

Corruption in India: Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract — Corruption is the most widespread endemic and a greatest threat to economic and political development of any nation. Given the high level of corruption in India, this phenomenon has turned into a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of our system. In recent times, the issue is receiving attention of authorities, policy makers, businessmen and civil society organizations. In other words, fight against corruption has emerged as a key developmental issue. As such, this study is an attempt to delve into the current status of corruption in India with a focus on issues and challenges in combating corruption. During the discussion, the authors found that the major scams committed in India since 2009 are a direct result of deficit in governance. This paper also found that lack of competent leadership and management, inherent delays in criminal justice system, hostile witnesses marked with lack of values as key challenges in eliminating corruption. To ensure a corruption free society, the authors strongly suggest simplification of office processes and procedures, filling up of judicial vacancies, civil participation for necessary buy-in and inclusion of private sector under anti-corruption laws, besides strengthening and empowering anti-corruption agencies. To sum up, it is argued that good administration is possible only when corruption is eliminated from society. Individuals who are currently garnering the most attention, such as corrupt politicians, businesspeople, and judges, should be socially shunned and barred from serving in our holy, self-governing country. To accomplish these desired social changes, enacting strong legislation with severe penalties and its rigorous execution is the need of the hour. The study is expected to contribute to the ongoing debate on the link between corruption and anti-corruption campaign, as well as the formation of a broad political consensus on how to deal with it in the future.

Keywords — *Corruption; Issues; Challenges; Anti-Corruption Laws; Scams.*

1. Introduction

In India, corruption is the most pervasive endemic. This sickness has infected every office in the public and commercial sectors. It is difficult to estimate how much the economy has suffered as a result of this disease. Even if most of us are concerned, we, the Indian people, must not be found wanting when the time comes to act. "Corruption not only destroys public trust, but also poses a threat to the integrity of markets. It also undermines rule of law besides distorting resource allocation" (G-20 Summit, Seoul).

In many developing countries, public sector corruption is a key barrier in effective service delivery. By sweeping into all facets of life, from starting a new business to getting a passport or seeing a doctor, corruption can obstruct the equitable distribution of commodities and services to its population. It can take various forms, from bureaucrats requesting bribes from citizens to do basic functions, to hospital personnel stealing drugs intended for the needy, to officials taking compensation for jobs that they perform poorly or do not complete.

In recent years, India's fight against corruption has become a major developmental issue. A growing number of authorities, policy makers, businesses and civil society organizations are openly confronting the issue (Hanna et al., 2011). At the same time, public awareness of

corruption has increased significantly. It was not uncommon until recently to hear someone talking about anti-corruption purely in terms of law enforcement. Most professionals working in the sector today, on the other hand, agree that public education and prevention are both critical. The field has also realised the importance of civil society in achieving effective and long-term reform (Abdul Raheem, 2009).

Research studies reveal that high level of corruption is directly proportional to lower levels of investment. Entrepreneurs will allocate their scarce time and money on bribing rather than production as a result of corruption, which increases transaction costs and uncertainty. By distorting the rule of law and eroding the institutional framework on which economic growth is based, it stifles the development of a healthy marketplace and imbalances economic and social progress. Poor people who are the hardest hit by the economic downturn are most reliant on government services. They are least able to pay the additional costs associated with bribes, fraud, and the misappropriation of economic privilege

Broadly speaking, there are two forms of corruption, administrative corruption and political corruption. By definition, the former alters the implementation of policies, such as getting a license even if one does not qualify for it, while as the later influences the formulation of laws, regulations, and policies, such as revoking all licenses, and

achieving the sole right to operate public utility. As elucidated by Warren (2004) “Bureaucratic corruption” involves the violation of first-order norms (the written rules and laws that are the product of politicians’ decision making), whereas “political corruption” is the use of powers by government officials or their known persons for illegitimate private gain.

2. Review of Literature

The study of corruption has become "dispersed" and "multidisciplinary," spanning from theoretical modeling of very basic conditions to specific details of a single corruption scandal. It has been investigated as a problem of political, economic, cultural, or moral underdevelopment (Amendson et al., 2001). In a similar context, in recent years, the body of theoretical and empirical research that objectively examines the issue of corruption has grown considerably (Elliot 1997, Gill 1998, Girling 1997, Mauro 1995, Paul and Guhan 1997, Shleifer and Vishny 1998, Vittal 1999, World Bank 1997).

While corruption in one form or other has always been with us, it has had manifested itself in different times at different places, with varying degrees of negative consequences (Bardhan, 1997). The early findings of corruption studies primarily focus on the national and institutional levels, analysing the specific impact of various facets of the economic, political, and cultural systems on corruption. However, whether or not these elements have a practical impact on corruption remains a point of contention. In a similar vein, from a medium-term perspective, system design and implementation of the degree of decentralisation between national agencies, as well as recruitment, appointment, compensation, and punishment, not only affect the bud of corruption, but also has a substantial impact on the spread of corruption (Liu, 2016).

Given the vast amount of literature available on corruption related factors, the authors have elucidated several relevant and testable hypotheses from the growing literature on the determinants of corruption. For instance, Bardhan (1997) pointed out that corruption had a devastating effect on the economy, while it cannot be denied that corruption has a positive meaning in some areas. Farooq and Shahbaz et al. (2013) shows that corruption is an obstacle to economic growth by building a time series model. In a similar vein, Treisman (2000) found the causal relationship between the economic development and reciprocal causation of corruption through the study of the per capita GDP. Gupta and Davoodi et al. (1998) pointed out that corruption has increased the income inequality and increased poverty. In contrast, Tummala (2009) have found controversial relationship between

inequality and corruption. Apart from the above, culture and politics were found closely related to corruption. Previous studies have also looked into a variety of factors that contribute to the level of corruption in a country which are globalization (Badinger and Nindl, 2014), economic growth (Bai et al., 2013), freedom of press (Bhattacharya, 2008), size of government (Kotera et al., 2012) poverty (Justesen and Bjornskov, 2014) and transparency (Lindstedt and Naurin, 2010). In a similar vein, as elucidated by Treisman (1998), the lack of trust and civic engagement may increase the supply of corrupt services by reducing the danger to officials of being exposed and punished.

Parallel strides have been made in the understanding of corruption and institutional reforms. Recent work has argued that education can better control the level of corruption and there is some evidence for the association subnationally in the United States (Glaeser and Saks 2006) and cross-nationally (Persson et al. 2003). There is also evidence and a growing consensus among scholars that greater transparency, information and technology-based efforts have a significant impact on reducing corruption. But given preliminary analysis of the literature and a much better grasp of the extent to which corruption is a symptom of fundamental institutional weaknesses, corruption in India is regarded as a complicated phenomenon as the result of more deep-seated problems of policy distortion, institutional incentives, and governance. Therefore, in an effort to capture the richness of the literature on corruption, the present paper elucidates the current scenario of corruption in India with special emphasis on the challenges India is facing to tackle this menace.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To explore the current status of corruption in India with special reference to major scams committed over the last decade.
- To analyse issues and challenges that India is facing in combating corruption.

4. Research Methodology

This paper attempts to construct facts through the scientific enquiry of the existing literature and analysing multiple discourses. The article captures multi-dimensional issues pertaining corruption. While doing rigorous search on various databases (Proquest, Google Scholar, Shodhganga and Google search), the authors could find only 38 papers wherein corruption was studied from multi-dimensional perspectives. However, after winnowing, it was found that only 14 papers had subject matter related to issues of corruption at national level. Thus, the research

articles/papers chosen in this paper cover a broad spectrum of corruption in wide range of areas like public, corporate, private etc. Our approach in this paper is primarily analytical in nature, given the inherent difficulties in collecting empirical data on the subject of corruption.

5. Current Status of Corruption in India

N. Nittal, former Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) is of the opinion that nearly half of those who avail services of public departments had the first-hand experience of giving bribe directly or indirectly. He also asserted that two third of people view corruption as real in these offices.

However, one third think corruption is more exaggerated. And yet, 80 per cent of people are passive and hardly 20 per cent had ever complained about such corruption to any. It is interesting that while 50 per cent of people reported that they had bribed, only 20 per cent took the trouble of complaining. This also highlights the need for sensitizing the public about the danger of corruption.” According to the United Nations, every year, an estimated US\$1 trillion is paid in bribes and US\$2.6 trillion is stolen through corruption. Together, this sum represents 5% of annual global GDP. Further, in developing countries, funds lost to corruption are estimated to be ten times the amount of the overall Official Development Assistance (OECD, 2015). Loss of public finances due to misallocations or greater expenses, as well as lower quality goods, services, and works, are all direct consequences of corruption. In the case of public works procurement, those who pay the bribes try to recover their money by inflating prices, charging for work not completed, failing to satisfy contract specifications, lowering the quality of work, or using inferior materials. In a similar vein, Corruption affects a person even if he doesn’t come into direct contact with it. Moreover, it makes the business environment less attractive to foreign investment.

Corruption is a major problem in India resulting in substantial risk for the businesses operating there. As per Corruption Perception Index 2020 (Table-1) published by Transparency International, India ranked 86 out of 180 countries/ territories.

Table 1. Corruption Perception Index 2020

RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
1	New Zealand	88
1	Denmark	88
3	Finland	85
3	Switzerland	85
3	Singapore	85
3	Sweden	85
7	Norway	84

25	USA	67
78	China	42
86	India	40

Source: Corruption Perception Index, 2020 by Transparency International (TI).

Note :(i) 180 countries/territories were represented across the world. (ii)The index which ranks 180 countries/territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of zero to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

As per the figures reflected in Table 1”, India dropped eight spots to No. 86, which it now shares with Morocco, Turkey, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago, all of which received the same score of 40. The country has steadily slipped since ranking 72 out of 179 in 2007, when the report debuted. Several recent high-profile scandals have underscored the extent of this problem. For instance, looking at the list of major financial scams in Table B offers some hints about the quantum of money involved in these scams. The global corporate community was shocked and scandalized on 7th of January 2009, when the chairman of Satyam, Byrraju Ramalinga Raju, resigned and confessed that he had manipulated the accounts of Rs 7,000 crore in several forms. In 2010, The Commonwealth Games, which costing about eighteen times its budget estimate, were accused of massive misallocation of finances. In a similar vein, two top Congress Party members and other government officials resigned after reports of contracts of substandard infrastructure and financial irregularities got highlighted.

The total misappropriation of funds, according to the Central Vigilance Commission, is estimated to be around \$1.8 billion (Kundu, 2015). During the second term of United Progressive Alliance another scandal called 2G scam rocked the political scene wherein, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in a report quantified and pegged the scam loss to Rs. 1.76 lac crores. This scam outraged opposition resulting in massive protests in Delhi coupled with complete shutdown of parliament for three weeks. Likewise, Colgate scandal of 2012 amounting to \$34 billion loss has received massive media reaction and public outrage. The deadlock resulted in Parliament functioning only seven of the twenty days of the session. The story did not end here.

The country had been a witness to several national level scams by the public officials. In recent times, NiravModi and his uncle were declared as 'fugitive economic offenders' in December, 2019, and were accused of committing a Rs 14,000 crore scam by obtaining credit facilities fraudulently from the PNB (Central Vigilance Commission, 2021). Laconically, The Reserve Bank of

India in its annual report for the year 2019-20 revealed that Bank frauds in value terms involving an amount of Rs 1 lakh and above, have more than doubled in 2019-20 to Rs 1.85 trillion from Rs 71,543 crore in 2018-19 witnessing an increase of 159 per cent. In volume terms, however, the total fraud cases have jumped 28 per cent to 8,707 in 2019-20 from 6,799 in 2018-19 (Reserve Bank of India, 2020). Other recent surveys also reveals that globally corruption has worsened in the last two years.

The major scams that have been committed in last five decades seem to be a direct result of deficit in governance by our corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. Following is a list of recent financial scandals committed in India since 2009. As per the estimates of World Bank and RBI, the total monetary worth of scams committed since 1992 in India is estimated to be one lakh billion. There must have also taken place other scandals probably of smaller magnitude but have gone unnoticed.

Table 2. Latest Financial Scams (INR in Crores)

YEAR	SCAM	Quantum of Money Involved
2009	Satyam Scam	14,000
2009	2G Spectrum Scam	1,76,000
2010	Illegal Money in Swiss Bank	71,00,000
2010	Orissa Mine Scam	7,000
2010	IPL Scam	1700
2010	Commonwealth Games Scam	70, 000
2011	Reddy Brothers Illegal Mining Scam	16,085
2012	Colgate Scam	1,86,000
2016	Vijay Mallya	9,000
2018	NiravModi PNB Bank Fraud	11,400

Source: Compiled from different sources like CVC Annual Report 2021, dnaindia.com and finance.yahoo.com

6. Corruption: Issues and Challenges

In recent times, the government has demonstrated a strong commitment to fight against corruption and a willingness to collaborate with the counterparts from other jurisdiction to combat the problem. In a similar context, India's anti-corruption laws in recent times have undergone a significant shift, with the existing government taking a hard stance. In order to bring a sea change to anti-corruption landscape, several laws including the Lokpal and Lokayuta Act, 2013 have been enacted to investigate and prosecute cases of corruption against public officials. However, despite adequate laws to fight corruption in the public sector, it is still one of the biggest menaces Indian society must deal with. In its fight against corruption, the Indian criminal justice system has faced numerous problems and challenges, some of which are listed below

6.1 Lack of Competent Leadership and Management

Departments are in disarray due to lack of skilled leadership and poor organisation. As a result, there is a lack of coordination and control between departments and organisational levels. Corruption is a result of this unrestrained and unmanaged government. The appointment of incompetent and incapable managers and executives at various levels of the hierarchy also contributes to mismanagement. As a result, the only cause of erroneous appointments is corruption, which promotes corruption.

6.2 Socio Economic Gap

When comparing India and the countries surrounding it on the index to the top 10 (least corrupt) countries, it becomes clear that the former group contains countries with significant socio economic inequalities, while the latter group contains countries with a high degree of social and economic justice. In this regard, Singapore ranks in the top ten least corrupt countries among European and European-settler countries. To be more specific, corruption is proportional to a country's socio-economic divide. In a similar vein, as alluded by Khair (2019), cultural and historical variables also influence the socio economic gap, the higher the socio-economic differences, the greater the temptation to commit fraud. For instance, in a country where a bribe of Rs. 5000 is little to the wealthy, it is simple for the wealthy to provide such a bribe. However, if a poor man's monthly income in the same country is Rs.5000, it is difficult for him to resist a bribe of that amount.

This results in a progressive loss of morality and ethics on both sides: some people find it simple to spend money to get things done, while others find it difficult to refuse that money. On both sides, there is a growing sense of disdain for the system and for one another. Because of such individual acts of corruption, the system is considered as fully corrupt.

6.3 Inherent Delays in the Criminal Justice System

Certain government authorities in India work persistently to eliminate corruption. A number of anti-corruption laws are also in place. Some personnel from these agencies fall prey to the lure of illegal commissions, allowing corrupt people to go unpunished. The criminal justice system has become unbearably slow, and punishments are not being administered promptly enough. The involved authorities frequently take a long time to provide authorisation for a prosecution after receiving reports from the investigating agency. Moreover, permission is denied on political or other reasons in some situations.

6.4 Lack of Values

Corruption has become accepted in the social psychology and behaviour of modern India. Bribery, nepotism, and favouritism are examples of social evils that have become accepted in society. People frequently contact someone they know for favours that they are not legally entitled to. Jumping traffic lights or lines, or receiving benefits owing to no fault of one's own, has become part of the societal ethos.

In Indian society, a person who has amassed fortune through unethical means is frequently granted the same, if not better, prestige as a person of brilliance. In the end, the corrupt politician or corrupt administrator is a public construct and a concrete representation of the mentally corrupt men on the street, whose approbation allows corruption to grow with impunity. It's no wonder, then, that corrupt political figures occasionally stride majestically to the court and welcome their fans as if they were receiving a prize for public service.

6.5 Hostile witnesses

The prosecution must establish its case beyond a reasonable doubt in order to convict a corrupt public official. According to the Indian Evidence Act Amendment 2020, governing evidence in India, this is a stringent legal necessity.

Even in circumstances of corruption, there is no exception to this rule. To prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt, the prosecution has to depend extensively on witness evidence. Witnesses, on the other hand, frequently refuse to support the prosecution case due to the other side's influence, allurements, and intimidation. There is no witness protection mechanism in place, and there are no measures for swift and efficient action against hostile witnesses. As a result, witnesses are frequently uncooperative, spoiling the prosecution's case.

6.6 Poor Economic Stability

In India, the economic crises marked with high inflation rates are major causes of corruption resulting in job losses and a shift in people's lifestyles. It instils a sense of insecurity in the minds of the public, particularly the impoverished.

Most people are unable to cope with this dreadful condition, and in order to stay employed and maintain a respectable quality of living; they resort to illegal and immoral acts. They also refuse to work hard again and instead take a variety of irregular shortcuts to achieve their objectives.

7. Tackling the Menace of Corruption: The Way Forward

Many people think that only government has responsibility for eliminating corruption and often blame government. Given the level of corruption and the existing framework in India, it is very clear that government alone cannot stop corruption. Corruption can never be removed or even decreased if the general public and civil society institutions remain apathetic and hopeless in their fight against it. As a result, it is the responsibility and duty of every Indian to fight against corruption and take steps to promote honesty and integrity. India's citizens must encourage excellence and educate their children the true meaning of success. People in the 21st century ought to use knowledge and established mechanisms to combat corruption. They should also use media and technology to reach millions of people in a matter of seconds. The following steps will go a long way in strengthening governance, reducing corruption and building confidence of ordinary people in the system.

7.1 Political Commitment

Despite having elaborate and multi-layered apparatus to control corruption, India is hardly making any progress to curb corruption owing to the fact of lack of political commitment on the part of political leadership. The institutional measures which are put in place to combat corruption can be useful only if correctives come from the political class which is the final legislative and executive authority in a parliamentary democracy.

Politicians must first address corruption inside their own ranks by establishing and implementing parliamentary code of conduct. Political parties have become a possible source of corruption in many systems, compromising the legitimacy and integrity of political parties' democracy. In a similar vein, Parliamentarians must also follow ethical guidelines, which include ethical frameworks that cover everything from conflicts of interest to voting.

7.2 Simplification of Processes and Procedures

To reduce or curb corruption, it is necessary to eliminate delays. In this context, it is essential that office procedures and the procedure for disciplinary proceedings needs much simplification. In the current system, official files are passed through numerous offices before a decision is made. Therefore, a transparent and straightforward decision-making pattern must be developed to ease office procedures. The mechanism for 'vigilance clearance' should be clearly specified in circumstances of promotion. To weed out the corrupt, the recent ruling issued by Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations under Regulation

226 (2) reading the Government to retire a Government servant at any time after he has completed 22 years of service or attained the age of 48 years in public interest. This power is exercised by the Govt. to remove such government servants, who are considered as deadwood, inefficient are of doubtful integrity and considered to be corrupt. Hence, the individuals whose performance is not up to par and who are involved in any act of nepotism, favouritism, or corruption can retire after 48 years should be applied in letter and spirit. Latest management techniques and methods need to be incorporated into the functioning of all public services and public sector projects so that their efficiency and productivity must be in synchronization with their social obligation.

7.3 Role of Judiciary

When we consider how to improve democratic corruption control, we frequently focus on reforms in accountability institutions. The recent literature indicates that, at the current stage of reform and democratization around the globe, accountability institutions must undergo a strengthening process in order to improve economic performance, promote fiscal responsibility and fight corruption (SIAVELIS, 2000). In this context, the judiciary has a pivotal role in combating corruption. In order to ensure that political and administrative power is used only in accordance with the law, officers involved in wrong doing or misuse of authority should be held accountable. To be more specific, one of the ways that the judiciary can win in the fight against corruption is by showing impartiality, integrity equality, competence and diligence in the dispensation of justice. The judiciary must appear to be both independent and reliant. Judges should rule in accordance with the law in all matters before them. Judges should make decisions based on the evidence and the rule of law and being independent of their personal biases and other external factors. Examples of countries like Kenya and China where courts can impose the maximum allowable sentence and where people found guilty of corruption are described as “greedy” and “contemptuous of rules and laws” should be expeditiously followed while dealing with corruption cases in India. More importantly, to address this acute problem of corruption, judicial vacancies pilling since years need to be filled up urgently and appropriate premises and support staff must be provided to ensure undue delay in social justice.

7.4 Civil Participation

The Right to Information Act, 2005 permits Indian residents to request government information, which must be made available to the public unless it is a confidential piece of information. People will respond and extend their full participation in resolving this issue if they are convinced that there is a strong attempt to protest against

corrupt politicians. Corruption no matter how deep-seated can be successfully uprooted through public participation and awareness. No doubt, individual actions can help to get rid of corruption; however, if the problem is to be tackled at its root, people's participation is essential. To address this issue, the central government must collaborate and work together with civil society and media to achieve a corruption-free India.

7.5 Inclusion of private Sector under Anti-Corruption Laws

In India the Prevention of Corruption Act 1988 is the landmark law which deals with offences relating to corruption. The law was essentially enacted to take care of corruption cases in the public sector and by public servants which is only one part of the issue. However, bribery is also rampant in the private sector. To be more specific, the problem of corruption in the private sector is increasing at an alarming rate owing to its great expansion after the liberalisation of the economy in early 1990s. The Prevention of Bribery in Private Sector Bill 2018, which seeks to provide a legislative framework to resolve the issue of corruption in private sector needs to be implemented in letter and spirit.

7.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Without independent outsider's monitoring, some international, regional and local anticorruption action plans can easily become as an additional paper work or a lip service and can hardly make any real differences. Monitoring and evaluation of the performance of anti-corruption agencies are also one of important roles of anticorruption CSOs. To combat corruption and to yield positive results, the civil society organizations must take steps in formulating and implementing anti-corruption strategies.

7.7 System Based Policy Driven Governance

In order to transform the entire ecosystem of public services through the use of information technology, a strong electronic ID system needs to be devised. The Digital India campaign aimed to streamline existing schemes should be expeditiously implemented which would allow poor citizens to avoid intermediaries and receive aid directly through a bank account. In order to allow for greater transparency, everything ranging from land records to death certificate and from contract bidding to grievance redressal mechanism needs to be digitalised.

7.8 Watch Dog Agencies

When the political milieu is filled with honest individuals and civil personnel are free from governmental

intervention, watchdog agencies like the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) can thrive. Otherwise, organisations like the CVC will be of no service or will be misused for political benefit. To improve the CBI's efficacy, it should be separated from the police and constituted as a separate entity committed entirely to fighting corruption. The Indian Constitution should be modified to allow the CBI to probe corruption charges at the state level without the agreement of the state's chief minister.

7.9 Use of Technology

As pointed out by Berkeley Bussell, that technology's most important contribution has been granting citizens greater access to information. Therefore, in this regard, some combination of administrative reforms and local-level technology initiatives can be taken up to help bring corruption to light. For example, digital devices like CCTV cameras and e-recorders must be put at government offices where bribes are frequently taken and given. People may also take the initiative to use their phones to record any corrupt practises in their neighbourhood and the same needs to be shared with the local police station. In addition to the ongoing initiatives, the following steps can go a long way in strengthening governance and building corruption free society:

- Money stashed in the Swiss banks is enormous – of the size of USD 19 – 20 trillion. Not taking immediate steps to bring this money back into the country is unpardonable. If brought back, this money can be optimally utilised to uplift the poor Indian community and can also be put to use for infrastructure and other developmental works of the country.
- Corruption needs to be nailed at the bottom level every day. New leadership against corruption needs to be built. Experience with e-governance in the state of Bihar, which has helped achieve impressive improvements in the delivery of public services is a great example of how things can be done correctly.
- Education from early stages is needed to help people and society to unshackle them from the mind-set that accepts and feeds corruption. Similarly, Public education will be an integral part of any effort to deepen the rule of law, and to improve transparency and accountability.
- Government officials across the entire public service sector should be better paid to reduce the incidences of bribe taking.

8. Result and Discussion

A plethora of literature has revealed that corruption is an obstacle to the development of democracies and the rule of law, thereby affecting the political leadership and

institutional legitimacy. It also erodes the fabric of society by generating environments that foster the violation of human rights. In a similar vein, corruption is a threat to good governance. The authors identified various obstacles while researching the issues and challenges that India faces in the battle against corruption. These encompass socio-economic disparities, intrinsic delays in the criminal justice system, hostile witnesses, weak economic stability, and so on. However, the key challenge confronting India is that of lack of competent leadership and management which appears to be a leading cause of corruption. Furthermore, inadequate economic stability, particularly in the setting of limited fiscal resources creates a sense of uneasiness in the minds of the public, encouraging them to engage in illegal and immoral behaviour, which breeds corruption.

To ensure a corruption free society, corruption should not only be viewed as a principal-agent but also as a collective action problem. To this end, the government should strengthen and empower anti-corruption agencies as well as monitor and evaluate their performance to improve their efficacy in the fight against corruption. Moreover, corrupt individuals, corrupt politicians, corrupt executives, and corrupt judges, who are currently receiving the most attention should be socially boycotted and blacklisted. They should not be permitted to serve in our holy, self-governing nation. This will help in establishing good governance and as such, the general public will enjoy the taste of life, freedom, and independence and India will continue to flourish and transform into a developed nation. All these desired changes can be achieved by establishing strong legislation with serious penalties and enforcing it properly. Countries like Kenya and China can be seen as a watershed in the resolve of the international community to fight corruption.

9. Conclusion

Corruption poses a great threat to the economic and political setup of any nation. This paper is an attempt to delve into the challenges faced by our country in the fight against corruption and suggests anti-corruption strategies to be devised and implemented by policy makers and civil society organisations to achieve a corruption free India. Among the key challenges faced by India are a lack of competent leadership and management, inherent delays in criminal justice system, hostile witnesses marked with lack of values, weak economic stability and so on. To fight against this menace, the authors suggest anti-corruption measures in terms of simplifying office procedures for disciplinary proceedings and making judiciary both independent and reliant. In other words, judiciary can fight against corruption by exhibiting impartiality, equality and diligence in the dispensation of the justice. Besides, central government need to collaborate and work together with

civil society and media to combat corruption practices prevailing in government offices. Moreover, system based policy driven governance practices need to be devised to allow poor citizens to avoid intermediaries in terms of receiving benefits under different government schemes.

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