Social communication of public authorities in the system of potential manifestations of corruption

Comunicación social de las autoridades públicas en el sistema de posibles manifestaciones de corrupción

Authors

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Abstract
The study analyzed works on corruption and social communication, documents of international organizations on these issues, proving that corruption results in costs for resources and affects the indexes of income and investment resources, formation of human capital and labor supply. Corruption is caused by: non-systematic nature of social and economic policies; underdevelopment of the legal system and legal provision of anti-corruption policy; limited performance of duties by control bodies etc. Based on the studies main forms of corruption manifestation were distinguished. The key factor of fighting against corruption is formation of public communication. By using open data on indexes characterizing the state of democracy, freedom of expression, e-governance and corruption the graphical model of the corruption index dependence on democracy level development, freedom of expression, and e-governance was built. Social communication should be developed through improvement of the public management system, development of democratic values, transparency of public activity etc.
Keywords: Social Communication, The Public Authorities, Manifestation of Corruption, Democracy, Media Freedom, E-Government.

Resumen
El estudio analizó trabajos sobre corrupción y comunicación social, documentos de organismos internacionales sobre estos temas, comprobando que la corrupción genera costos por recursos y afecta los índices de ingresos y recursos de inversión, formación de capital humano y oferta laboral. La corrupción es causada por: la naturaleza no sistemática de las políticas sociales y económicas; subdesarrollo del sistema legal y provisión legal de políticas anticorrupción; desempeño limitado de funciones por parte de los órganos de control, etc. Con base en los estudios se distinguieron las principales formas de manifestación de la corrupción. El factor clave de la lucha contra la corrupción es la formación de la comunicación pública. Mediante el uso de datos abiertos en índices que caracterizan el estado de la democracia, la libertad de expresión, la gobernanza electrónica y la corrupción, se construyó el modelo gráfico del índice de corrupción de dependencia del desarrollo a nivel de democracia, la libertad de expresión y la gobernanza electrónica. La comunicación social debe desarrollarse mediante la mejora del sistema de gestión pública, el desarrollo de valores democráticos, la transparencia de la actividad pública, etc.
Palabras clave: Comunicación Social, Poder Público, Manifestación de la Corrupción, Democracia, Libertad de los Medios, Gobierno Electrónico.

Introduction

During the process of public authorities operation, the management system is exposed to manifestations of corruption, which impede the development of economic and social spheres of the society's activities. Moral neglect of legal boundaries of the democratic society functioning, a fair division of benefits leads to economic problems.

Preventive actions play an important role based on the multi-aspect social communication development of the public authorities with legal entities and individuals, non-state organizations, representatives of the civil society, and communities of various levels. It contributes to dialogue, building general actions on fair terms of economic and social activities as well as the fight against corruption.

One of the hardest problems is corruption during which representatives of authorities use the resources redistribution and irrelevant power decisions for their own purposes. The manipulation of rental payments and the incitement to indirect rent-seeking from an enterprise by the officials direct significant resources to a non-industry sector rising resource expenses (Aidt, 2016).

The European Commission (2014) in its report on corruption in 28 countries-members of the EU reported that the main source of political corruption was caused by the opacity of state public procurements in all countries-members.

Political corruption and ineffective usage of public finances hinder the development of local communities and strengthen the role of interpersonal relationships with elites, so it is needed to reduce the critical impact of public authorities. The increase of subjects interested in political events in an informal network of information exchange increases the probability to promulgate corruption, which are recorded in mass media. The mass media notifications are intensified according to the scale of corrupt acts. Thus, further actions on minimization of corruption manifestations in public authorities have to be based on modern recommendations of international institutions and non-state anti-corruption organizations (European Commission, 2014), development and suggestions by scientists as well as formation in accordance with the stated areas of public authorities' social communication to minimize potential manifestations of corruption.

The notion of social communication of public authorities is based on the understanding of necessary state's achievements in general for the development of a transparent communicative environment that includes the development of freedom of speech and independent mass media means, as well as for strengthening of democratic values and building of e-governance in the country.

Materials and Methodology

This work is based on the declared statements determining anti-corruption policy stipulated in documents of the international organizations (European Commission, 2014; International Monetary Fund, 2016; United Nations, 2018a; 2018b; United Nations Development Programme, 2008; United Nations Global Compact, 2013). Problems of analysis and approaches to the determination of corruption indicators, democracy, freedom of the press, and e-government are studied (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020; Reporters Without Borders, 2020; Transparency International, 2020; United Nations, 2018a; 2018b).

This work is based on indicators of 2018 (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020; Reporters Without Borders, 2020; Transparency International, 2020; United Nations, 2018a; 2018b), analyzing the theoretical data on the given issue as well. The consideration of social communication and communicative relationship between establishments and citizens as well as public relations was relied on, determining the e-governance problems.

Based on the existed data features of the main forms of manifestations of corruption have been allocated and determined. Implementing data on indicators that characterize a state of democracy, freedom of speech, e-governance, and corruption (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020; Reporters Without Borders, 2020; Transparency International, 2020), diagrams of dissipation for 164 world countries have been built by working out a graphical model of dependence of corruption index on democracy.

The aim is to understand problems on manifestations of corruption and the place of social communication there; the impact level of a transparent communicative environment of public authorities at the core of which several aspects should be defined in order to solve problems of corruption and to develop social communication.

Results

Corrupt acts became a subject of researches in the 1990s. Corruption constantly was a wide-spread phenomenon. Manifestations of corruption lead to annual losses equal to $1.5-2 trillion dollars or 2%

of the world GDP (IMF, 2016). Corruption leads to annual losses equal to $3.6 trillion in the world or 5% of the world GDP (United Nations, 2018a).

A great number of countries that lowered their indicators of Corruption Perceptions Index since 2012, do not engage key political, social or business subjects to the process of political decisions making (Transparency International, 2020). The UN Global Compact recommends implementing the anti-corruption policy, strengthening the transparency of public administrative and financial procedures, organizing thematic training, and increasing the efficiency of actions. 20% of world companies experienced officials' corrupt acts. The anti-corruption activity can rise the efficiency of public authorities and secure positive changes in the investment environment (Xie & Zhang, 2020). In the United Nations Development Program (2008) corruption is identified as "abuse of entrusted power for private purposes". Some works emphasize the necessity of such anti-corruption actions that include avoiding deformation of legal awareness of public managers and citizens.

A principal-agent model explains the emergence of corruption through the principals' (citizens) selection of agents (politicians) to manage on behalf of the community in terms of limited information to control the corrupt behavior of public officials. Imperfect monitoring allows officials to abuse their discretionary power while using norms and rules for the maximization of bribe-taking. Another scientific approach refers to the problem under consideration of the quality of management and institutions. It is anticipated that the developed countries have more effective bureaucracy, the improved legal system, more qualitative institutions to constrain corrupt politicians and public servants (Amin & Soh, 2019).

Manifestations of corruption are widespread both in the entire chain of command and spheres and sectors of economic and social activities, but they have hidden forms. United Nations Global Compact (2013) distinguishes the firms shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Main forms of corruption manifestations and their essence

Definition	The essence of the notion
Misappropriation	Stealing or appropriation of government funds, which results in abuse of powers of state
Bribery / demanding corrupt acts	Informal payments or presents in exchange for the decision of state establishment that makes the service possible. In other cases, this service should be free of charge or at low cost
Partial reimbursement	The payment of a part of contract fee (directly or through an intermediary) to a public servant who drew up a contract or conducted a transaction or meeting illegally
Lobbyism of companies financing	Attempts to influence decisions made by officials, the exchange of campaign financing for political benefits
Patronage	Giving preference to ethnic groups, relatives of a civil servant, when the employee is not the most qualified, contrary to formal rules
Normative enthusiasm	Promoting the commercial or other interests of a certain group by a regulatory body authorized to regulate the field or sector within which the group in question operates
Tender corruption / conspiracy	Offering a benefit for influencing the outcome of competition for public procurement, a competitive conspiracy between participants or a contractor and a public official
Personal interests	The practice of hiring one's own company or an official who belongs to close relatives or friends to provide public services
Conflict of interests	Circumstances under which the private interest of an official affects the impartial and objective performance of his/her public duties, the choice between the duties and requirements of the position and private interests
Service exchange	Benefits are provided by mutual services and can take a variety of forms, including work, residence permits, or provision of education and health care
Pricing	An agreement between competitors on the increase, change, or other ways to maintain the price at which their goods or services are sold

The corrupt activity rise reflected in the mind of business representatives and citizens. In the report on global risks of the World Economic Forum (2020) 46.6% of respondents believed the corrupt activity would rise. Building the policy directed towards the social anticipation of manifestations of

corruption, biased possible corrupt acts, mitigating risks on discretionary actions of public politicians, and the creation of terms to stop manifestations of corruption, the state must provide transformation of citizens' behavior from contemplation to an active part in public relations. Political public relations are

the management process with the help of which in order to get political consequences individuals or legal entities set and support relations with their key public commissioners to achieve their own goals through focused communications and actions. Relations have both informal character of cooperation and trust and legal bases stipulated in the legislation, considering democratic character of relations, common responsibility, effective control and means of impact.

The concept of social communication has important aspects in terms of counter actions to manifestations of corruption: public and economic transparency of the state policy and the right to obtain the information. The democratic society determines the right to get access to public information as the main one for transparency ensuring. The efficiency of demographic procedures is based on the access of the society to the public information related to the state actions. The data received allows us to realize the political right to be elected and elect; to have an impact on the state policy; fulfill the control over public expenditure; promote accountability to prevent manifestations of corruption. The state, in its turn, must implement necessary legislative and administrative activities to improve maximal accessibility of the public information (UN Human Rights Council, 2010).

There is a statement that public relations are regarded as the main subject of social relations study. The studies demonstrated that social dialogue plays a key role in building relations between authorities and public (Cheng, 2020). In social cooperation, public relations mean a communicative dialogue with the parties concerned to build mutually beneficial relationships, the problem of data confidentiality stimulates the approach aimed at relationships for communication based on the practice of public relations (Gesualdi, 2019).

Broad communication at the societal level allows exchanging ideas and the information. Developed cooperation with the parties concerned and the focused contact, processes of scenarios development of political discussions are aimed at determining key discourses on problems and limits of future formation (Roper & Hurst, 2019). The expansion of communicative borders of the society's communication in the context of anti-corruption policy is seen, first of all, in several key directions: operation of mass media; the functionality increase of official public authorities' sites; the development of e-governance, further creation of the institutional environment. The researchers state that factors of rule of law, implementation of freedom of speech and independent mass media influence the lowering of manifestations of corruption (Elbhnasaw & Revier, 2012).

Today independent mass media realize the mission on the initiation of accountability of officials, the publication of the public information, transparency creation in the society, prevention of corrupt acts through their detection and stimulation of anti-corruption legislation implementation etc (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016). State's broad control affects the communicative model and the creation of a dialogue between organizations and society (Huang, Wu & Cheng, 2016).

The indexes of corruption in the country for the research are more often determined by using The Corruption Control Index of the World Bank, Corruption Perceptions Index from Transparency International, and the Index of Corruption of International Manual on countries' risks. CPI is thought to be a more accessible measure to analyze corruption because the index ICRG measures the investment risk of corruption, and the sub-component WGI of the Index of corruption control is criticized for certain methodological questions . Corruption Perceptions Index in the state sector was developed as an indicator for measuring corruption perception of the state sector. It can be found within the range from 0 to 100 (a higher indicator determines a higher level of corruption manifestations imperceptions (Transparency International, 2020).

Reporters Without Borders (2020) publics annually the Press Freedom Index. The index varies between 0 and 100, where the lowest value of the index demonstrates greater dependence of mass media in the country. The democratic countries compose the top 5 of the rating. Using data of CPI and PFI for 164 countries, it is possible to build a graphical model of connection of the index of corruption and the indicator of media independence (Figure 1).

The fundamental component of the operating democracy is becoming the rise of anti-corruption activity with the help of ICT (Kumar, Yadav & Sharma, 2017). The importance of ICT for the development must be regarded as an economic and social right that at the state level has to be subsidized for the access to electronic mass media to realize this right, the fight against poverty and achievement of goals in the sphere of development (UN Human Rights Council, 2010). ICT-based technologies make it possible to find "digital traces" and conduct audits, which allows us to detect manifestations of corruption and bring violators to justice. Combining comprehensive administrative reforms with ICT will enable to reduce corruption, to improve transparency, to

apply systemic barriers, and to increase the possibility for detection and disclosure. The use of the Internet destroys the information monopoly of authoritarian governments. Studies have proved that the existence of broad information on corruption on the Internet indicates a low level of corruption in various countries (Goel, Nelson & Naretta, 2012). The possibility to freely post information on the Internet; accelerated dissemination of information on social networks; gaining access to independent and foreign sources of mass media (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016).
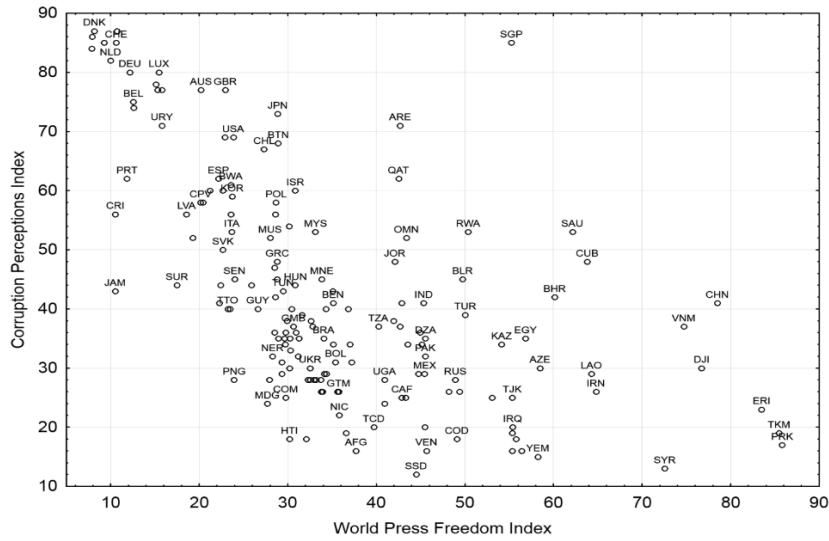

Figure 1. Corruption Perceptions Index and World Press Freedom Index

The use of information technologies since 1990s made it possible to expand state communications to the e-government level. E-government is use of digital devices in the public sector to provide public services, information. E-government provides the provision of the information generated or ordered by public authorities, which falls under the definition "open (state) data" (OECD, 2015). By involving citizens, e-government supports civil society and concerned groups in their cooperation in developing anti-corruption policy (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016).

The UN examines indicators of the readiness of government agencies to use ICT. The e-Government Development Index published by the United Nations (2018b), shows the development of e-government. The indicator is within the range from 0 to 1 (a higher value indicates a higher degree of e-government development). By using data of 2 indicators (CPI and EGDI) for 164 countries we obtain a graphical model of the relationship between the index of corruption and the development of e-government information (Figure 2).
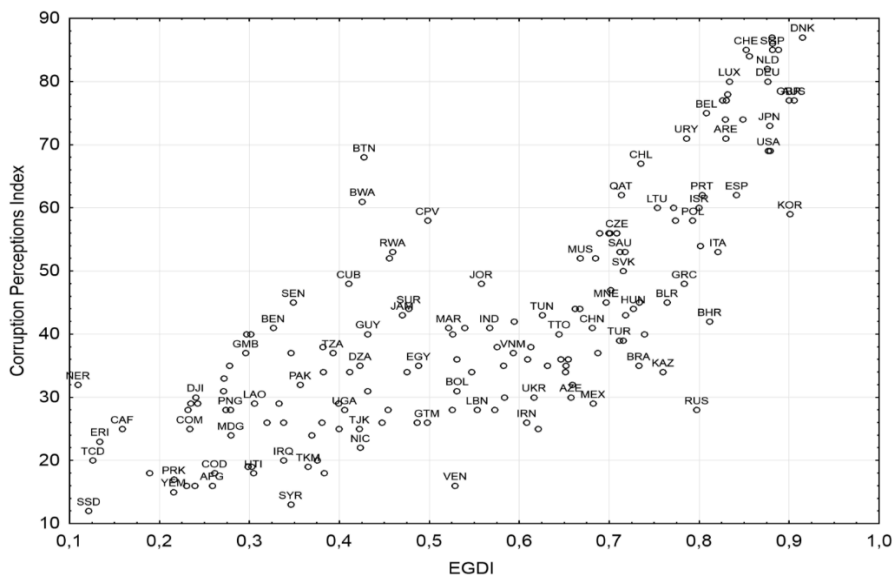

Figure 2. Corruption Perceptions Index and e-Government Development Index

The problem of democracy development is a subject of research as well. One of the indicators of democracy is the Democracy Index (EIU) developed by The Economist Intelligence Unit's (2020).

By using data from 2 indicators for 164 countries we obtain a graphical model of the dependence of the Corruption Index on the e-Government Development Index (Figure 3).
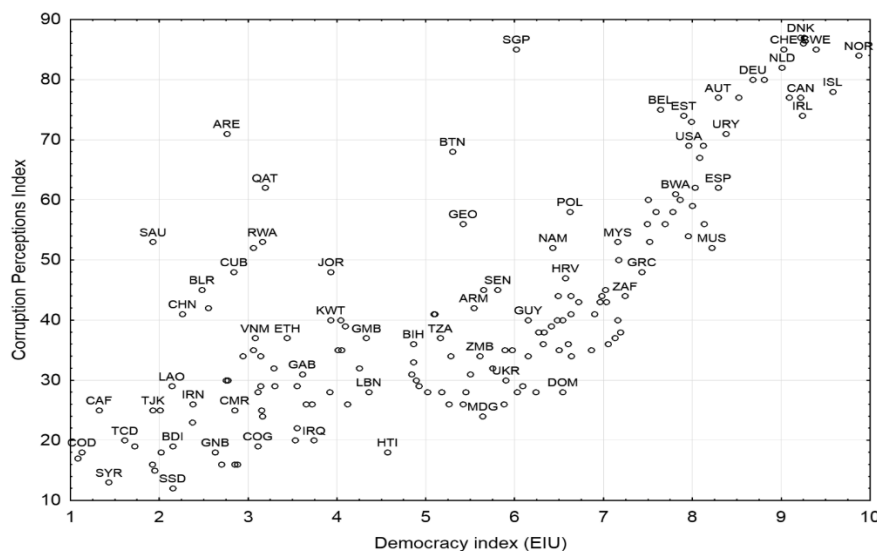

Figure 3. Corruption Perceptions Index and the Democracy Index

Countries with a high level of anti-corruption activities have independent mass media, authoritarian countries are more corrupt.

Discussion

The study of the impact of mass media freedom and e-government on corruption is discussed in Starke, Naab and Scherer (2016). The study of the relationship between democracy and corruption, based on the sample of 30 African countries, proves that raising capital in the economy is increasing in more democratic countries. The analysis used indicators of corruption taken from the International Country Risk Guide and as a measure of democracy was used the Civil Liberties Index (Polity IV).

Another impact study describes the dependent variable through the World Bank's Control of Corruption Index and the Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International. The state of democracy is characterized by the Democracy Index (Polity IV) and the Freedom House Political Rights Index. (Kolstad & Wiig, 2015).

The democratization of society depends on press freedom. Vanhanen's Index of democratization (Kalenborn & Lessmann, 2013) is used as an indicator of democracy.

The data on 164 countries for 2018 was used. Indicators can be determined and used differently (Kalenborn & Lessmann, 2013). Approaches to

determining the indicators in different countries will differ as well. Improving the education sphere and increasing the average income of citizens, i.e. the quality of life (Chan, Dang & Li, 2019).

The incorporation of additional descriptions in the general model can improve its quality in further researches. In our opinion, it is more prudent to introduce a factor that addresses certain expenses on the functioning of the communication space, including construction, installation of equipment, modernization of technical networks, etc., although it has only a side effect on social communications. Development of technological infrastructure, reduction of barriers and expansion of the number of mobile Internet devices for wide access of citizens to the Internet, the attraction of necessary resources for the implementation of e-governance – these tasks involve the adoption of appropriate decisions at the state level (Starke, Naab & Scherer, 2016).

Information networks need to be used properly for the dialogue between authorities and citizens about corruption. Further research is required upon this issue.

Conclusion

Thus, in the process of exercising their powers, the modern systems of public authorities in the vast majority of world countries are faced with manifestations of corruption. Corruption has hidden forms and is widespread in all branches of

government and spheres of activity. The consequences of corrupt acts are slowing economic development, distorting the political preferences of society, reducing confidence in power institutions, lowering the competitiveness and investment attractiveness of the country, society's distrust in social justice. One of the effective means influencing manifestations of corruption is the social communication of public authorities with individuals, legal entities, and civil society. The establishment and implementation of effective communication cooperation involve the formation of factors that characterize the state's freedom of speech, democracy, and e-government development. Independent mass media allow politicians and public officials to publish objective information on manifestations of corruption, to control and demand accountability to the public. Democratic values form political culture, civil liberties, electoral process, pluralism; and political participation. E-government ensures the implementation of public services of high quality, 2-way communication, minimization of corruption components of administrative procedures, and maintaining online interaction with citizens.

The combination of freedom of speech, democracy development and e-government mechanisms based on anti-corruption; diagnostics of social needs; open data; social partnership with public organizations, mass media etc; public reporting; responding to the shortcomings; questionnaire tools; broad discussions; educational activities can help to reduce corruption.

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