CORRUPTION AND FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the issue of corruption, and does in the context of different forms of government. Using democracies as a reference point they are compared, using corruption as a measure, with each of the other forms of government. In the case of small states it was not possible to do an analysis as the Transparency website did not record their corruption score. In each case of governmental style: absolute monarchies, theocracies, dynasties, the most populous states, and countries with lesser attention to human rights. The overall results are that is no instance does the correlation between corruption and population reach statistical significance. With respect to corruption each comparison, of the form of government compared to democracies. This is also conservative in that it uses a two-tailed test, and is thus open to the possibility that the reverse could be true. It is concluded that when compared to democracies each of the other forms of government has a lesser corruption score, taking the mean difference and taking variance into account. This approach may commend itself to other researchers.
Keywords: Corruption, sovereign states, forms of government, types of government

1. INTRODUCTION: THE NATURE OF CORRUPTION

Corruption may be used to indicate a particular concept, or it can take on the air of abuse. To be called 'corrupt' is definitely pejorative, and leads us to consider the nature of what we have come to call 'corruption'. Transparency International defines corruption as '… the abuse of entrusted power for private gain'.

To these present authors this is fine as far as it goes, but one needs an extension of the definition. First, among such forms of corruption are (in alphabetical order):

- Abduction for ransom
- Abuse of power
- Blasphemy
- Bribery
- Conflict of interest
- Deceit
- Extortion
- Hypocrisy
- Misuse of power
- Physical abuse

What these have in common is that they are contrary to, at least, Western law, have elements of deceit, of elements of physical and political coercion, and of hypocrisy. Two examples that require an extension of the definition are hypocrisy and blasphemy respectively, and each have quite different problems associated with them. To further the advancement of the study of corruption it is proposed that an extension of the definition be offered. Where the Transparency definition is offered it is proposed that it be kept, with an addition. The new proposed definition for consideration is:

> 'The abuse of entrusted power for private gain, the total commitment to the rule of law, and the right to be critical'.

Without making assumptions, a recent paper by the Word Economic Forum examined the economic consequences of corruption (see References). They concluded that there is a two-way effect of bureaucratic corruption. They noted that a firm's performance may be or may not be) enhanced by bribery (the greasing-the-wheels phenomenon). The prospect of receiving such largesse may be one of the reasons why bribery does not disappear. They acknowledge that it could well be a restraint on growth. The authors of the WEF report do suggest that transparency of such interactions between business and public officials would help. They argued that any reduction in discretionary power for both would lower any gains from corruption, and could well lead to lowering any gains. It is worth noting that the economic consequences of corruption apply differentially to different businesses. Notwithstanding, it is noted that countries where corruption is rife do not, on average, fare nearly so well as non-corrupt countries – particularly the Scandinavian countries. Hale (2015) concluded that, as local politics differs so much, it is difficult to draw a conclusion). If that is the case then there would be no generalities, and hence no conclusions. It seems to the present writers a doctrine of despair. On a more positive note, Lambsdorff (1999) concluded that research on causes of corruption lays emphasis on the lack of competition, not having a policy on corruption prevention, distortions of policy, and salaries. Attention is also given to such issues as gender and on colonialism. One might ask if the various forms of government foster those factors.

Coming to more specific issues, there is a model of theocracy in which an analysis is proposed (Ferrero, 2013). Taking a supervised thesis there is the finding of Rahman (2013) where, among his conclusions is 'The key findings from this scrutiny are indicative that countries with greater prevalence of dynasty politics are associated with higher levels of corruption'.On getting wider perspectives there is the work of Alesina&Spolaore (2005), who adapt an historical view, and deals with the general consequences of the size of the population, as does the more recent work of Buchan & Hill (2014). At the philosophical level Parfit (2011) has given us a perspective from a philosopher's point of view. In an earthier frame of reference Temkin (1993) proposed equality is a potent ideal, and that one has obligations to the disadvantaged. It also addressed the fundamental question of when is one situation worse than another regarding inequality: the formal question is 'is one inequality worse than another'.Lederman et al (2005) had already shown that democracy, parliamentary traditions, political stability, and freedom of the press are all associated with lower *corruption*. What is particularly interesting is that they conclude that 'Additionally, common results of the previous empirical literature, related to openness and legal tradition, do not hold once political variables are taken into account'. This is an interesting conclusion.The paper by Vargas-Hernandez (2009) characterises corruption as being multi-faceted: the main categories being political, economic, and public administration. The paper goes on to provide examples. It makes the distinction between the broader reach of the political concept, and the narrower legal concept of bribery. The paper concludes that 'However, it is difficult to assess the overall levels of corruption phenomena based on empirical or perceived data which do not reflects the realities of corruption world'. One is not quite sure what it means to hold that the empirical facts do not always represent the realities of the corruption world.

Even so comprehensive a study as that of Heidenheimer & Johnston (2011) does not address the issue of satire and free speech, nor does it address hypocrisy and its effects from this standpoint – thus the present contribution. The pros and cons of the arguments for and against corruption are clearly outlined in Johnson's (2004) book: she does, however, conclude that 'Corruption does far more harm than any passing good obtained: Johnson goes on to provide evidence and argument.' We need to remind ourselves that this is so'. It was noted by Laurance (2004) that corruption is particularly prevalent in countries with a higher proportion of biodiversity. That is of particular concern as natural resources, animals, timber, oil, precious metals etc. are prone to corrupt management practices. Using cross-country data Goel& Nelson (2010) used about 100 nations, and thus made a distinct contribution to the historical, geographical and governmental determinants of corruption. They addressed two key issues: the effects of size and scope of governments for in relation to countries; and second, what are the historical and geographical factors that influence corruption. They were able to conclude, amongst other things, that governments have a distinct influence on corruption.The work by Rothstein (2011) addresses the issue, amongst other things, that poor quality governments have a deleterious effect on social and health welfare the opposite is yet to be established. That is to say, that good governance criteria are yet to be established with respect to their effectiveness. The theme of his work is about social capital, and trust. In a slightly different frame of reference Larmour&Wolanin (2001) quoted, with approval, the extant formula: monopoly + discretion – accountability = corruption. It points to the major variables indicative of corruption.

They went on to nominate five themes: internationalism, economic, a new interest, it is suspicious of state action, and the role of education & prevention is very important. One would take issue with only one of those themes, being suspicious of state action. The state may legislate to prevent the excesses of this paper, by Elbahnsasawy&Revier (2012), looked at the effect of corruption determinants varying, or not varying, over time. One of their prime conclusions is that the rule of law is an important determinant in minimising corruption. As they note, richer countries have lower corruption, as does free expression and accountability. They go on to outline some of the factors that are not important determinants of corruption (such as the provision of natural resources, and religious tradition). This is contrary to some previous findings, and bears further investigation.As Haidt (2012) has remarked, one cannot study the mind without studying culture, and one cannot study culture without studying psychology. He also noted that there are a cluster of moral themes, nominated which he nominated as Autonomy, Community, and Divinity. (p.99). Such themes need to be argued very closely.

Johnson (2004) compares four countries; the USA, Russia, India, and Israel and mentions the importance of whistleblowing. Table 8.1, listing varieties of incentives and target constituencies is seen as particularly valuable. The book is, basically, a moral argument against corruption.Nor does the work of Johnston (2014) canvas such issues as different types of government. There is no 'dynasty' or 'theocracy' listing in the Index, nor does it mention comparative government. Among the questions posed is the role of cartels, and the question of why is there so little corruption (Ch.2.p29). Table 8.1 on the varieties of incentives and target constituencies is seen as particularly valuable. Even so thorough a work as Rose-Ackerman &Palifka (2016) does not list a comparative study of the different kinds of government. The Index does not list such items as comparisons of different forms of government, nor theocracies, nor dynasties, etc. It lists cartels among the corruption entities, as it does for judicial corruption. The latest work on corruption (that of Rose-Ackerman &Palifka (2016)), in which the case is argued for institutional reform as an essential factor in mitigating the effects of corruption. This second edition encompasses the notions of the fall of the Berlin wall, the founding of Transparency International, changes to World Bank policy (see References on World Economic Forum), and an increase in globalisation generally.There are works that deal with issues in particular countries: instances are: Mitchell in 1996 (Japan); Butt (2012) in Indonesia; and De Waal (2015) on the Horn of Africa. Quite recently Pinker (2011) has argued, persuasively, on the diminution of violence over the centuries. One could parallel that by arguing that the growth of ethics over same relatively recent period has seen the growth of ethical concern.In addition to the economic consequences of corruption one might also be concerned at its moral qualities. It is noted that there are countries where it is endemic. Such places are, on the whole, less prosperous, unless they have a world-demand resource (such as oil). The most severe criticism of corruption practices is that it enhances disparities of income, and thus contributes to inequality. It is noted that the struggle for equality is a never-ending one, one of the most prominent of which is the universal franchise, particularly applicable to women. The diminution of violence, as outlined in Pinker's (2011) book, is one part of developing equality, another is those countries that foster equality appear to have happier and fulfilled populace, a third argument is that those countries which foster equality appear to

continually prosper. Taken collectively, all the arguments favouring equality appear to be connected to the absence of corruption.

We do need to recognise that some cultures have it so that it is endemic. One has to note, with satisfaction, that Shariah law does not permit the application of interest. With that precept in mind it is valuable to observe that those countries that adopted such practices weathered the GFC better than countries which did not follow the practice. Against this one might add that such nations practice bribery (which is not in Sharia law) but is a cultural effect. How those practices can be reconciled is an interesting proposition.

2. METHOD

The present approach is an attempt to further open a field of enquiry. To date there have been various studies, but this current presentation uses a comparative approach. The corruption scores of selected countries with different forms of government give the corruption scores as set out below. Two cautions will be noted. One is that the USA has been excluded from the comparison of democracies and most populous nations as it occurs in both, and is thus excluded from 'most populous nations'. The second caution is that a comparison was made between democracies and absolute monarchies. It was done by including and excluding the starred items, but made no difference to the outcome probability level.

Democracies

The standard democracies are as listed. The populations have a great range: the lowest is 5.5 million, and the largest is 324 million. The average corruption level averages 84, and ranges from 76 to 91. There is no statistically significant relationship between corruption and population.

Absolute monarchies

There are few remaining absolute monarchies in the world today. Those that are include Brunei, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Swaziland, and the United Arab Emirates. Of the six absolute monarchies the data show that the average corruption score is 57, short of the ideal of 100. Further, although Qatar is an absolute monarchy the head of state and the head of government are two different people.

Theocracies

This group consists in representative countries which have legal sanctions for either apostasy or for blasphemy. The average corruption score is 37.

Dynasties

These countries where the head of state is nominated, and does not consist of constitutional monarchies. The essential point is that the dynastic inheritor sets the acceptable parameters. In the case of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe has been president for 30 years, and has nominated his successor. The average corruption score is 35.

Most populated countries

The top nine countries of population were selected from the appropriate website. The average corruption level was 35. It will be noted that the USA was excluded from this analysis as it already appears in democracies, thus the n = 8 rather than 9.

States with lesser regard for human rights

The population ranges in size from the most populated country in the world (China- well over a billion at 1,382,323,332) to Turkmenistan at just over 5.4 million. It is clear, as mentioned, that population size has very little do with it. The corruption score for countries with a lesser regard for human rights is 23, which is distinctly low, and is confirmation that corruption and a lesser attention to attention to human rights are correlated.

The population size was collected because one hypothesis was to test was to see if population size bore any relationship to corruption (see data sources).

The corruption measure from was the Transparency website. The main examination was to see if corruption bore any relation to forms or style of government.

Of the 'small states' none had their corruption score listed on the Transparency website. As a result no further calculations were possible. The countries listed are given in Table 1:

3. RESULTS

Table 1a   Overall results

		2016 data				corr& pop	Signif of
		Corruption	Population	t value	probabilty	correl C&P	correlat
Democracy	Australia	79	24,641,662				
	Canada	83	36,626,083				
	Denmark	91	5,711,837				
	Finland*	90	5,541,274				
	Singapore*	85	5,784,538				
	Germany	81	80,636,124				
	New Zealand	88	4,604,871				
	UK	76	65,511,098				
	USA*	81	326,474,013				
	MEAN	**84**	**61,725,722**			**-0.399**	**ns**
Abslmonar	Brunei	58	434,448				
	Oman	45	4,741,305				
	Qatar	61	**2,338,085**				
	Saudi Arabia	46	32,742,664				
	Swaziland**	43	1,320,356				
	UAE	66	9,397,599				

	MEAN	**53**	**8,495,743**	**6.603**	**p < .001**	**-0.244**	**ns**

Most popul	Bangladesh	26	164,827,718				
	Brazil	40	**211,243,220**				
	China	40	1,388,232,693				
	India	40	1,342,512,706				
	Indonesia	37	263,510,146				
	Nigeria	28	191,835,936				
	Pakistan	32	196,744,376				
	Russia	29	143,375,006				
	USA	*74*	*326,474,013*				
	MEAN	**38**	**469,861,757**	**16.749**	**p < .001**	**0.155**	**ns**

Theocrsy	Afghanistan	15	34,169,169				
	Brunei	58	434,448				
	Mauritania	27	4,266,448				
	Pakistan	32	196,744,376				
	Qatar	61	2,338,085				
	Saudi Arabia	46	32,742,664				
	Sudan	14	42,166,323				
	UAE	66	9,397,599				
	Yemen	14	28,119,546				
	MEAN	**37**	**38,930,962**	**6.867**	**p < .001**	**-0.266**	**ns**

Dynasties	Bahrein	43	1,418,895				
	Brunei	58	434,448				
	Morocco	37	35,241,418				
	North Korea	12	25,405,296				
	Oman	45	4,741,305				
	Saudi Arabia	46	32,742,664				
	Swaziland	43	1,320,356				
	Syria	13	18,906,907				
	Zimbabwe	22	16,337,760				
	MEAN	**35**	**15,172,117**	**9.647**	**p < .001**	**-0.429**	**ns**

Lesser. Rts	China	40	1,388,232,693				

Egypt	34	95,215,102				
Libya	14	6,408,742				
North Korea	12	25,405,296				
Saudi Arabia	46	32,742,664				
Somalia	10	11,391,962				
Syria	13	18,906,907				
Sudan	14	42,166,323				
Turkmentn	22	5,502,586				
MEAN	**23**	**180,663,586**	**14.717**	**p < .001**	**0.498**	**ns**

	Not avail from TI.	2014 data only available
**	Swaziland data taken from	http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Swaziland/transparency_corruption/

http://www.photius.com/rankings/2016/population/population_2016_0.html

Table 1b

Country	What do these countries have in common		
N.Korea	Lesser rights	Dynasty	
Somalia	Lesser rights		
Libya	Lesser rights		
Sudan	Lesser rights		Theocracy
Syria	Lesser rights	Dynasty	
Turkmnstn	Lesser rights		
Afghanstn			Theocracy
Yemen			Theocracy
Zimbabwe		Dynasty	

Six of the nine nations had lesser rights
Three of the nine were dynastic
Three of the nine were theocratic

It will be seen from the data that in each case of type of government there was no significant relationship between population size and level of corruption. Democracies corruption measure was used as the reference point, and was compared, using Student's 't' to each of the other forms of government. In each case the comparison showed a significant increase in corruption, the 't' tests showing that, taking variance into account, there is a significant increase. Even though a two-tailed test was used that results (conservatively)

were statistically significant. In each case democracies had better scores than did any other form of government. The results appear in summary form in Table 1. Additionally it will be seen that the worst corruption scores were selected by country, and an attempt made to see if any form of government predominated.

In the event six of the nine countries had a lesser concern with human rights: three of them were theocracies; and three of them were dynasties. In two cases the lesser concern for human rights also yielded a dynasty; and one combined a lesser concern with human rights with a theocracy.

4. DISCUSSION

Among the issues of corruption is that of considering the relationship of culture to corruption, the inconsistencies that affect attitudes to corruption, and the role of blasphemy. The type of government (absolute monarchies, theocracies, dynasties, the most populous states, and countries with a lesser regard for human rights. The relationships of corruption to each of these forms of government was outlined in Rothstein's book (2011).
An examination of the corruption data showed, in numerical form, the corruption index for each type. The ideal score is 100 = no corruption: 0 = total corruption. The clear conclusions here are:

- The relationship between population size and corruption is not significant on any analysis.

- Using the selected democracies corruption perception index each of the stated differences as between other forms of government are statistically significant.

- With respect to corruption the democracies have a distinctly better record compared to countries, particularly for those with a lesser concern for human rights countries.

- Absolute monarchies seem to function relatively well, of the selected forms of government they are second only to democracies.

- Theocracies rank third with respect to less corruption.

- Dynasties rank fourth with respect to corruption.

- Countries with a lesser concern for human rights rank bottom of this list.

- It is noted that population size, as such, appears to bear no relationship to corruption.

This kind of comparative study may commend itself to those concerned with the issue of corruption and forms of government. In an ideal world one would look at all nations, and to categorise them. It is thus that one would have a better determination. What is put forward here is an attempt to outline the problem.

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