

# A BRIEF ANALYSIS ON CORRUPTION IN BRAZIL: POLITICS

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## ABSTRACT

This work is a literature review addressing the topic of corruption in Brazil, consisting of an in-depth analysis of four selected articles. We conclude that corruption in Brazil goes back to colonial times, as well as that greater control by the state is necessary.

## INTRODUCTION

According to Calil Simão (2011, p. 27), the absence of interest or commitment to the common good is necessary for the installation of corruption:

“Social or state corruption is characterized by the moral inability of citizens to make commitments aimed at common good. That is to say, citizens are unable to do things that do not bring them personal gratification.”

Corruption is a word well known to Brazilian society - since the beginning of colonization, that “Brazilian way of doing things” is commonplace and goes unnoticed by many, synonymous with simple exchanges of favors. In today’s Brazil, much attention is given to this topic, due to the large police operations that were carried out and the arrest of several important figures of the national political landscape.

The subject is particularly important due to the generalized lack of knowledge about political issues with political corruption, which is constantly addressed by the Brazilian media.

This work is divided in three parts: in addition to the introduction before the reader, it consists of the review of literature on political corruption, the presentation of methodology and the conclusion. The review of literature on corruption addresses the concepts of political corruption and the leading academic papers on the topic.

Therefore, for a simplistic understanding, we will make a brief analysis of the academic texts on the topic.

## METHODOLOGY

We have made a bibliographic search, using the following databases: Google Scholar, SciELO, using the following keywords: corruption in Brazil, political corruption and political science. Out of six articles and books found, only four were used in this literary review, due to inconsistency of others.

## DISCUSSION

Political corruption can be defined as “the use of public power for private individual gain, promotion or prestige, or for the benefit of a group or a class, in a way that comprises a violation of law or the standards of moral conduct” (Somões, 2011, p. 35).

“Detachment from the principles creates motives for corruptive practices, through degeneration of fundamental values, leading to a scenario of struggle for power. When civic values give way to apathy, we are led towards a deep sense of irresponsibility, since desires overshadow duties, creating a scenario for the dissolution of fundamental bonds.” (BELLAH, 1975)

In regards to the corruption ranking:

“In the world corruption ranking, Brazil, one of the main economies in the world, was listed by Transparency International among the most corrupt countries in the world. It should come as no surprise considering the torrent of scandals it has been a victim of (BATISTA, 2000).

In 2010, a Fiesp study showed that the annual cost of corruption in the country is between 1.38% and 2.3% of GDP.

Corruption in Brazil directly affects the well-being of citizens, by reducing the public investments in health, education, infrastructure, security and housing, amongst other rights essential for life, and criminally violates the Constitution by expanding social exclusion and economic inequality. The Brazilian Penal Code classifies government corruption as an offence in Title XI - Crimes against Public Administration, which can occur in two ways:

- Crimes committed by a public official against the administration in general, which constitute passive corruption; and,
- Crimes committed by individuals against the administration in general, which characterize active corruption.

Onset of specific actions, such as special operations to combat organized crime carried out by internal and external oversight bodies, the Federal Police and other institutions involved in combating government corruption, as well as the integration of these bodies, has been a priority of the Federal Government in the last decade. With regard to punishments, the Federal Comptroller Office (CGU), as the central corrective body of the federal executive branch, has already removed 2,398 statutory civil servants from public service by means of a disciplinary process by the end of 2009 (Federal Comptroller Office - CGU, 2010).

It is important to understand the actions to combat government corruption in Brazil, as they are subsequently publicized in the media, potentially affecting the perception of corruption in the population, that in turn influences the behavior of the index developed by Transparency International.

## CONCLUSION

In the present work we have observed that corruption has historical and social origins, and that it is a problem that greatly affects Brasil, with negative repercussions in the social, political and

economical spheres. One of the main challenges that hinder the fight against corruption is the still prevailing culture of impunity present in the society and the fact that those that can afford a good lawyer hardly spend much time in jail or are even punished. In addition, the fact that politicians enjoy privileged rights and are judged differently than ordinary citizens contributes to the impunity.

In order to control state corruption, it is necessary to create cultural meanings in a way that inexorably presents an alternative path to the social subject. As well as the organization of the legal sphere in a way that intertwines moral and ethical values and maintaining the constancy of such organization.

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