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Corruption as an obstacle to development in developing countries: a review of literature

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Abstract:

Purpose

– Contemporary literature has paid scholarly attention to corruption from a variety of competing perspectives. However, broader accounts of the impact of corruption on development in developing countries are relatively scarce. The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of corruption as a social impediment to development, which has a devastating effect on developing countries.

Design/methodology/approach

– The paper explores the relevant literature and the different perspectives that have been developed and conducted for investigating corruption in developing countries. The paper uses publicly available evidence to show that political, economic elite engaged in corrupt practices.

Findings

– The evidence shows that socio-political and economic development, politics, power, history and globalisation have continued to reproduce and transform the institutional structures and actors which have facilitated corrupt practices in developing countries. The review shows that large sums of government revenue have been undermined by the corrupt practices of the political and economic elite (both local and international), which have enriched a few, but impoverished most.

Practical implications

- The paper seeks to bring the anti-social activities of political, economic and professionals under scrutiny and offers some suggestions for reforms.

Social implications

- Corruption has played a major role in causing serious damage to the economic and social landscape in developing countries. This in turn, has undermined social welfare and also investment in the public services, thereby eroding the quality of life and producing a decline in average life expectancy.

Originality/value

- The paper is a general review of literature and evidence on contemporary issues.

Keywords:

[Corruption](#), [Developing countries](#), [Economic development](#), [Political elite](#), [Multinational companies](#)