Towards a Sustainable Anti-Corruption Strategy:
An Ethic-Induced Model

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ABSTRACT:
Literature abounds to show that the current anti-corruption strategies have failed to fight corruption because of neglect of ethics in these strategies, despite its importance. The purpose of this paper is to make a contribution to anti-corruption theory by developing a model that clarifies many complex ethical dilemmas around corruption. To develop a conceptual model, the extant literatures on ethics and anti-corruption strategy were used. Specifically, the focus was on the constructs of the complexity of fighting corruption by suggesting and analyzing ethical integrity, reasoning, and competence and the existing models of anti-corruption strategies. Surprisingly, anti-corruption literature has not yet adequately considered the concept of ethics in fighting corruption. In this paper, an ethics-induced model of anti-corruption strategy was developed, which identifies three types of ethical measures to combat corruption- integrity, reasoning and competence. Ethical integrity is likely to determine how an individual employee behaves in a volatile environment and where such an individual can easily be lured into corruption. Ethical reasoning would enable an individual to have a precise moral judgment. However, ethical competency is more likely to direct how an individual ought to act with a high degree of outdoing the temptations to corrupt. This paper is a conceptual one and has not been empirically validated yet. The results are to be viewed as preliminary that necessitates further extensive empirical research. However, the model has implications for further research. Scholars and researchers may empirically test the extent to which ethical integrity, reasoning, and competence can ably fight corruption. They may also test the potential effects of anti-corruption strategies and tactics as well as ethical dilemmas corruptors face. Knowing the cause and nature of corruption may help to select the appropriate anti-corruption strategy given then it is committed by persons who are moral beings. For instance, when corruptors face high corruption temptation scenario, they may be well advised to select ethical reasoning to handle the dilemma. The value of the present article lies in the fact that it binds together the literature on ethics and corruption. Thus, the paper helps reduce the artificiality of the current anti-corruption strategies.

Keywords: *Corruption, Developing economies, Ethics, Ethical integrity, Ethical competency, Ethical reasoning*

INTRODUCTION

Despite the importance of ethical behaviors in organizations (Trevino, Weaver and Reynolds, 2006) little has been done to practically embed ethical considerations in designing strategies in fighting high impact scandals like corruption. The absence of research on the effect of ethics on fighting corruption is typical of human behavioral research, which for the most part, draws an artificial boundary between human beings and ethics. This line of research has failed to consider that corruption might be as much a product of ethical forces inside a human being.

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Few researchers (e.g., Caudrado and Arce, 2005; Treviňo, Weavor and Reynolds, 2006) have advocated the inclusion of ethical antecedents in the study of corruption in organizations. The need for an ethical 'dress rehearsal' of any anti-corruption measure is particularly important in today's competitive and selfish environment where corruption has invaded the public, private and NGO organizations causing irreparable damage in the process. Much as corruption is an ancient and pervasive problem, every-day life in both the developed and developing worlds have now suffered 'eloquent corrosion' because of the vice of this pandemic (Levin and Satarov, 2000; Paldam, 2002) just because unethical behaviors have been normalized in societies (Ashforth and Anand, 2003). Perhaps, the dozen corruptors engage in the vice as their fundamental human goal (Diener and Osihi, 2000) since the tumultuous past few decades have shaken individual economic well-being which needed an immediate resource security. No wonder, subjective wellbeing has captured how people think and feel about their existential state (Sharma and Alter, 2012) with stronger irresistible influences which often triggers psychological resource agitations resulting in charting out measures to deprive others. This has led to loss of respect for the poor which situation engenders a seedbed for 'collective selfishness', disregards for others and dishonesty.

To deprive others is to be corrupt and the corruptor is born blinded to just values and ethics. Miller and Blacker (2005) point out that an action is corrupt if it morally degrades a person or an institution (e.g., perverts destroys or subverts honesty or integrity), regardless if any laws or rules have been broken. In most cases this results into plundering of resources causing progressive decline in people's life. It has to be stressed those who are corrupted and those who corrupt differ in respect of their intentions and beliefs concerning the corrupting effect of their actions. Therefore, ignoring the impact of ethics in fighting corruption is both conceptually limited and practically risky because acting ethically is not just the responsibility of those in charge of organizations only but also employees as well. Every action must serve the needs and usually benefit of the society rather than individual interest. This is an altruistic goal- as opposed to an egoistic one. Again actions are

supposed to be undertaken with societal identity and societal consciousness which can be recognized by all and should be based on code of ethics, standards of practice, and periodic review. Outrageously, the increased globalization leading to intense international competition and technological advances have served to break ethical practices, replacing them with more *ad hoc* arrangements such as self-enrichment, personal wealth-accumulation and such like. It's accelerated pace requires cultivating cooperation across organizational structure and ethical boundaries especially in regard to management practices and ethical behaviors. This is because individuals are forced to clarify their values, develop new strategies, and learn new ways of satisfying their selfish needs. The end result is the endemic failure to eliminate corruption in the society.

It is therefore important to understand why ethics is very important in fighting corruption. Consequently, the purpose of this paper is to develop an ethics-induced model which can be used to fight corruption. This proposed model has both conceptual and practical implications. From the conceptual standpoint, the model posits that the prevalence of corruption is due as much to pressures from ethical dilemmas and employee's personal characteristics than it is due to external environment. Thus, the model adds to the understanding of burgeoning literature on ethical dilemmas which make corruption to thrive. From the practical standpoint, the model will help potential corruptors to develop a repertoire of ethical behaviors that are responsive to changes in corrupt environment. Before, presenting the model, the paper lays the groundwork by analyzing the challenges of corruption facing society and discusses the place of ethics in fighting it. The paper will later on induce a model in the circumstance to fight corruption. Then finally suggests avenues for research and practice.

Causes and Challenges of Corruption in Developing Economies

Corruption has characterized the ever changing organizational environment whose volatility can never be predicted with certainty. It has even been rationalized such that corrupt individuals tend not to view themselves as corrupt (Ashford and Anand, 2003). Corruption

threatens the economic and political fortunes of developing economies by imposing heavy costs while distorting development policies and undermining confidence in institutions. According to some scholars (e.g., Aidt, 2003; Gaviria, 2002; Michael, et al. 2004), corruption is an extremely complex issue without any complete and integrated framework to define it. Cipe (2008) contends that corruption is generally understood to mean the abuse of entrusted power for personal gain. This means corruption is featured with a discretional power over the allocation of resources, higher rents associated with its misuse, and high probability of evading regulations/penalties associated with the wrong doing (Jain, 2001). However, to qualify as corruption three specific conditions must be satisfied (Schneider and Enste, 2000): there must be two or more parties in a transaction who must display bias with each other that is inconsistent with impartial treatment; the bias or conflict of interest must be intentional; and there must be some advantage for both parties to commit this violation which advantage need not be monetary in nature; it could involve favoritism or non-monetary gifts. Essentially, corruption can be incidental involving junior public officials. It may also be systematic that affects, for example a whole government department or parastatal. It may as well be systemic, that is kleptocracy of government by theft in which honesty becomes irrational.

The paradox of the root causes of corruption is as immense with varied opinion to its origin. Batty and Torres (2005) certify that corruption is a very difficult construct, born and developed in complexity. Hence, given its multiple roots, corruption can generally be attributed to the poor design of institutions and more importantly the erosion of moral fibers in the society. Some of its deepest roots include unclear, complex, and frequently changing laws and regulations. For example, when these laws are contradictory or require heavy interpretation, the discretionary power of officials is amplified increasing the risk that they will make arbitrary, self-serving decisions. Also when the laws are unpredictable, entrepreneurs do not know their rights and obligations, so they can not comply fully nor defend themselves, for example against illegal inspections. Corruption then becomes a mean to circumvent inefficiency and arbitrary official

actions. The inadequate, inconsistent and unfair enforcement of laws and regulations causes and makes corruption to sprout. For example, even if laws to combat corruption are in the books, lax enforcement can invite abuse especially when they are applied selectively targeting those regarded to have departed from the prevailing political line of thinking. A weak justice system, low penalties and high cost of compliance will render laws ineffective.

Corruption is also caused by lack of accountability and transparency especially when deals are made behind closed doors. This becomes impossible to assess the criteria behind those closed-door's decisions, whether they serve public interest and respect the law. Most commonly these violators on both the public and private sides conceal their transactions as such they escape being accountable.

Furthermore, low public service salaries has been cited as one of the deepest cause of corruption because when officials cannot meet what they perceive as their daily needs through their salaries, they resort to corruption to supplement their income. However, simply raising the wages of officials will not curb corruption as long as opportunities to abuse the system persist.

In addition, conflict of interest also causes corruption because private interest of the employees leads to the discharge of duties in ways that may not be in the best interest of the organization. This is because the private financial interest of the employee is sufficient enough to influence or appear to influence, the exercise of public duties and responsibilities ending up to corrupt.

General moral decadency as a result of deterioration of ethical values account for the reason why many people are now corrupt in the developing economies. It is not surprising that those ones have now developed the end justifies the means attitude in which it does matter how one acquires and amasses resources. It has unfortunately become a sign of prestige and high status in society if one helps himself/herself from the public purse more so that the lack of political will to address the problem of corruption has made it a less risky business than what it should have been. Worst of all, the promotion of the culture of silence and being complacent in regard to the use of public

resources has only helped to perpetuate corrupt practices.

Many citizens have become irresponsible in not taking public resources as their own. In that way they see no obligation to protect public resources. This has indecisively led to the growth of the culture of impunity that has been the mainstay of ethical disintegration making corruption to flourish unabated. Impunity has become the potential captors' weapons and obviously the poor's ultimate injury. This culture is made to thrive on the bedrock of a null expectation of punishment after wrong doing resulting into unending corruption.

These factors and several others have made corruption to be one of the most serious unethical practices that undermine trust and confidence in public institutions as well as their officials. Both the society and businesses bear the costs of corruption through resource misallocation whereby resources that could be put to productive use are instead diverted for personal good. It is not uncommon to find organizations wasting time and resources on rent-seeking-cultivating relationships with officials of these organizations spending on bribes. These officials often make biased decisions (for example, in investment) that do not serve public interest and it's the tax payers (ordinary citizens) who swallow the cost. Rampant corruption signals to potential investors that the rule of law, and thus property rights are very weak making investment a risky proposition. Lower investment therefore means lower growth. Since rent-seeking makes some companies not to favorably compete in the market and acts as barrier to entry for new firms, it leads to reduction in competition, efficiency and innovation. In the end, consumers pay highly in terms of prices, lower quality and limited product offerings. Corruption also leads to unresponsive policies and poor administration because law makers in a corrupt system use their power to help rent-seekers, not citizenry as a whole. In such a system, bureaucrats are not held accountable for their performance and actually have incentives to delay services in order to extract bribes. Corruption also lowers the income potential of the poor and also limits their access to quality public services.

The Place of Ethic in Fighting Corruption

Corruption generally covers fraud (theft through misrepresentation), embezzlement (misappropriation of corporate or public funds), and bribery (payments made in order to gain an advantage or to avoid a disadvantage). Normally, corruption makes an 'insider' profit at the expense of the 'outsider'. This conveys three scenarios. First, there is abuse of position since the 'insider' has control of the supply of good and/or services, has discretion in giving or withholding them (or any of them), and is not held accountable for the choice he/she makes. This shows that an 'insider' operates from a position of strength yet justice demands that there should be fair recompense for services rendered. Secondly, it offends relationship because the weaker party in the transaction is treated as an 'outsider' though there may be others who are even further 'outside'. Thirdly, there is underhandedness because the transaction is illegitimate as such the parties will usually try to keep it from the public domain. This creates a situation in which the corruptors consider themselves to be outside the boundary in which moral values, rules, and consideration of fairness apply. They then tend to become overconfident and view themselves as highly ethical people who are in control of their lives. Researchers such as Moore et al. (2006) have proposed this is how professionals become morally compromised gradually over time even though there could be potential safeguards such as basing decisions on data, using a devil's advocate to question decisions, and consciously expanding the analysis to include consequences for multiple stakeholders.

The transactional nature of the relationship between the 'insider' and the 'outsider' is unethical because those involved improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves or those close to them by the misuse of public power entrusted to them. They qualify themselves to benefit from financial kickbacks and patronages through for example, procurement fraud, including collusion, overcharging, or the selection of contractors, suppliers and consultants on criteria rather than the lowest evaluated substantially responsive bidder; illicit payment of "speedy money" to government officials to facilitate the

timely delivery of goods and services to which the public is rightfully entitled, such as permits and licenses; illicit payments to government officials to facilitate access to goods, services to which it is legally entitled; illicit payments to prevent the application of rules and regulations in a fair and consistent manner, particularly in areas concerning public safety, law enforcement, or revenue collection; payment to government officials to foster or sustain monopolistic or oligopolistic access to markets in the absence of compelling economic rationale for such restrictions; the misappropriation of confidential information for personal gains, such as using knowledge about public transportation routings to invest in real estate that is likely to appreciate; the deliberate disclosure of false or misleading information on the financial states of corporations that would prevent potential investors from accurately valuing their worth, such as the failure to disclose large contingent liabilities or the undervaluing of assets in enterprises slated for privatization; the theft or embezzlement of public property and monies; the sale of official posts, positions, or promotions; nepotism; or other actions that undermine the creation of a professional, meritocratic civil service; extortion and abuse of office, such as using the threat of a tax audit or legal sanctions to extract personal favors; and obstruction of justice and interference in the duties of agencies tasked with detecting, investigating, and prosecuting illicit behavior.

In all these manifestations, the devastating effects of corruption on the economies and life of the citizens have led many governments to devise measures with a view to curb the vice. Most of these measures are based on the structural and organizational factors which are thought to help fight corruption better. For examples, governments have put in place various independent oversight agencies such as the Ombudsmen, Inspector Generals, Auditor General, and Public Accounts Committees of Parliament to help in monitoring the ethical behaviors of public servants. These institutions have, however not billed to their expectations because the strategies they employee have lots of discrepancies (Clarke and Xu, 2004) due to the complex nature of corruption. The author concurs with Doig, Moran and Watt (2001) whose contention is that many countries have

established anticorruption agencies without proper evaluation and in a context where the appropriate structural factors and organizations features are absent; thus adversely affecting their development and operational effectiveness. This suggests that whilst such agencies can be effective anticorruption organizations, at worst they can add another layer of (ineffective) bureaucracy to the law enforcement sector; divert resources from existing organizations involved in anticorruption work; function inefficiently if unable to target serious/high level corruption cases; functions as a 'shield' to satisfy donors and public opinion; delay the reform of other areas; and function as a political police.

The several anticorruption measures seem to be failing due to dealing with the problem in exclusivity of ethics. They mainly deal with the 'after the act' and have concentrated to show that the 'before the act' approaches are not effective as a deterrents to perpetuation of corrupt acts. In the same vein, Habtimichael (2009, p. 98) writes: "Most traditional anti-corruption strategies focus on dealing with symptoms rather than causes and emphasize stern punishment, salary increment to public servants or establishing anti-corruption commission". van de Walt (2003, p. 407) postulates that "In the arsenal of techniques advocated for fighting corruption the ethical causes are often ignored or are mentioned only in passing- as if they are peripheral to the phenomenon". Yet the question of morality and corruption is a personal and a communal problem, as Spence et al. (2005, p. 197) advocate "The successful combating of crime and corruption presupposes a moral community: a community of people who for the most part try to do what is morally right and to avoid what is morally wrong, because they desire or believe that they ought to do what is right and to avoid doing what is wrong." There is therefore, a need for a holistic approach to fight corruption from the nature of the human person through the lens of ethics which the proceeding section falls into.

The Ethics-Induced Model

In an attempt to find solutions to problems of an ethical dilemma, human beings tend to decisive themselves through psychological processes by hiding the ethical issues from view

(Tenbrunsel and Messick, 2004). This is why the traditional anti-corruption strategies are not anywhere near to undo the complex phenomenon of corruption. As suggested by Gruys and Sackett (2003), these strategies are blind to deviance which is the cornerstone of all the causes of corruption since it violates significant norms. Once deviance occur, the wellbeing of society, its members and the wide community is threatened since this voluntary behavior is contrary to legitimate interests (Marcus et al., 2002). Deviance can best be overcome by ethics since it plays a noble role by charting out high standards of behaviors. In this way, outcomes for the society become better since the decisions of office-holders will be made fairly and on merit and not influenced by personal and private interests. Ethics helps build confidence in institutions which makes investors willingness to sink their moneys in the country. Since ethics is impartial and objective, it increases predictability which improves economic efficiency and effectiveness. Most importantly, ethics lowers level of corruption, raise confidence in the rule of law and belief in the safety of the operating environment which is the critical factors for the well-functioning of societies. Ethics set high standards which are in the interests of the society as a whole. This justifies incurring costs in promoting and maintaining them.

To sustainable fight corruption, a model is proposed premised on the understanding that it will provide measures to manage behaviors in ways that will reduce individual's illegal and unethical conduct which often lead to corruption. This is because an individual behavior ought to be subjected to or judged according to generally accepted moral norms of behavior (O'Fallon and Butterfield, 2005). According to Toor and Ofori (2009), ethical behaviors include key principles such as honesty, integrity, fairness, and concern for others which are to be demonstrated by those entrusted with running and managing affairs of organizations. However, a survey conducted by Wesley et al. (2011) revealed that the most significant ethical issues to organizations are bribery, corruption and facilitation payments; whistle blowing/speaking up and discrimination, harassment or bullying. Such examples of unethical issues affecting organizations are worldwide phenomena much as the public

expects institutional officials to exhibit ethical behaviors, fulfill their obligations and rise up to these expectations (Bello, 2012). Some scholars (Collins, 2010; Trevino and Brown, 2004; Upadhyay and Singh, 2010) have moved ahead to give recommendations on how to manage ethical issues in organizations. They recommend that heads of institutions should be chief ethics officers of the organizations; hire ethical people only; ensures employees participation in ethical trainings; and reward ethical conduct and punish unethical ones. They open up the right solution to the prevalence of unethical practice which entails throwing aside false measures and uncritical acceptance of any measure that channel the fight of corruption to unethical direction. Thus, the issue here is ethics helps to avoid this risk and makes employees and citizenry think and act in the right way. Ethics also helps to solve moral problems and create moral knowledge and focuses on the ability to maintain this process in the right way. Immanuel Kant (1785/2006) contends that when people are free from false illusion and have the necessary skills they can use the right method to find the right solution to their problems.

The main thrust of the ethics-induced model of fighting corruption (figure 1) is that the prevalence of unethical behaviors and practices which influence the emergence of a particular base of ethics. The model argues that when the unethical behaviors and practices are perceived as inevitable leading to corruption, the dominant form of fighting it would be ethics related. The model further argues that ethics is not only to be practiced at the personal level; but rather, it is to be exhibited for the collective purpose- for the society as a whole. Environmental factors such as political, social, cultural, economic, technological, globalization and such like are factors that instigate personal factors to make an individual prone to unethical behaviors and practices. To the extent that employees perceive corruption as a way of life, they are likely to accept unethical behaviors and practices in order to adapt to this vice. This relationship is presented in figure 1 below.
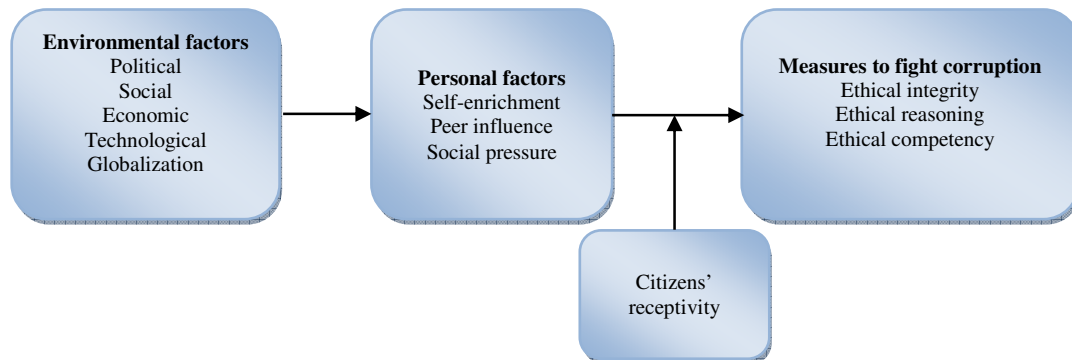
Figure 1: Integrated model of causes of and measures to fight corruption

As illustrated in Figure 1, the presence of environmental and personal factors influences measures to fight corruption, that is, ethical integrity, reasoning, and competency. This relationship between causes of and the measures to fight corruption is moderated by the citizen's receptivity. Ethical integrity aligns and re-aligns the mindset of the potential corruptor to firmly adhere to a moral code or a code with altruistic values that is incorruptible. Ethical integrity enables an individual to become aware of the existence of a moral problem in a situation, or that a moral standard or principle is relevant to the circumstance. This is critical because identifying an issue as ethically significant presumably helps to initiate ethical decision making and in turn makes ethical behavior more likely (Trevino and Weaver, 2003). The ethical integrity measure to fight corruption is likely to determine how an individual potential corruptor behaves in a volatile environment and how such an individual can easily be lured into corruption. Ethical integrity also attempts to shape and create an unimpaired condition that is soundness. It also makes the quality or state of being complete or undivided that is completeness something which is truly needed in the fight against corruption. Again the measure helps in the fight against corruption since it espouses and enacts values and is all about congruence between words and deeds. Ethical integrity is about honesty, morality, being a person of a strong character, and being above reproach. It is doing the right thing, for the right reasons, no matter the cost. Essentially, ethic integrity is right actions and motives. Given that moral collapse almost everywhere within every sector of life which is normally the breeding ground for corruption, ethical integrity is needed to repair the damage caused by the collapse. The exhibition of ethical integrity, willingness of the employees to demonstrate, would heighten the fight against corruption. The supreme quality needed for an employee is unquestionably ethical integrity, without it, no real evasion of corruption is possible. When the environment and personal factors are very prevalent and the future of ethical behavior is at stake, the fight against corruption may easily accept the effort of fighting corruption to re-align the fight by co-opting ethical integrity as a measure found by many studies to improve moral sensitivity of an individual (Blodgett, Lu, Rose and Vitell, 2001; Clarkeburn, 2002; Yetmar and Eastman, 2000). Because of ethical sensitivity, ethical integrity makes an individual recognize that a decision-making situation has a moral content. This comes as a result of the presumed magnitude of consequences and social dimensions content of the situation (Flanney and May, 2000; Frey, 2000; May and Paul, 2002). In his study Reynolds (2006a) found that those who prefer to focus on the means (formalists) represents a more encompassing and inclusive decision-making framework than those who focus on the ends (utilitarians). Butterfield, Trevino and Weaver (2000) in their scenario-based study found the existence of a competitive framework and the

use of moral language influenced moral awareness (the latter by triggering a moral schema), along with the issue characteristics "magnitude of consequences" and "social consensus". Thus, the following proposition is formulated:

P1. Ethical integrity is the best option to fight corruption where values can be compromised due to environmental and personal factors.

Ethical integrity can as well be aided by ethical reasoning in the fight against corruption. This is because once a potential corruptor becomes aware of an ethical dilemma, ethical judgment processes should be more likely to be triggered (Trevino, Weaver and Reynolds, 2006). These processes can take the form of being aware of what is right based upon either concern for obedience to authority and fear of punishment or exchange in relationships. They can also be based on the realization of the expectations of significant others or rules or laws. However, all these processes should be embedded on determining what is right more autonomously by looking to universally held principles of natural justice and rights. This means that an individual's thinking about what is right should be largely influenced by significant others as well as rules and laws where actions should be more consistent with moral thought. Ethical reasoning is associated with characteristics of ethical issues, particularly the type of harm and the magnitude of consequences and dimensions of an issue's moral intensity (Frey, 2000). Turner et al. (2002) proposed that individual's with more complex moral reasoning would have the ability to conceptualize problems and interpersonal situations in more complex ways, resulting in the likelihood that they would go beyond short-term self-interests to focus on the good of the group. This suggests that moral reasoning should be considered when identifying measures to fight corruption, particularly if the environment and personal factors are enormous as to lead to ethical dilemmas. For example, in the current circumstances, lack of ethical reasoning has caused serious misconduct by employees at all levels, a loss of trust in organizations by the citizens, and overt corrupt practices (Darcy, 2010). It is only through ethical reasoning that can help articulate and embody the purpose and values of the

organization especially now that everyone seems to live in a fish-bowl on public display. It also focuses on organizational success rather than on personal ego especially recognition that values is in the success of people in the organization. Ethical reasoning capitalizes on ethics, value and the creation of value for stakeholders as well as creating a mechanism of dissent which is dearly needed in situations where employees have to 'push back' processes that may be out of line. Ethical reasoning takes a charitable understanding of other's values because it understands why different people make different choices, but still have a strong grasp on what they would do and why. It enables making tough calls while being imaginative through consistently uniting "doing the right thing" and "doing the right thing for the organization". It enables an employee to know the limits of the values and the ethical principles he/she live and are prepared with solid reasons to defend a course of action. It makes it easy to frame actions in ethical terms by taking seriously the claims of others, considering the effects of one's actions on others (stakeholders), and understanding how acting and leading in a certain way will have effects on one's character and the character of others. It connects the basic value proposition to stakeholders support and societal legitimacy by linking the basic *raison dètre* of the organization with the way that value gets created and society's expectation is a gargantuan task. However, where an individual's thinking about right and wrong is highly susceptible to external influence such as in the case of corruption which is very prevalent now, then the management of such conduct through attention to norms, peer behaviors, leadership, reward systems, climate, and culture and so on becomes important (Trevino, Weaver and Reynolds, 2006). Ethical reasoning would enable the employee to behave and act in line with the interest of the organizational beneficiaries. As such it can be argued that individual with complex ethical reasoning are more likely to value goals that go beyond immediate self-interest and to foresee the benefits of actions that serve the collective good. In contrasts, it can be believed that individuals who see collective good as the purpose of action are less likely to act against it. Thus, the following proposition is formulated:

P3. Ethical reasoning acts as a major parameter in the fight against corruption based on the principles of right ethical behavior

Just as well, ethical competency is more likely to direct how a potential corruptor ought to act with a high degree of out-doing the temptations to corrupt. In any corruption-infested situation, the economy and the livelihood of the citizens are at stake and the potential corruptors may have a poor understanding of both the influences of the environmental and personal factors on corruption and how to respond to them. Because the economy or the citizens may face a do or die situation, they often have no choice but to rely on the potential corruptors whose ambitions when unchecked would sprout corruption. However, when an organization strengthen the ability of its leaders, managers, and employees to apply abstract notions, reliably through deployment of specific knowledge and reasoning skills that is ethical competency, such an organization is bound to avoid the pitfalls of corruption, scandals, and maladministration. Key elements of ethical competence includes subject-knowledge matter that is the substantive institutional ethics standard, both *de facto* and *de jure* standards of ethical official conduct and integrity standards, together with legal, institutional, political, and cultural justification of those standards; reasoning skills that is the diagnostic and analytic skills needed to identify ('construct') an ethically problematic situation, and skills of values- clarification and value-based reasoning needed to apply relevant standards appropriately, to identify and test assumptions, and to recognize where a case is not covered by a particular rule or where further information is required in order to understand the matter at issue. Ethical competency means one is endowed with problem-solving skills which is needed to resolve an issue where competing and conflicting goods contend for attention; demands of ethical or moral principle, the law, the organization policy, standards, and guideline, 'the public interest', and the particular citizen's interest, all have to be considered; advocacy skills that is the ability to advocate effectively a principled view of the matter, and the proposed or actual decision; self-awareness and consensus-building skills that is recognizing the various merits and weakness of one's

positions, and of the principled position which may be taken by other officials, individuals, interest groups, and building consensus; and attitude and commitment promotes development of rational commitment to appropriate norms and standards, through the use of reflective learning. However, when the prevailing conditions are unfavorable, employees may disregard the use of these skills and would wish to directly benefit from unethical behaviors and practices. Possession of these skills does not necessarily create a new interpretation but alters a significant proportion of the frameworks that have been used to fight corruption this far, rendering them ineffective. To the extent that such a move becomes ineffective, their continuous application may be counterproductive. In unfavorable conditions, ethical competency can fail to generate commitment of employees, no matter how appealing and appropriate the measure may be. In spite of these, however, not only does ethical competency help fight corruption, but more importantly endows employees with principled moral reasoning, recognition of ethics-related conflicts, refusal to do something unethical, and apply ethical principles in handling situations. Thus the following proposition is formulated:

P2. Ethical competency is important in identifying the ideal combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes and experience, the possession of which empowers employees to be able to fight corruption.

When the fight against corruption seems not to take a convincing dimension, the ethics-induced model is taken to rise to the course and lodge a good fight much better than the several anticorruption strategies that have so far been adopted. This model can be narrowed down to the combination of ethical integrity (EI), ethical reasoning (ER), and ethical competency (EC), simply 3EIRC. They can be taken on to fight corruption when there is high degree of receptivity by the citizens that an employee has a clear conscience; technically good or effective and morally good; trustworthy and credible; and deeply committed to his/her work. Thus, the model contends that receptivity will act as a moderator between causes of corruption and the measures to fight it. Hence, the model is derived from the consensus developed world-wide over the importance of reforming institutions to

strengthen ethics, integrity and professionalism to prevent and combat corruption (Ashour, 2004). Such reforms are crucial to protecting public resources, enhancing organizational performance, and strengthening the organization's role in orchestrating development and providing basic services, indeed there is a greater awareness of the need for ethics, integrity and professionalism in all sectors today. The importance of the model, however, depends on the roles ethics is accorded a place to influence organizational performance. In this model, fighting corruption is influenced by ethics but not anti-ethics measures with the external and personal contexts of the causes of corruption. However, in this framework, it is further contended that the question of ethics is one that is linked to the character and conduct of morals of human beings, that is, the good or bad, right or wrong behavior and evaluation of conduct against some absolute criteria and with a negative or positive value put on it. In presenting 3EIRC as a measure to fight corruption, their ingredients as forms to enhance ethical behaviors and conducts are demonstrated in an employee's life and work performance. The last proposition is formulated based on these assumptions as

P4. Ethical integrity, reasoning, and competency have a high degree of success in the fight against corruption and the wider public is in their support.

Implications for Research and Practice

Building on the statement that fighting corruption has nearly failed under the current anticorruption strategies, a model has been developed that identifies three kinds of measures to fight corruption: ethical integrity, reasoning, and competency. This model can spur further research on the measures to fight corruption and provide lessons for management practice.

Implication for Research

Five lines of research could follow from this model. The first line of research is the systematic analysis of the environmental and personal factors that foster the adoption of ethical integrity. Organizational and management scholars may conduct empirical studies comparing the ethical integrity tendencies of employees whose organizations operate in high favorable conditions for corruption to sprout. A second line of research may analyze the extent to which ethical reasoning can fight corruption. This also requires empirical investigation to determine it. A third line of research may deal with ethical competency in the fight against corruption. Empirical investigations are needed to answer this question. A fourth line of research for instance, may pose the question can the 3EICR be used concurrently to fight corruption? Answering this question requires empirical investigation. However, Scholars may empirically test the extent to which ethics influences the types of fighting corruption that may be adopted with ease. A fifth line of research may require researchers to interest themselves to investigate the genesis and outcomes of even higher levels of "collective" forms of corrupt behavior using the lens of the model. Understanding unethical behavior in individuals and even in work groups is insufficient to explain how corruption becomes institutionalized without reference to ethics (Anand, Ashforth, and Joshi, 2004; Nielsen, 2003). After all, Trevino, Weaver and Reynolds (2006) suggest that understanding the processes that drive and sustain such differences in corruption levels, as with the outcomes of such corruption, would be extremely helpful and could inform initiatives with the potential to decrease such corruption. Certainly, conducting rigorous research that moves beyond mere sanctions and penalties is challenging for many reasons, yet it is worth doing even if we conduct fewer studies to stem out corruption in our midst. Researchers from diverse disciplines are in a position to provide unique and meaningful assistance, if they will take this important step.

Implications for Practice

It can be surmised that several strategies designed to fight corruption are faulty which cannot eradicate the vice from society. In addition, organizations could consider the extent to which ethics can ably contribute to fight corruption because insofar as morality is central to an individual's self-understanding, failure to act morally creates cognitive dissonance and emotional discomfort (Blasi, 2004). Bergman (2004) contends that failure to act morally becomes, in effect, a betrayal of oneself, and motivating power of morality resides in its

degree of integration with the self. According to Cumbo (2009), ethical behavior can be taught and learned. Employees can be trained in areas such as critical evaluation and problem detection, envisioning, communication skills for conveying a vision, and impression management. An ethical employee should be able to formulate a vision both clear and appealing to all such that individual should behave in ways that are morally justifiable (Beu and Buckley, 2004). In addition to formulating the vision, the ethical employee should be inspirational and works within the guidelines for reaching organizational goals and objectives; he/she can dramatically fight corruption effectively. However, the course of fighting the scourge can be costly and hectic. As Ward (2005) seems to suggest, where ethical behavior is in short supply, employees should be encouraged, for it can make a difference in the fight against corruption. Apart from these, organizations need to establish 'ethical infrastructures' which should contain both formal and informal elements: ethics codes and policies, communications, trainings, monitoring systems, sanctions, and rewards on the formal side, and attention to ethical climates and organizational cultures on the informal sides (Trevino and Weaver, 2003).

CONCLUSION

This paper shows that it is possible to have a corrupt-free society. To have such a state there is need to dive into the practical search for an ethic-induced mode. The paper has demonstrated that the numerous anti-corruption strategies world over have failed to wipe out corruption in human society. It would seem the only option left now is to revisit the natures of human being and how they ought to live. The paper suggests that the long 'forgotten' path of ethical integrity, ethical reasoning and ethical competency could do wonders in this case. Though it's conceptual in nature, the paper could be a benchmark upon which empirical investigations on these variables could enhance anti-corruption efforts.

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