GLOBAL CORRUPTION INDEXES: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Concerns about corruption have prompted organizations such as Transparency International, the World Bank, and Freedom House to develop some key indicators using a variety of methods, as well as other equally important indicators. The construction of indexes, on the other hand, differs, posing concerns about the global corruption indices' implementations and challenges. This study examines whether these indices are effective and useful and elaborates on some discussions about them. In this context, the World Bank, Corruption Index, Freedom House and Transparency International indicators are subjected to a comprehensive review of how they work, their methodologies, sources of financing, reporting frequencies, motivations and global reach. In this study, special attention is paid to Measurement of Corruption, Utilization of Corruption Indices and Challenges of Global Corruption Indices. The paper concludes that despite the challenge of measuring corruption, it still is a reality with negative impact on different countries. While international measures of corruption may contribute positively to the welfare and democracy level of some countries, they can have extremely negative consequences for others as well. Although they are seen as a useful framework that opens the door to a global awareness, the political spirit behind the corruption assessments should never be overlooked.

Keywords: *Global Corruption Indexes, Measurement of Corruption, Utilization of Corruption Indices, Anti-Corruption.*

KÜRESEL YOLSUZLUK ENDEKSLERİ: ELEŞTİREL BİR DEĞERLENDİRME

Öz

Yolsuzlukla ilgili endişeler; Uluslararası Şeffaflık Örgütü, Dünya Bankası ve Freedom House gibi kuruluşları, çeşitli yöntemlerin yanı sıra eşit derecede önemli diğer bazı göstergeleri kullanarak temel bazı göstergeler geliştirmeye sevk etmiştir. Bununla birlikte endekslerin yapısı farklılık göstermekte ve küresel yolsuzluk

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endekslerinin uygulamaları ve zorlukları hakkında endişeler yaratmaktadır. Bu çalışma, söz konusu endekslerin etkili ve kullanışlı olup olmadığını incelemekte ve endeksler etrafındaki bazı tartışmalara yer vermektedir. Bu çerçevede, Dünya Bankası, Yolsuzluk Endeksi, Freedom House ve Uluslararası Şeffaflık göstergelerinin, nasıl çalıştıkları, metodolojileri, finansman kaynakları, raporlama sıklıkları, motivasyonları ve küresel erişimleri kapsamlı bir incelemeye tabi tutulmaktadır. Çalışmada; Yolsuzluk Ölçümü, Yolsuzluk Endekslerinin Kullanımı ve Küresel Yolsuzluk Endekslerinin Zorlukları konularına özel bir önem atfedilmiştir. Çalışma, yolsuzluğun ölçülmesindeki zorluklara rağmen, bunun hala farklı ülkeler üzerinde olumsuz etkileri olan bir gerçek olduğu sonucuna varmaktadır. Uluslararası yolsuzluk önlemleri bazı ülkelerin refah ve demokrasi düzeyine olumlu katkıda bulunurken, diğerleri için de son derece olumsuz sonuçlar doğurabilir. Her ne kadar küresel bir bilince kapı aralayan faydalı bir çerçeve olarak görülseler de yolsuzluk değerlendirmelerinin arkasındaki politik ruh asla gözden kaçırılmamalıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Küresel Yolsuzluk Endeksleri, Yolsuzluk Ölçümü, Yolsuzluk Endekslerinin Kullanımı, Yolsuzlukla Mücadele.*

Introduction

Corruption has changed from a largely national and regional concern to a global revolutionary force epidemic. The social backlash against corruption, like a firestorm, has erupted through the global political system in less than a decade (Glenn et al, 1997 cited in Newell, 2018). Corruption is a dynamic social, political and economic phenomenon which is widespread to varying degrees in all states (Rohwer, 2009). Most governments and top-level officials have fallen as a result of corruption scandals. Notably, Mexico in 1997, fired the top law drug-enforcement officer for taking bribes and subsequently shut down the department because of corruption; the Leader of Ukraine waged a war on corruption once again; PM Li Peng of China complained that his country had been losing ground in its corruption battle; Endemic corruption was declared by South Korean President Kim Young; Anatoly Kulikov, the Russian Interior Minister vowed to fight corruption and the "gray economy"; The electorate of Pakistan, disillusioned by perceptions of widespread corruption, remained in droves away from the elections and Washington public schools were suspected to be fraught of nepotism and cronyism. Corruption scandals have also led to the decline in government effectiveness in India, Italy, Brazil, and Ecuador in recent years. The long-established ruling parties have been weakened, including the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and the Mexican Institutional Revolutionary Party. The number, range and relevance of corruption cases in countries indicates both the complexity of this problem and its seriousness as a global problem. When corruption is endemic and unchecked, it thwarts economic growth and threatens democratic authority. Less pervasive forms result in wasted resources, greater resource sharing disparity, less electoral competitiveness, and greater government mistrust. Creating and leveraging high-level political bribery resources often raises government expenditures, distorts the distribution of government

spending, and can dangerously decrease the efficiency of infrastructure (Elliott, 2002).

As part of the global effort to curb corruption, the need for international anti-corruption regulation in transnational business activities has been discussed by the UN; however, beyond the development studies, agreements and guidelines, no attempt has been made to harmonize regulatory and anti-corruption policies. There has been a surge of interest in the development and implementation of governance metrics over the past three decades: Now there are about 140 user-accessible collections of governance metrics, containing practically thousands of individual indicators (Arndt & Oman, 2006). Over the last decade, the number of metrics based on evaluating corruption has increased exponentially. They vary from some of the more developed and commonly used measures such as the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) of Transparency International (TI) and the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) to a more modern generation of assessment and appraisal instruments such as the Global Corruption Barometer of TI and the Global Integrity Index of Global Integrity. The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), released by Transparency International every year, is by far the most popular index of this kind (TI) (UNDP, 2008).

The indices mentioned above are quantitative aggregates and the main goals behind the indicators are to raise public awareness, to enable statistical analysis to better understand and resolve the problem, and to support governments in their efforts to fight corruption. These corruption indexes face major challenges and raise special concern about their relevance for most countries around the world (Kolstad, Fritz and O'Neil, 2008). Although wide-ranging measures are useful to educate policy discourse and to allow quantitative analysis into the causal chains of corruption, they alone are not adequate to inform donors of their organizational practices in the field of governance and anti-corruption. More comprehensive qualitative knowledge is therefore required, both to assist with the validation of quantitative indices and, more specifically, to support particular anti-corruption operations.

So far, however, the qualitative evidence required to advise organizational work has remained scarcer. To date, there are few mechanisms available to gather such data in a comprehensive manner. Fact-based indexes, such as the Global Integrity Index, in particular, may come to conclusions that are very distinct from 'perception-based' tests. Perception-based indices are better at capturing 'how things really work'; in this sense, fact-based tests can be deceptive since they are overly oriented on the structured administrative setting world (Kolstad, Fritz and O'Neil, 2008).

Again, the wide definition of corruption is one concern in the measurement of aggregated corruption indices. What the corruption indexes really tell us is uncertain since the forms of corruption and their importance differ from country to country (Thompson and Shah, 2008, 8). According to Transparency International, the initial goal of the perception-based indicator is to raise awareness of corruption and to provide clearer evidence for

researchers to examine the causes and effects of corruption (Knack, 2006, 16). The concern is that multiple types of corruption are present. In addition to the problem that it is not really clear what actually determines any of the various indicators used in the aggregated indexes, there is the problem that different forms of corruption are calculated by these different indicators. The Country Policy and Institutional Assessment of the World Bank, for example, questions about inadequate investigations, conflicts of interest, initiatives skewed against limited interests, corruption-affected policies and public services redirected to private benefit, while the World Economic Forum asks about the volume of bribes charged (Lambsdorff, 2008). Therefore, since sources measuring two various facets of corruption are averaged together, it is unclear what precisely the CPI and WGI are measuring.

It is against this backdrop that this paper aims to discuss the effectiveness of these indexes, through elaborating on some controversies around them. The paper is developed into five sections; the first part reflects on the general problem of corruption globally then the emergence of national and international corruption index lists. The second part discusses Corruption indices and the actors involved, the third part explores Measurement of corruption by these corruption indicators, the fourth and fifth part examine Utilization of Corruption Indices and the global challenges respectively.

1. ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD

Fighting corruption has become one of the dominant international themes in today's world. The perception of corruption as a problem at the center of both national and transnational networks of political relations has led to an increase in global consciousness and awareness in this area. Corruption, which is accepted as a transnational crime with the 8th article of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, signed by many countries, constitutes one of the main agenda items of today's international society. Again in this context, the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on Anti-Corruption (COSP), established by Article 63 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, is an important policy guide to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for the development and implementation of anti-corruption activities, which continues its activities as an international decision-making body (UNCAC, 2020). One of the important developments observed in this field is that, as a product of the awareness and struggle understanding at the UN level, supreme audit institutions have also started to take an active role in the fight against corruption in the national and international arena. The fight against corruption is not within the direct mandate and jurisdiction of SAIs. However, the fact that the main purpose of SAIs, the duty of auditing the revenues and expenditures of the state, also has a critical effect in detecting and deterring corruption in the public sector, has become a global theme that is increasingly emphasized in the international arena.

The concept of corruption, which has become one of the popular topics of global politics, cannot be handled independently of the globalization process with its economic, cultural and political aspects. With globalization, corruption has rapidly moved away from being a national and generally cultural problem and has started to come to the fore as an economic, political and global problem. "There are many factors that have led to the emergence of this trend and are largely linked to the globalization process. First of all, the globalization process has changed or diversified the parties that lead to corruption activities. When the corruption activities between individuals, companies and government institutions at the national level reached a global scale, it started to occur between individuals, firms, non-governmental organizations, international financial institutions, multinational companies, non-governmental organizations and states. Cross-border illegal activities, terrorist financing, mafia and money laundering help to internationalize this problem. The involvement of multinational companies in economic activities all over the world and the internationalization of economic activities on a wider scale have increased global competition and increased the demands of such companies affected by corruption to put pressure on the countries where corruption is present" (Aktan, 2019:2).

Undoubtedly, the worldwide movement in favor of increased accountability reflects a growing democratic assertiveness in the world. As a result of this, we witness an increased community participation in today's policymaking processes. However, we should also note that this fact brings additional burdens and aporias on the issue of corruption as well. In the analysis of the definition, nature and effectiveness of the international corruption indices, which we will discuss below, it should be kept in mind that corruption assessments have political implications and can be used as a very effective intervention instrument in global power struggles.

2. CORRUPTION INDICES, WHICH ACTORS ARE INVOLVED

An overview of selected international indexes of corruption is given in this section. Three main indexes; namely, the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, and Freedom House Nations in Transit Index.

2.1. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)

The Transparency International is a transnational advocacy network established in 1993. Its core objective is to "To curb corruption by mobilizing a global coalition to promote and strengthen international and national integrity systems." TI aims to do so by enabling policymakers to create and enforce successful anti-corruption programmes, regulations, and policies. Its emphasis at this point is to improve the openness and accountability of government activities, in particular government procurement, and to shift the

moral and ethical mindset of the public. Organizationally, TI comprises of a global secretariat in Berlin and an ever-expanding number of national chapters-from about 50 in 1995 to over 100 in 2000. National chapters of TI also form partnerships with other NGOs, such as churches and human rights groups, whose aims coincide with it. To optimize funding from multiple actors, TI emphasizes rather different facets of corruption. Second, TI describes its goal as one of steadily reforming national and international processes to make them more accountable and less corruption-friendly. It is far from disclosing specific instances of corruption. It is far from disclosing specific instances of corruption. National chapters are encouraged to observe TP guiding principles of non-investigative work and freedom from political agendas of government, commerce, and partisanship. Thus, TI appears not to be seen as threatening any country, company, or individual. They exchange data and experience with governmental anti-corruption agencies and education organizations in place. Providing such information to the public is a significant component of TFs policy to shift attitudes against corruption (Wang and Rosenau, 2001).

The most noticeable undertaking of TI is probably its Corruption Perception Index (CPI). The CPI is not an objective measurement of corruption in different countries, as TI is careful to point out. It is a "composite index", a survey of polling, drawing on data related to corruption from analyst and industry studies performed by a range of credible and reliable organizations (Kubik and Linch, 2013:304). According to analysts and business people, the CPI evaluates 180 countries and territories by their alleged rate of public sector abuse. A scale of zero to 100 is used, where zero is incredibly corrupt and 100 is very clean. (Transparency International, 2020).

Chart 1. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index
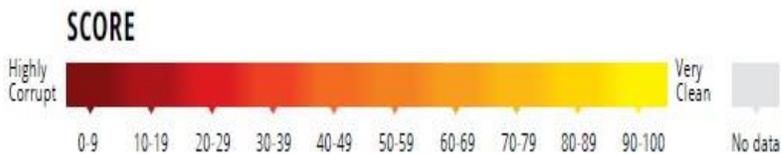
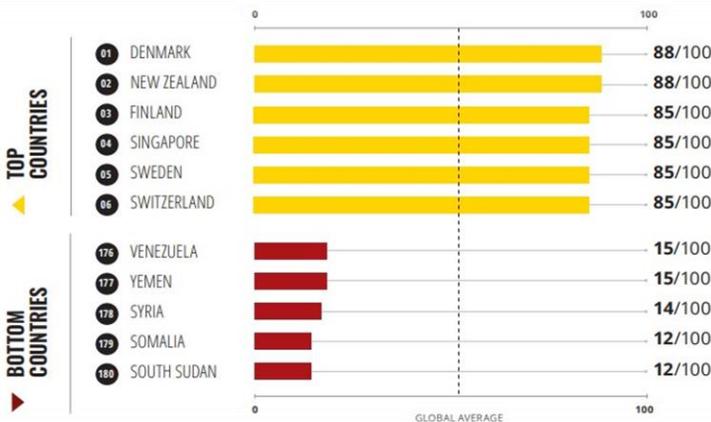**Source:** *Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (2019).*

Some major changes were made to the methodology in 2012, after a thorough evaluation process. The method used to combine multiple data sources has been streamlined and now contains only data from each data source for one year. Crucially, this approach would make it easier to measure scores over time, which was generally not methodologically feasible. From 2012 onwards, year on year correlations would be possible.

For measuring the CPI, the following steps are followed:

a. Choose sources of data: The CPI is an aggregate metric that draws together information from a range of outlets. To qualify as a source for the Corruption Perceptions Index, each data source needs to meet the following criteria:

• Quantifies public sector corruption perceptions,

• Based on a reliable and effective methodology that grades and rates several states on the same scale,

• Performed and expected to be conducted periodically by a reputable organization,

• Enable ample difference in scores to differentiate between nations.

b. Standardize data sources on a 0-100 scale where a 0 is equivalent to the highest perceived corruption level and a 100 is equal to the lowest perceived corruption level. This is achieved by subtracting and dividing the mean of the data set by the standard deviation which resulting in z-scores, which are then calibrated to have an average of about 45 and a standard deviation of about 20 so that the data set matches the 0-100 range of the CPI.

c.Compute the average: For a nation or region to be included in the CPI, the state must be assessed by a minimum of 3 sources. The CPI score of a nation is then determined as the average of all the available standardized scores for that country.

Report the uncertainty measurement: The CPI is supplemented by a standardized score-related error and confidence interval, which captures the difference in the scores of available data sources for that country/Territory (Transparency International, 2012).

Chart 2. Corruption Perception Index

Source: *Corruption Perception Index (2020).*

2.2. World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators: Control of Corruption

Six governance metrics have been developed by the World Bank Institute and the Research Development of the World Bank since 1996. Corruption regulation, assessing the perception of corruption, are the six aspects of governance. The World Bank Institute began a long-standing study initiative on Governance Indicators in the late 1990s (Apaza, 2009). Virtually no globally equivalent transparency or corruption measures existed at the time (IBRD/World Bank, 2006). Since 1996, with the assistance of Pablo Zoido-Lobaton and Massimo Mastruzzi, Daniel Kaufman and Aart Kraay have been creating six Worldwide Indicators (WGI) governance indicators, which are now available every two years since 1996 and every five years between 2002 and 2006. The sources are chosen to represent individuals, business owners, researchers, and specialists from the public, corporate, and non-governmental sectors from around the world, and the standard methodology is adopted (World Bank, 2011). The WGI data itself is a composite index of data organized by an aggregation method. Since 1996, the WGI has reached more than two hundred countries and territories, evaluating six governance dimensions: "voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, effectiveness of government, regulatory quality, rule of law, and corruption control" (Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A. and Mastruzzi, M. (2011).

In their Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) initiative, researchers at the World Bank followed the basic methodology of the TI CPI, but tried to improve it in many ways (Kaufmann et al. 1999 cited in Rohwer, 2009). Over the period 1996 to 2008, this project publishes aggregate and individual governance metrics for 212 countries and territories. The aggregate indicators combine the views of a large number of respondents in industrial and developing countries from companies, citizens and expert surveys. The aggregate metrics blend the opinions of a broad number of respondents in developed and developing countries from companies, residents and expert polls. A wide number of survey institutes, think tanks, non-governmental organisations, and multinational organizations build on the individual data sources underlying the composite metrics. The World Bank began by compiling current awareness metrics to generate one of the six elements, such as Control of Corruption. They used only those perception indexes which contain, from their point of view, useful information for evaluating the quality of corruption control in different countries. The Control of Corruption indicator applies to 25 outlets with 40 indicators in the 2009 version of WGI. The World Bank uses an "Unobserved Component Model (UCM) to aggregate the various responses to six broad clusters" (Kaufmann et al. 2009:98; Arndt and Oman 2006). This particular model is used to take into account the fact that corruption is not detectable on its own, and only by aggregating the scores from given measures can one estimate it. The aggregation of the various sources used takes place more specifically in 5 stages:

- In the Control of Corruption cluster, all indicators from the same source are merged into a single indicator. In order to generate a single source number, the World Bank uses a plain, un-weighted average of all the existing indicators that it uses from a source. As a consequence, in the Control of Corruption cluster, we have as many metrics as sources.

- In order to assess whether the source encompasses a broad enough number of countries in various income groups and regions to identify representative sources, each of the developed indicators has now been rescaled. For the Control of Corruption composite measure, nine out of the 25 sources used in 2009 are listed as representative.

- The World Bank aggregates these representative references into a Regulation of Corruption preliminary composite measure. Based on the frequency of their correlation with one another, the multiple representative sources are weighted. More specifically, the weight applied to the numbers from each source is inversely proportional to its error variance compared to the other sources used to create the indicator, so that the smaller the expected error variance of the source is and the greater the weight is, the more similarly the numbers from one source correspond with those of other sources.

- In order to achieve estimates of the error variances of these sources (i.e., the other 16 sources used to derive the Control of Corruption composite indicator), the World Bank regresses non-representative sources to the previously measured composite indicator. The same weighting method as in phase 3 is used here by the World Bank. Non-representative references are used since the attenuation bias imparted by the calculation error is corrected in the preliminary composite indicator projections in step 3 (Arndt and Oman 2006, 107).

- Finally, all the metrics, representative and non-representative, are built on by new indicators. Based on that, new figures for the real degree of corruption control for each nation can be determined.

Each of the composite measures is developed by Kaufmann et al. (2009) in such a way that the resulting projections of governance estimates have an average value (across countries) of zero and a standard deviation (across countries) of one. This suggests that nearly all ratings are between-2.5 and 2.5, with higher ratings leading to better performances. This methodological characteristic of the aggregate indicators also means that their scales are essentially random and that they cannot be consistently used over time to track changes in government levels (Arndt and Oman2006,61), but are descriptive about changes in the relative roles of individual countries over time, according to Kaufmann et al. (2009, 15). There is an expectation that global governance averages are zero in each cycle, as a convenient choice of units (Kaufmann et al. 2009, 22).

2.3. The Freedom House Nation in Transit Index

The Nations in Transit reports (NIT) compiled by Freedom House falls under the Expert Assessment category of corruption measure. The NIT is publicly accessible and publishes more information on its sources, measurement criteria and survey methods (Kubik and Linch, 2013). Freedom House is a non-governmental organisation based in the US that performs studies on democracy, democratic freedom and human rights and advocacy. Freedom House publishes articles and analyses on a variety of primary subjects pertaining to democracy, human rights and civil liberties. The offices of the company are in Washington, D.C. and the research activities are in New York City. It still has over a dozen field offices around the globe. "Freedom House's non-partisan Board of Trustees is comprised of prominent business and labour leaders, former diplomats and senior government officials, scholars, and journalists". Freedom House depends on funds from the US federal government and donations from private corporations, foundations and citizens. A large percentage of the annual budget is given by the US government. The financing for Nations in Transit comes from the US International Development Agency. "In the 29 formerly communist countries from Central Europe to Central Asia, Nations in Transit examines "democracy," analysing seven categories: "National Democratic Governance, Local Democratic Governance, Electoral Process, Independent Media, Civil Society, Judiciary Framework and Independence, and Corruption" (Freedom House, 2020).

The 2014 Country Reports in Nations in Transit adopt an essay structure that helped the writers of the study to provide a detailed overview of the progress of democratic reform in their expert country. Freedom House "provided them with guidelines for ratings and a checklist of questions covering seven categories: electoral process, civil society, independent media, national democratic governance, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence, and corruption". In order to provide readers with more comprehensive and nuanced coverage of these two critical topics, Freedom House launched separate analysis and ratings for national democratic governance and local democratic governance beginning with the 2005 edition. The scores for all categories reflect the agreement of Freedom House, the advisers to Nations in Transit, and the writers of the study. The NIT index of corruption look at public perceptions of corruption, the business interests of top policymakers, laws on financial disclosure and conflict of interest, and the efficacy of anticorruption initiatives.

In consultation with the study authors, a panel of academic advisors, and a committee of regional expert reviewers, Freedom House has issued numerical scores in the seven categories mentioned above for all 29 states in Nations in Transit. The scores are based on a 1 to 7 scale, with 1 indicating the highest level of democratic development and 7 the lowest. A quarter-point scale accompanies the scores. Usually, minor to moderate changes involve a positive or negative change of a quarter point (0.25), while major

developments require a half point change (0.25). (0.50). More than half a point in a single year is unusual for either group to fluctuate. There are four steps in the ratings process for Nations in Transit:

- Preliminary scores are recommended by the authors of individual country studies in all seven categories covered by the review, ensuring that substantial data is presented when a score change is proposed.
- Every draft report is then submitted to a variety of regional expert reviews, who include input in the report's text on both the improvement in score and the consistency of its justification.
- The institutional advisory board of Freedom House reviews and assesses all ratings over the course of a two-day meeting.
- Report authors are given the right to challenge by more than 0.50 points any changed ranking that varies from the original.

On the basis of political purposes or laws alone, Nations in Transit does not rank states per se, nor does it rate countries. Instead, the ratings of a nation are calculated by considering the realistic impact of state and nongovernmental actors on the rights and freedoms of a person. NIT rating, which cannot be taken as absolute indicators of a country's condition, are useful in making a general evaluation of the democratic or authoritarian existence of a country. They also allow the comparative study of reforms between the countries studied and the analysis of long-term trends in a given country to be carried out Freedom House (2014).

3. MEASUREMENT OF CORRUPTION

The broad concept of corruption is one issue with measuring corruption. While the word 'corruption' generally refers to the abuse of authority by elected authorities or public employees in order to achieve personal gains, new and different meanings have arisen over the last few decades (Andvig et al, 2000; Huberts et al 2006 and Sampford, 2006). The definition of the harm involved in corruption is the basic disagreement between indicator providers: The World Bank (WB) describes corruption as the abuse of public office for private benefit (WGI, 2013). Corruption is conceptualized by Transparency International (TI) as "abuse of entrusted power" (Transparency International, 2013). The United Nations has simplified the differences relating only to "abuse of power for private gain'" (UN, 2004). As a result, the biggest distinction applies to the "type of sector, public or private, affected by corruption". The meaning given by TI and Lambsdorff refers to 'the private gain measure of public power' which relates to the receiving of money or valued properties, but may also include power or status increases' (Lambsdorff, 2007). For the World Bank, corruption includes "both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as the 'capture' of the state by elites and private interests" (WGI, 2013). "what counts as corruption in one part of the world, is understood similarly elsewhere".

What the corruption indexes really tell us remains uncertain since the forms of corruption and their importance differ from one country to another (Thompson and Shah, 2008: 8). The initial goal of their perception-based metric, according to TI, was to raise awareness of corruption and provide researchers with better data to examine the causes and effects of corruption (Knack, 2006, 16). According to Thompson and Shah (2005: 7), the extent of corruption in a country may depend on the frequency of corrupt acts, the number of bribes paid or the benefits generated by contractors through corruption. As indicated by Andviget et al. (2000), "Bribery, embezzlement, fraud, and bribery" are the four main categories of corruption.

- Bribery is understood in a corrupt arrangement as the reward (in money or kind) that is given or taken. Kickbacks, commercial transactions, and pay-offs are all words that can be used to describe bribery. These are all forms of bribes concerning the payment of money or favors to private-sector workers, government officers, and legislators.
- Extortion is the use of intimidation, abuse or threatening to use force to obtain money and other services.
- Embezzlement is abuse of resources, e.g., when disloyal workers loot from their bosses, from persons who are responsible for handling them. From a purely legal standpoint, it is not called corruption, but it is used in a wider definition.
- It includes the exploitation or fabrication by public officials of information, evidence and knowledge for their own benefit.

Another way to categorize various kinds of corruption is to split it into petty and grand corruption. On the one hand, petty corruption is characterized as corruption that exists on a daily basis in the street. It happens as people communicate with low-to-mid-level government officials in situations such as hospitals, schools, police forces, and other bureaucratic bodies. The amount of money involved is limited, and it mainly involves people (and disproportion-ably the poor; UNDP 2008, 8). Grand corruption, on the other hand, takes place at the conclusion of policy formulation in politics. It applies to the extent at which it happens (where laws and regulations can be affected unfairly), rather than the amount of money involved. Normally, the forms of transactions that attract great corruption are broad in scale. Great corruption is often used to synonymize political corruption.

In addition to the problem that it is not really clear what actually determines any of the various indicators used in the aggregated indexes, there is the problem that different forms of corruption are calculated by these different indicators. The World Bank's Country Policy and Structural Evaluation, for example, inquire about ineffective audits, conflicts of interest, policies that favour limited interests, policies impacted by corruption, and public services manipulated for private benefit, while the World Economic Forum inquire about the amount of bribes charged (Lambsdorff, 2008). Therefore, since sources measuring such various facets of corruption are

averaged together, it is not clear what precisely for instance, the CPI and WGI are measuring. Depending on the scale used by the various corruption index, a country is considered to be corrupt by the number obtained during the survey. For example; on a CPI's scale of zero to 100, a country that obtains zero is incredibly corrupt and 100 is very clean. On the WGI scores lie between – 2.5 and 2.5, with higher scores corresponding to better outcomes. On a NIT scale of 1 to 7, country with 1 is considered being clean, and 7 the most corrupt.

4. UTILIZATION OF CORRUPTION INDICES

4.1. Governments Reactions

The report or publications from the corruption indices discussed have yielded countries' reactions in terms of policy-making, acceptance or rejections of such reports from countries unsatisfied with their positions on the various corruption indicators. For instance, the annual publication of the CPI by TI creates a lot of media interest, drawing public attention to the corruption issue, as well as to TI itself. Understandably, low ranking (meaning considered to be corrupt) governments of states are critical of TI. Cameroon's government released a statement firmly criticizing the ranking. Also, Argentina's President Menem, who ranked sixty-first out of eight-five nations, also dismissed the TIs Ranking, saying that the results were politically driven. Governments all over the world, whether they like it or not, pay heed to the rankings. All the corruption initiatives were particularly sensitive to the suspicion and hostility of developing countries towards foreign imposition. "For Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia argues that "if you sell them, we can't take bribes. that "we can't take bribes unless you offer them." In reaction, Eigen released a caution against concentrating in the developing world on corruption: "Corruption is perceived to be greatest there, but I urge the public to recognize that a large share of the corruption is the explicit product of multinational corporations, headquartered in the leading industrialized countries, using massive bribery and kickbacks to buy contracts in the developing world and the countries in transition" (Eigen, 2005). TI is currently working on a bribery-propensity index to assess which countries have "bribe-paying companies" (Wang, and Rosenau, 2001).

4.2. Policy-Making and Political Implications of Corruption Measurement

An assumption of the corruption model, which is linked to the notion of the central importance of calculation, is the conviction that the measurement of corruption, among other governance metrics, can be converted into policy. Their role is to guide the successful creation and evaluation of policies. As Weber (2007: 45) argued, "Corruption measures" are fundamentally policy instruments. Their role is to guide the successful creation and evaluation of policies. Undoubtedly, the CPI has contributed to

putting corruption on the global agenda, generating pressure across countries for change and shaping the actions of states, companies, civil society groups and mass media (Eigen, 2005; Financial Times, 2004; Transparency International, 2006). The relationship between measurement and policy formulation can be seen in stages: measurements create stimuli and inform policies globally, national political leadership is then convinced to enact policies, and these policies are reformed in the institutional structures (the rules of the game). The concept specifically expects compliance with the suggested policies to lead to a better record in the current ranks, indexes and corruption indicators for these countries. Rose-Ackerman (1999) and Kaufman (1997) outline government changes that have been motivated or triggered by corruption indices as a result of the relatively high profile of such indices to minimize perceived corruption. Kaufman's findings include the implementation of total liberalization through legislative changes; macroeconomic deregulation; tax, administration, and expenditure reform; structural reform; regulatory reform; and reform of the public service, including an enhanced pay structure with sufficient wage benefits and enforceable punishments for malfeasance. Recommendations by Rose-Ackerman to eliminate benefits and raise costs for corrupt behaviour include the abolition of anti-corruption programs; privatization; public program reform; regulatory reform; regulation of anti-corruption regulations and procurement processes. Some of these reforms have in many ways worked. Examples of their success are the Czech Republic and other pioneers of the post-communist change. The anti-corruption policy of the Fox administration in Mexico was focused on the country's success in the CPI (Weber, 2007). The pledge by South Korea to achieve a top-ten spot by 2007, after being ranked 50 in 2003 (Financial Times, 2004), is the signal value given to the ranking. In reality, Korea made a huge leap in the 2005 CPI (from 47 in 2004 to 40 in 2005), and TI Korea and the Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption hailed this achievement (KICAC) (Wang and Rosenau, 2001).

4.3. Institutional Innovativeness

The effectiveness of the Corruption Indices is attributed to its potential to include creative systemic frameworks to help tackle corruption. As TI has learned, the North, for example, is a significant center of opposition to the anti-corruption campaign. Although it is in the interests of many northern firms not to have to pay bribes, they believe that if they fail to pay bribes, their rivals will get contracts and jobs. This is a common example of the "Prisoners Dilemma". The model of "islands of integrity" by TI gives a valuable response to this problem. This model is meant to eliminate corruption in a single market with few rivals. Abuse with a small range of rivals in a single market. It is most important to major capital programs funded by the government, in which corruption has become the most severe. The model has been used in a few Latin American programs since its introduction in 1993. It has recently been approved by a number of African national and local governments. The model

is now funded by the World Bank and other major developed-country corporations. The "islands of integrity" framework was developed to assist governments and corporations in preventing corruption. It demands that all public tender applicants and the government that issues it sign a pact obliging all competitors to refrain from corrupt practices. If the deal is breached, the violators face fines such as losing their contract, being held liable for damages (to the government and competing bidders), and losing their bid security. Corrupt businesses will also be excluded from potential government enterprises. Accrediting government departments and businesses that refrain from corrupt practices is a related tool by which national chapters hope to affect government and company activities (Wang and Rosenau, 2001).

4.4. Adoption by Loan and Aid Givers

Generally, in their investment decisions, investors and foreign banks increasingly use governance measures, and the less mature the economy is, the more relevant these indicators seem to be (Arndt and Oman, 2006). According to Jens Andvig (2005), if perception indexes are used to direct donor assistance allocations to the poorest nations, this could lead to a worsening of inequalities in the private investment cycle. As a result, for developing countries in need of loans, their CPI ranking may have profound consequences. As part of an increased emphasis on fostering good governance to combat poverty and corruption, aid agencies now use the measure. Notably, TI admits that the recent decline in Bangladesh's foreign direct investment could be attributed to the country's position at the foot of the standings since 2001 (Financial Times, 2004). TI cautioned that debt relief to the world's poorest countries could be lost to corruption as all nineteen countries had serious to extreme levels of corruption in terms of their CPI scores owing to debt relief owed to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the African Development Bank. Low ratings, however, do not result in assistance being withdrawn; instead, aid should be replaced by improved funding for anti-corruption programs by recipient countries, according to TI (Financial Times, 2005). Nonetheless, it is understood that at least one donor has stopped financing a country dependent on the CPI (Arndt and Oman, 2006: 48). The Millennium Challenge Account, formed by the US government, in 2003, reported that countries invited to bid for assistance would have to show their contribution to good governance and that how the country performed on Transparency International's CPI would be an indicator used to test cases (US Info, 2004). The CPI's influence is clearly acknowledged in USAID's anti-corruption policy (USAID Frontlines, 2005).

5. CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL CORRUPTION INDICES

Although corruption indexes have yielded both policy and structural reforms across the globe, researchers over the years have raised criticism on the challenges of the indexes in measuring corruption (Malito, 2020). One major challenge agreed among scholars has been the issue of "perceived

corruption and the actual extent of corruption". According to Maurseth (2008: 27) perceptions are expressed in perception-based indicators. As a consequence, their capacity to reflect reality is dependent on whether expectations reflect reality, and perceptions can shift more rapidly or more slowly than reality. For instance, the CPI is not, however, a tool for measuring degrees of corruption. It only measures opinions, especially of foreign business executives, and therefore may be skewed. Although it can tell us a lot about how countries compare in terms of perceived corruption, it doesn't tell us anything about corruption levels at the sub-national or sector level. Even if the Transparency International CPI is considered "hard data," it does not rigorously analyze whether variations in ranking between countries are statistically important (Transparency International 2011). In short, "the CPI is an advocacy tool par excellence, but should not be relied upon as a tool for measuring corruption, certainly not in isolation" (Rao and Marquette, 2012). In the view of Galtung (1998), "perceived value of corruption omits the 'absolute amount of corruption". Others, on the other hand, believe that perception indices are overly reliant on the opinions of specific groups of business elite or experts (Andvig et al., 2000). For example, the World Bank's Control of Corruption has been criticized as biased from the perspective of business elites, who evaluate corruption based on their own political orientation (Rohwer, 2009). The CPI has also been chastised for its dubious assumption (Arndt and Oman, 2006) about the relationship between perceived and actual corruption levels (Søreide, 2006). Most factors that predict perceived corruption, such as economic development, democracy, and press freedom, do not correlate well with available measures of actual corruption experiences, which is one of the acknowledged limitations of aggregate perception data (Triesman 2007).

Another significant challenge of the global corruption indices is manifested in the fact that corruption is invisible to the naked eye. Parties of fraud, on both the giving and receiving sides, go to great lengths to keep their dealings secret from the public eye. While it is commonly believed or known that such activities exist, the concrete acts of corruption are cloaked in secrecy and vehemently denied when evidence of them is presented. Because of the covert and dispersed nature of corruption, and the challenge of measuring any success in its elimination, it's impossible for future participants to know whether or not they've made a difference; nevertheless, information is the lifeblood of any social movement. In the case of corruption, the logic of large-scale concerted action, in short, fails. Corruption frequently involves collusion between the parties involved. Unlike cases of human rights violations and environmental pollution, where one party is harmed, corruption practices benefit all parties involved. Everyone involved has a vested interest in keeping their collusion hidden (Wang and Rosenau, 2001).

It is also stated that individual data sources have disproportionate effects on the CPI and exhibit causal interrelationships within one another, as demonstrated by the findings of some of the indices, especially the CPI, which

cover 176 countries. The perception of corruption varies by region, with developed countries reporting lower levels of perceived corruption than developing countries (Budsaratragoon and Jitmaneeroj, 2020). In addition, both of the most important corruption indicators are based on an aggregation methodology: The World Bank's Control of Corruption indicator is made up of 21 different assessments and surveys, while Transparency International's CPI is calculated using 17 data sources. Even if composite indicators are effective at summarizing data, they run the risk of losing conceptual clarity (Van Dijk and Van Mierlo, 2011), because the indices may rely on non-public sources (Knack and Keefer, 1995) or obscure methodologies. Internal validity loss is significant due to the inability to ensure the independence of various sources. In fact, data that rely on the same sources for the construction of their own measures may be included in data aggregation from multiple data sources. As a result, the aggregation may not be based on independent judgments, potentially introducing bias and jeopardizing the composite indicator's "conceptual precision" (Knack, 2006).

Lastly, it should be emphasized that we are living in an increasingly internationalised world in which many privately owned commercial companies exercise more power than some individual nation states. It is extremely important how global efforts to combat corruption are affected by this. According to Jenkins, the ongoing process of globalization has introduced a range of new power-holders—such as multinational corporations and transnational social movements—that slip through the jurisdictional cracks separating national authorities, yet whose actions have a profound impact on people's lives. The influence exercised over economic policy in poor countries by such multilateral institutions as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization has also reduced the autonomy of many governments, making domestic democratic accountability even more elusive (Jenkins, 2007: 137).

With the effect of globalization, today's states and public administration are being forced to "do more with less" worldwide. According to Farazmand, this may be viewed partly as a global design to set up the public sector for failure and to cause further legitimation crisis so that corporate elites can claim the entire public sector with the slogan of better management (Farazmand, 2001:437-463). In fact, the emergence of new public-holders is a serious threat for democratic governability in one respect, because these structures have the potential to deepen the legitimation crisis in modern democracies. As is known, a legitimation crisis breaks when and where we observe a decline in the confidence of an administrative/institutional function. Here the question lies: How can we legitimize one of World Bank's (politically) true (?) interventionist actions within the boundaries of national hegemony in terms of democratic governance? The rise of worldwide quasi-autonomous and independent agencies, to some extent, holds the claim to address the legitimacy crisis in nation states but we must acknowledge that they are still

parts of the problem they challenge in terms of democratic governability (Ince and Taner, 2017:4-5).

Conclusion

The challenge of corruption continues to attract the attention of policy makers and researchers from different disciplines. Corruption is seen as a major threat to good governance and growth in many societies across the world. Yet fighting corruption seems to be as difficult as identifying the practice as it comes in different forms, at different levels and different intensity. In addition, there has been a growing debate as to how or even if it is possible to measure corruption. The academic field does not seem to favour a specific approach adopted by the many corruption indices. This paper therefore sought to examine the significance and relevance of third party indices in measuring corruption. The paper selected four international indices (World Bank, Corruption Index, Freedom House, Transparency international), looked at their methodological approach and examined the challenges that elicit criticisms on their findings. Despite the opposition on the use of these indices, they are seen as very important tools that can be used to paint a snap image of a country's governance and operational risks. Proponents of these indices argue that they provide practitioners dealing with development issues with information that can allow them to formulate and identify programs by examining the level of corruption within institutions and countries. They add that the existence of these indices has catapulted discussion on corruption more seriously at the national, regional and international level.

On the other hand, opponents of these indices argue that countries that are perceived to be corrupt tend to be rigorously tested in order to prove the prevalence of corruption while countries that are perceived not to be very corrupt are not strictly examined. This concern is particularly brought up with the use of composite indicators that dominate the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index and the World Bank Corruption Control Index. Similarly, concerns are raised over which corruption index measurement is the most effective and accurate. The World Bank, Corruption Index, Freedom House, Transparency international all use different measurements and are adopted by different organisations and institutions to push for corruption and reform agenda across the world. Sometimes what constitutes corruption in one country may not be considered as corruption in another. Therefore, it is ineffective to adopt either the composite or survey indices without cross checking the findings of one indicator with the other.

The long term effect of these indices is that they have been used to exert conditions on many developing countries that are presented as corrupt, yet given that some of these indices relay purely on perception rather than quantitative and empirical evidence, these countries may end up paying an exaggerated price. This is not in any way supposed to mean that the indices are less important, in fact they are useful in many ways. What is of concern to us in this paper is that these index data are used in many ways and affect

development and political trust in different countries. Given this importance, measurement and ranking of countries based on corruption indices needs to be given the seriousness it deserves. Corruption interpretation and perception is a very fluid concept that can change from one person to another. Therefore, there is need to reevaluate corruption indices and strengthen the processes to produces more useable data.

Despite the challenge of measuring corruption, it still is a reality with damning impact on different countries. An act of evident corruption as well as any misassessment in the corruption result in reduction in investment, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), eventually leading to the deterioration of economic prosperity. A change in the balance of government spending away from more profitable practices and into activities that are less productive can also be associated with this. Considering that, the unequality is growing globally, and poverty is becoming more widespread, international aid efforts are also adversely affected by this process. While international measures of corruption may contribute positively to the welfare and democracy level of some countries, they can have extremely negative consequences for others as well. Although they are seen as a useful framework that opens the door to a global awareness, the political spirit behind the corruption assessments should never be overlooked.

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