



# IMPACTS OF CORRUPTION ON INDIAN ECONOMY AND ITS COUNTERACTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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**Abstract:** Corruption fosters cultures in which bribery or personal connections are valued more highly than merit in governments, corporations, and other institutions. Fundamentally, corruption undermines the principles of justice, accountability, and honesty that are essential to any healthy system, harming society as a whole. **Objective:** The study has tried to investigate the impacts of corruption in India and its counteracts. **Methodology:** This design is descriptive and it has made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Text, content, and descriptive analysis are used based on the sources of secondary data. **Results and Discussions:** India has always struggled with corruption, which has had a big impact on the country's politics, economics, and society. How to harm the all sectors are discussed in details. At the federal level, the Indian governments have attempted to fight against corruptions. A few initiatives to combat the corruptions are discussed. **Conclusion:** Corruption undermines public confidence, impedes economic expansion, and jeopardizes a country's foundations. To reduce corruption and promote honesty via religious rituals, a holistic approach is required that includes personal development, collective support, and a deep understanding of the moral ideals included in religious teachings.

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## Introduction

The Prime Minister of India addressed the twin problems of nepotism and corruption in his 76th Independence Day speech, emphasizing the pressing need to stop them. Additionally, Transparency International published the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2023. The score indicates that, on the whole, corruption control has either remained the same or gotten worse in the majority of nations during the past ten years. In 2023, the Corruption Perceptions Index for India was 40 points high (<https://www.drishtiias.com/to-the-points/paper4/corruption-in-india>).

**Definitions of Corruption:** When those in positions of authority act dishonestly, it's called corruption. The inclination to use public office for personal gain is the first step. As a result, corruption is the misuse of authority or position for one's own benefit, usually by dishonest or immoral means. It can take many different forms, such as favoritism, nepotism, fraud, embezzlement, and bribery. When those in positions of authority abuse their influence to further their own interests at the expense of the general welfare, it is known as corruption and frequently erodes justice, openness, and institutional confidence. Wide-ranging effects of corruption include the breakdown of societal trust, economic disparity, and the impediment of progress. By stealing funds intended for public

services, undermining the rule of law, and sustaining an unfair cycle, it impedes progress. Corruption fosters cultures in which bribery or personal connections are valued more highly than merit in governments, corporations, and other institutions. Fundamentally, corruption undermines the principles of justice, accountability, and honesty that are essential to any healthy system, harming society as a whole. Strong institutions, careful supervision, and a culture shift toward openness and moral behavior are all necessary to fight corruption.

**Aim of the Study:** The study has tried to investigate the impacts of corruption in India and its counteracts empirically.

## Methods and Materials

**Methods and Analysis:** This design is descriptive and it has made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Reports, research papers, published articles, websites, and others are the sources of secondary data. To hold the required presentation and conclusion, the numerous materials collected from the various sources have been carefully sorted under the appropriate headings, inspected, and verified. Text, content, and descriptive analysis are among the several quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques used.

**Materials:** Some important remarks are given below:

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**The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, or UNODC:** The misuse of authority for personal benefit is referred to as corruption. The UNODC provides a wealth of information on the various types of corruption, how it affects society, and how to fight it. Concerns including nepotism, embezzlement, and bribery are highlighted in their documentation (UNODC).

**Transparency International:** The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is one of the extensive studies produced by Transparency International, a global organization dedicated to fighting corruption everywhere. The types of corruption, their impacts, and the role that institutions play in combating them are all covered in length in the CPI and other publications published by Transparency International (Transparency International).

**World Bank:** Research on the effects of corruption on governance, institutional integrity, and economic development is published by the World Bank. In order to combat corruption and promote equitable development, their reports stress the value of openness and the rule of law (World Bank).

**Literature in Political Science and Sociology:** A number of scholarly works and books examine how corruption affects social trust and economic disparity. The economic, political, and social aspects of corruption are extensively covered in works by writers like Susan Rose-Ackerman (Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform, 1999) and Robert Klitgaard (Controlling Corruption, 1988).

**Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):** The OECD offers a wealth of research and guidance on combating corruption that concentrate on corporate practices and public sector governance. Transparency, anti-bribery procedures, and international cooperation are all highlighted in their frameworks (OECD).

**Global Integrity:** This group, Global Integrity, monitors corruption and governance in nations all around the world. According to their reports, societal trust, economic development, and political stability are all weakened by corruption (Global Integrity).

#### **What are the Reasons Behind Corruption in India?**

**Lack of Transparency:** Corrupt activities thrive when government procedures, decision-making, and public administration are opaque. Officials may act corruptly with less risk of being caught when their decisions and actions are protected from public scrutiny.

**Ineffective legal frameworks and weak institutions:** A large number of India's institutions in charge of upholding laws and regulations are either compromised or weak. This covers the judiciary, oversight organizations, and law enforcement. Weak institutions may even encourage corruption by failing to hold dishonest people accountable. If corrupt individuals are thought to be getting away with it, this might inspire further corruption. When people believe they can get away with corrupt practices, they are more likely to do so.

**Low salary and Incentives:** Public employees may get low salary, especially those in lower-level positions. They may be more susceptible to bribery and other corrupt practices as they see corruption as a means of increasing their wealth.

**Bureaucratic Red Tape:** Due to burdensome regulations and drawn-out bureaucratic processes, people and businesses may turn to corrupt practices to expedite processes or circumvent obstacles. India's complex economic structure, which involves several licenses, permissions, and clearances, may facilitate corruption. Businesses may resort to bribes in order to survive in this environment.

**Political Interference:** Political interference in administrative matters has the potential to compromise the independence of governmental institutions. Political leaders may persuade officials to engage in corrupt practices for their own or their party's advantage.

**Cultural Aspects:** Corrupt practices may occasionally be viewed as culturally acceptable, which promotes corruption. The notion that "everyone does it" might incite individuals to engage in unethical practices guilt-free.

**Lack of Whistleblower Protection:** If people lack adequate protection, they could be deterred from reporting wrongdoing. Potential whistleblowers may be silenced out of fear of reprisals, which fosters corruption.

**Social Inequality:** People with wealth and power may use their influence to obtain preferential treatment and carry out corrupt activities without facing consequences, which is one way that social and economic inequality can fuel corruption (<https://www.drishtiias.com/to-the-points/paper4/corruption-in-india>).

## **Results and Discussions**

India has always struggled with corruption, which has had a big impact on the country's politics, economics, and society. Let us examine a few of the main impacts:

### **Impacts on the Economy**

1. **Stifled Growth:** Corruption hinders economic growth by discouraging investment, reducing efficiency, and distorting market mechanisms.
2. **Ineffective Resource Allocation:** When corrupt practices occur, resources may be distributed improperly, favoring some individuals or organizations over others and preventing them from being used to their full potential.
3. **Greater Costs:** Corruption usually results in greater costs for both customers and businesses since bribes and kickbacks are typically passed on as higher prices.
4. **Reduced Tax Income:** Tax evasion and avoidance brought on by corruption reduce government income and limit its ability to provide public services. Corruption may lead to even more bureaucratic inefficiencies and delays if dishonest bureaucrats use red tape to seek more bribes (Busch, 1968). Such inadequacies in institutional efficiency may indirectly affect growth by lowering the private marginal product of capital and investment rate (Mauro, 1995). Levine and Renelt have shown that investment rates are a good measure of economic growth (Levine and Renelt, 1992). Bureaucratic inefficiencies also directly affect growth through the misallocation of economic capital. Moreover, corruption slows economic growth at a given income level (Mauro,

1995). Therefore, corruption hinders economic progress by discouraging foreign investment and increasing operational expenses. Funds that may be used for infrastructure and social welfare initiatives are taken away for private gain.

### Impacts on the Society

1. **Inequality and Injustice:** Corruption may exacerbate inequality by giving preference to the affluent and powerful at the cost of the poor and disenfranchised.
2. **Damaged Trust:** Public trust in political institutions is undermined by corruption, which contributes to social unrest and a decline in civic participation.
3. **Limited Access to Services:** People who live in remote regions or come from disadvantaged backgrounds may find it more difficult to access essential public services like infrastructure, healthcare, and education as a result of corruption. Consequently, funds meant for public benefit are often embezzled, leading to inadequate healthcare, education, and social security. Corruption widens the gap between the affluent and the poor, intensifying economic inequities.

### Impacts on the Politics

1. **Weakened Democracy:** Corruption may corrode democratic principles by undermining the rule of law and putting special interests ahead of the benefit of the whole.
2. **Political Instability:** Corruption may lead to social unrest and political instability when people lose trust in the government and its ability to address their problems.
3. **Corruption Cycles:** When corrupt activities persist, they can create a vicious cycle that makes it difficult to implement changes.

Consequently, corruption erodes public trust in government and erodes democratic institutions. When people believe that government officials and politicians are dishonest, they lose trust in democratic processes.

### Impacts on the Environment

**Environmental Degradation:** Corrupt environmental regulations lead to pollution, illegal mining, and deforestation. The ecosystem is irreparably harmed when companies and manufacturers regularly bribe officials to circumvent environmental restrictions.

### Impacts on Ethics

**Weaken of Moral Values:** A corrupt culture normalizes dishonest behavior and erodes moral norms in society. At every level of administration and governance, moral standards decline when corruption permeates institutions.

### Loss of credibility

A company operating in a sector that is perceived as highly corrupt may lose ground when it comes to a fair valuation of its business because investors bargain hard and factor in the cost of corruption at the time of transaction, according to the majority of survey respondents from PE firms in a 2013 study on bribery and corruption in India by the international professional services firm Ernst & Young (EY). "High-level corruption and scams are now

threatening to derail the country's credibility and its economic boom," according to a report by KPMG (*Colvin, 20 April 2011*).

### Education quality

The quality of education in India has been declining due to corruption, which has also had long-term detrimental effects on society. In India, one of the main causes of domestic black money is said to be educational corruption. A private university called Manav Bharti University was charged in 2021 with selling tens of thousands of degrees for money over a ten-year period (Mohan, 1 March 2021-[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption\\_in\\_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption_in_India)). Keep in mind that the consequences of corruption might range depending on the area and sectors in India. Nonetheless, the aggregate effect is noteworthy and has broad implications for the advancement of the nation.

### Anti-Corruption Efforts in India

At the federal level, the Indian governments have attempted to fight against corruptions. A few initiatives to combat the corruptions are listed below.

#### Whistleblower Protection Act of 2014

India's 2014 Whistleblower Protection Act is still mostly ineffective after ten years. Despite its laudable intentions, it has come under fire for its inadequate protections for whistleblowers and its subpar reporting system. The Act's primary flaw is its reliance on "Competent Authorities," who are usually senior officials who are not equipped to handle sensitive investigations. These officials, which include prime ministers and state vigilance commissions, are overburdened and unable to effectively handle cases involving whistleblowers. Furthermore, the involvement of Competent Authorities may put whistleblowers in risk. By including whistleblowers in the investigation, the Act may make retaliation against them more likely. Furthermore, by omitting explicit procedural criteria for inquiries, the Act allows for discretion and potential bias.

**Other disadvantages consist of:** Whistleblower protection is limited since the Act makes no promises about anonymity, court review, or enforcement.

**Restricted scope:** It excludes commercial entities, high-ranking government officials, and the military.

**Insufficient definitions:** The Act lacks precise definitions for victimization and protective measures.

**Limited applicability:** The Act exclusively protects those who report to Competent Authorities; it does not protect recognized whistleblowers, such as RTI users or Social Audit participants.

**All things considered:** whistleblowers who expose corruption are not sufficiently protected under the Whistleblower Protection Act of 2014. To address the objections and ensure that whistleblowers may reveal wrongdoing without fear of retaliation, it must be drastically changed.

**Act on the Right to Information (RTI):** India's Right to Information Act (RTI) of 2005 mandates that the government respond to people's requests for information promptly. RTI requests are made by citizens using a digital portal, and government organizations must respond to them within 30 days (or 48 hours in an emergency). Since its implementation, the RTI has enabled civil

society organizations to expose corruption at all levels. RTI is a powerful tool in the fight against corruption since millions of requests are filed annually. However, users of the RTI face increasing legal dangers and challenges. Because RTI queries are public, users are vulnerable to attacks; for this reason, organizations such as the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) keep an eye on these incidents and advocate for stronger security measures.

**Social Auditing:** Social auditing is a citizen-driven strategy for ensuring openness and accountability in public undertakings. At these public gatherings, residents evaluate how programs that impact them are being implemented by contrasting official records with actual conditions on the ground. A verification exercise is part of the procedure to record oral testimony and find expenditure disparities.

### U.S. Initiatives to Combat Corruption in India

Indian nationals may be extremely helpful in uncovering corruption in government contracts and American businesses. Here are how whistleblowers who come out are protected by certain important U.S. laws.

### The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA)

Under the Dodd-Frank Act and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), you could be eligible for compensation and protection if you have proof that an American citizen or business bribed foreign officials to obtain an unfair advantage. This SEC-managed programme forbids employers from retaliating and compensates 10–30% of recoverable fines above \$1 million. It is strongly advised to speak with a U.S. whistleblower lawyer due to the complexity of FCPA prosecutions.

### Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Laws

You can notify OFAC or Fin CEN if you have knowledge of money laundering schemes or breaches of US sanctions. While OFAC oversees sanctions against foreign corporations, Fin CEN examines financial transactions to spot suspicious activities. Up to 30% of fines exceeding \$1 million may be awarded to whistleblowers who reveal infractions such as insufficient client verification (KYC) or failure to report suspicious activity (SARS) under the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA). Furthermore, information that results in the seizure of corrupt foreign assets might earn up to \$5 million through the Kleptocracy Asset Recovery Rewards Programme.

### False Claims Act and Qui Tam

Whistleblowers who expose fraud against the US government are protected by this statute. Through judgments and settlements, the Justice Department collected more than \$2.68 billion in 2023 alone.

A qui tam case, which is a provision of the Act, allows Indian residents who are aware of such fraud to obtain a share of the collected damages or penalties, often between 15 and 30 percent. In order to optimize outcomes and safeguard your rights, think about collaborating with a U.S. lawyer who specializes in whistleblower law.

These rules provide Indian residents with substantial safeguards and incentives to reveal misconduct involving American

businesses and government contracts ( <https://kcc.com/corruption-index/corruption-in-india/> -Accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025).

### Attempts to Fight Against Corruption

To combat corruption, the Indian government has implemented a number of measures:

1. **Legislative Reforms:** To improve anti-corruption measures, laws like as the Prevention of Corruption Act (1988), the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013), and the Whistle Blowers Protection Act (2014) were passed. Enforcing these regulations is still difficult, though.
2. **Digital Governance:** Programs like e-Government, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), and Digital India lessen human participation while enhancing transparency. Digital transactions increase accountability in public expenditures and reduce corruption dependent on cash.
3. **The Right to Information (RTI) Act of 2005:** Giving people the ability to demand openness in how the government operates. Several corruption cases in India have been made public thanks in large part to this statute.
4. **Demonetization (2016):** An effort to lessen financial transaction corruption and stop black money. Although its long-term efficacy is still up for debate, it did momentarily stop illegal money activity.
5. **Fortifying Anti-Corruption Agencies:** To combat corruption, organizations such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) are essential. Political meddling, however, frequently reduces their efficacy.
6. **Corporate Governance Initiatives:** To combat corporate fraud and financial mismanagement, efforts are being undertaken to improve accountability and transparency in private sector enterprises.

### The Way Ahead

Even with these steps, corruption is still a major problem. India's battle against corruption may be strengthened by taking the following actions:

1. **Judicial Reforms:** To guarantee prompt justice, corruption cases were tried more quickly. Corrupt people can be discouraged by establishing fast-track courts for matters involving corruption.
2. **Election Reforms:** Tougher regulations against election fraud and greater openness in political financing. To stop the flow of dark money, political parties should be required to reveal their financial sources.
3. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Promoting whistleblower procedures and civic engagement. Holding public authorities responsible may be greatly aided by a more knowledgeable and conscious populace.
4. **Corporate Accountability:** Tightening corporate fraud and bolstering corporate governance. Stricter compliance procedures should be put in place by businesses to stop corruption in their institutions.

5. **Strengthening Local Governance:** Encouraging Panchayati Raj organizations to guarantee more accountability at the local level. It is necessary to increase the transparency and accountability of local self-government entities to the citizens they represent.
6. **Technology Use:** To produce tamper-proof transaction records, e-governance programs and blockchain technology are being expanded. Corruption in social programs may be considerably decreased by digitally recording public expenditures.
7. **Strict Penalties for Corrupt Officials:** Enforcing severe sanctions for corrupt officials in order to establish zero tolerance for corruption. Corruption may be discouraged by the threat of harsh punishment.
8. **Religious point of View:** No religions in the world encourage dishonesty and corruption. Person can be rectified and made honest through the religious practices and thereby reduce corruptions. Being a Sanatani, I have cited some teachings of Bhagavad Gita.

A revered Hindu text, the Bhagavad Gita contains deep lessons on leading a moral life, such as the value of honesty, integrity, and selflessness. The following passages from the Bhagavad Gita can serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement for people to act with honesty, integrity, and ethics:

1. **Morality and Truth: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 16.24:** *"One should therefore follow the rules of the scriptures. One who acts according to the scriptural injunctions, without attachment, and without desire for the results, attains the highest goal."*

This passage emphasizes how crucial it is to uphold the moral standards outlined in religious writings. People are inspired to act honorably and with integrity, free from any commitment to self-interest, when they live by ethical standards.

2. **Taking Action Without Seeking Personal Benefit: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 2.47:** *"You have the right to carry out your responsibilities, but never to reap the rewards of them. Don't allow your connection to inaction or the rewards of action serve as your motivation"*.

This passage instructs people to behave honorably and conscientiously without being influenced by their own wants or the results of their deeds. A feeling of moral clarity and integrity is developed by concentrating on doing the right thing without being attached to rewards.

3. **Purity of Intention: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 3.16:** *"One who does not follow the wheel of creation set of going in this world (i.e., does not perform their duties), sinful and sensual; they live in vain."*

This passage exhorts people to carry out their obligations in an honest manner that is consistent with higher ideals, without ignoring them or abusing dishonesty to get around or expedite labour.

4. **Give in to Higher Knowledge and Truth: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 4.36:** *"Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you can cross over the ocean of miseries."*

This text implies that even previous transgressions can be forgiven when one submits to the truth and pursues a path of righteousness. It inspires people to be truthful with themselves and seek spiritual development via the pursuit of truth.

5. **Admit Truth and Greater Knowledge: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 4.36:** *"Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you can cross over the ocean of miseries."*

This scripture implies that even previous wrongdoings can be overcome when one seeks righteousness and surrenders to the truth. It inspires people to seek spiritual development by truth and to be truthful with themselves.

6. **Give yourself over to knowledge and the truth: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 4.36:** *"Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, when you are situated in the boat of transcendental knowledge, you can cross over the ocean of miseries."*

This scripture implies that even past transgressions can be forgiven when one submits to the truth and pursues a path of righteousness. It inspires people to be truthful with themselves and seek spiritual development via the pursuit of truth.

7. **The Value of Selflessness and Sincerity: Bhagavad Gita-Verse- 9.22:** *"To those who are constantly devoted and who remember Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me."*

Sincerity and a commitment to honesty and truth are emphasized in this poem. It highlights that when individuals concentrate on sincere devotion and love for a greater purpose, they naturally connect with honesty and integrity.

8. **Sincerity, Honesty and Lack of Deception: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 10.20:** *"I am the Self, O Gudakesha, seated in the hearts of all creatures. I am the beginning, the middle, and the end of all beings."*

This verse emphasizes that lying and dishonesty are essentially against one's own nature because the Divine is a part of every human being. When people connect with the Divine inside, they are motivated to act in a way that is honorable and decent.

9. **Self-Regulation and Self-Control: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 6.5:** *"One must elevate, not degrade, oneself with one's own mind. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well."*

This text states that honesty and integrity start on the inside. The mind must be trained in order to act morally. When people are in charge of their ideas and actions, they maintain integrity and follow moral principles.

10. **Selflessness in Behaviour: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 3.30:** *"Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with your mind focused on the Self, free from desire and attachment, fight."*

This verse promotes selflessness and acting without consideration for one's personal gain. Instead of being driven by self-interest, it encourages individuals to approach every task with integrity and a service-oriented perspective.



- 11. Honouring the Truth: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 17.15:** *"The austerity of speech consists in speaking words that do not cause distress to others, that are truthful, pleasing, and beneficial, and in regular recitation of scriptures."*

This passage highlights how important it is to speak the truth in a way that is polite, respectful, and helpful to others. It promotes candid communication that doesn't cause harm to others.

- 12. Self-Awareness and Veracity: Bhagavad Gita-Verse 10.41:** *"Whatever is glorious, prosperous, beautiful, and powerful, know that to be a manifestation of a part of My splendor."*

People are urged by this poem to acknowledge the Divine in all facets of life, especially honesty. It teaches that one's own and all of creation's Divine nature is reflected in honesty and integrity.

Individuals are encouraged by the Bhagavad Gita to develop honesty via self-awareness, devotion, and moral behavior. People can stay clear of corruption and cultivate strong moral character that helps both them and society by concentrating on the truth, being selfless, and walking the straight road. According to the Gita's teachings, one should conduct honorably, without concern for worldly gain, and in accordance with their higher spiritual selves, which fight corruption.

## Conclusion

These resources offer a comprehensive viewpoint on corruption, its expressions, and the significance of ethical norms and institutional responsibility. They support the notion that corruption has pervasive negative effects on social values and development. Fundamentally, corruption undermines public confidence, impedes economic expansion, and jeopardizes a country's foundations. It is a complex, multidimensional issue that transcends political systems, cultural conventions, and country borders. When corruption infiltrates organizations, money from vital services is diverted, inequality rises, and social injustice is maintained, leaving the most vulnerable communities at its mercy. Fighting corruption requires cooperation, transparency, robust accountability systems, and a commitment to moral leadership.

Without enacting structural reforms, increasing public awareness, and working together globally, we cannot hope to create environments where integrity flourishes and everyone gains from breakthroughs. Without such efforts, corruption will persist in impeding global advancement and tainting the source of riches for future generations. To reduce corruption and promote honesty via religious rituals, a holistic approach is required that includes personal development, collective support, and a deep understanding of the moral ideals included in religious teachings.

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