Prevention of corruption in Kautiliya way

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Abstract

The paper focuses upon Kautilya’s ideas of administration of state, where corruption plays an important role in the State’s economic system. In the Arthashastra, Kautilya has prescribed the measures to prevent the corruption and punish the offenders. He has presented an example that, just as fish moving inside the water cannot be known, when it is drinking the water, in the same way, officers appointed for the carrying out the works of state cannot be known when they are embezzling the money. The paper describes the relevance of Kautilya’s ideas of preventing corruption in modern political environment.

Keywords: Corruption, Revenue, State officials, Kadrya, Secret agents

Introduction

In the Indian intellectual tradition, Kautilya’s name is known with the school of politics in ancient India. He was instrumental in the destruction of the unjust Nanda king of Magadha in 324 B.C. in ancient India. In his supervision, the Maurya king Chandragupta built the vast empire whose frontiers were larger than that of modern India. Chandragupta was the first king who was the king of greater India, whose historicity is certified in context to the time of administration. He was the first king, who after unification of northern India extended his kingdom from the Himalayas to southern India continent. Chandragupta Maurya did this all undertakings with the help of intelligent Kautilya, who was also his teacher. Kautilya’s Arthaśāstra is a unique contribution in the area of political science, which covers the administration, polity, economics, foreign policy, and public administration also. We can see from historical sources that, the empire built by the Chandragupta Maurya, and was expanded by his son Bindusara and his grandson the Ashoka following the policies of Kautilya.

Prevention of corruption in Kautiliya way:

Corruption is an improper and unlawful conduct intended to secure a benefit for oneself or another. Its forms include bribery, extortion, and the misuse of inside information. It exists where there is community indifference or a lack of enforcement policies. In societies with a culture of ritualized gift giving, the line between acceptable and unacceptable gifts is often hard to draw. By this description, we can see that corruption is unlawful activity, which emerges out from lack of enforcement policies. As said above that, the nature of man is similar of the horse, they change when they are employed in the work. By the description of taking preventive measures against corrupt officials in the time of Kautilya, it seems that, corruption was also in practice in the administration. Danida also have mentioned the Kauṭilya’s view in his Daśakumāraccaritam that, the Cānakaṇya has enumerated forty types, but the wicked officers employed in the state offices, embezzles the money by applying thousands types of deceitful techniques. Kautilya has described with the example of honey that, if the honey is placed on the surface of tongue of somebody, then it is impossible that, he has not tasted the honey. Similarly, officers who are employed in the work of dealing with the money it is impossible, that he has not tasted the honey. In present days we can see that, the roots of corruption are very strong; it has developed in micro level, such as traffic police, the clerk of a small office, to the macro level in the institution of government. We have seen the news of country’s biggest scams, such as Bofors scam, Fodder scam, 2 G spectrum scam, Coal auction scam from last the twenty years.
These are said to be biggest scams of the country, which affected the economic progress of the nation badly. In present time, the corruption has developed the concept of black money. “A report published in 2013 by Global Financial Integrity states that the total black money outflow from India was nearly $343 billion during the last decade. This puts India at the fifth position on global exporter of illicit money. Driven substantially by the higher education sector, real estate deals and mining income, India’s black economy could now be nearly three quarters the size of its reported gross domestic product (GDP)”.[x] In the Kauṭiliya, terminology, such as persons who embezzles the money of the state in a large amount are called Dāyiya, and the punishment is recommended for them the secret punishment.[i]

The corruption has its adverse effect not just on the static efficiency, but also on the investment and growth. [ii] UNDP argues that the corruption is a great hurdle in the development of the nation, because of corruption the social and political stability of a nation undermined. “Corruption in government increases poverty in many ways. Most directly, it diverts resources to the rich people, who can afford to pay bribes, and away from the poor people, who cannot. However, it also skews decisions in favour of capital-intensive enterprise (where the pickings are greater) and away from labour-intensive activities more likely to benefit the poor. Corruption also weakens governments and lessens their ability to fight poverty. It reduces tax revenues and thus the resource available for public services. Moreover, if administrations are assumed to be corrupt, honest people tend to avoid public service, so the quality of personnel suffers. More generally, corruption eats away at the fabric of public life-leading to increased lawlessness and undermining social and political stability.”[xii]

We can see the example of developed countries such as Norway, Australia, Switzerland, Netherlands, and the USA; these are in the top position of ranking in the Human Development Index, and India has got 135th ranking in its Human Development Index. While, our neighbouring country Sri Lanka has a better position than the India in Human Development Index.[xiii] Circumstantial evidence suggests that over the last 100 years or so corruption has declined with economic growth in most rich countries. For, an example of Singapore, we can see that, as developing country that is economic growth in most rich countries. For, an example of Singapore, we can see that, as developing country that is growing fast, the government has been able to prevent corruption from affecting its development. Singapore has been able to prevent corruption from affecting its development. Singapore has been able to prevent corruption from affecting its development. 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