



SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL FACTORS OF CORRUPTION IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF UZBEKISTAN: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

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Abstract: This article analyzes the socio-philosophical factors of corruption in the education system of Uzbekistan from the perspective of contemporary processes. The research reveals the historical roots of corruption, its connection to social consciousness and the value system, as well as the social causes of corrupt practices found in educational institutions.

Keywords: corruption, education system, socio-philosophical factors, legal culture, social consciousness, moral values, transparency, digitalization, civil society, state policy.

The education system is one of the main institutions that determines the social development of a society, and its normative order, ethical criteria, and institutional relations reflect the society's overall value system. In the context of the reforms being carried out in Uzbekistan's education system, the problem of corruption requires analysis not only as a legal or organizational shortcoming but also as a socio-philosophical phenomenon. This is because corruption disrupts the balance between knowledge, social justice, and moral legitimacy within the educational environment.

This paragraph analyzes the socio-philosophical factors of corruption in the education system from the perspective of the current situation. Specifically, social inequality, conflicts of interest, the insufficient development of institutional control mechanisms, and the instrumental nature that moral values have acquired are examined as significant sources of corruption. These factors affect the functional essence of the education system, weakening its social credibility and legitimacy.

Analyzing corruption within the framework of social philosophy allows for an understanding of it not merely as a result of individual actions, but as a product of the interplay between social relations, values, and institutions within a society. In this context, this paragraph serves to formulate conceptual approaches aimed at a deeper understanding of the problem of corruption in the education system and its prevention.

Corruption in Uzbekistan's education system requires special attention not only as a legal and ethical phenomenon but also as a socio-philosophical one. It is not just a matter of legal violations but an indicator of society's value system, the level of its cultural-national consciousness, social justice, and spirituality. Therefore, it is crucial to approach the problem of corruption based on ontological, axiological, and epistemological criteria. In Uzbekistan's education system, corruption primarily manifests as a product of the socio-economic environment. "Social injustice in society, imbalances in the distribution of resources, and the privileged position of individuals with high social capital foster a climate of corruption in educational institutions. Because the education system - especially higher education - is seen

as a social elevator, access to it or success within it is often tied to monetary factors"¹. Corruption in the education system is also directly related to incorrect knowledge and values in consciousness. The devaluation of knowledge, an assessment system not based on a diploma, but on knowledge, and the evaluation of academic achievements based on false criteria lead to the loss of epistemological trust. "In a society where documents, certificates, and ratings are considered more important than the quality of education, corruption is perceived not only as an existing, but also as a legalized phenomenon"².

Corruption in the education system of Uzbekistan is not a simple administrative problem, but a deeply rooted socio-ethical phenomenon, and to understand it, it is necessary to deeply analyze the worldview, value system, and level of mutual trust in the minds of people formed in society. This problem is embedded in all segments of society, especially in the sphere of education, manifesting itself in its most dangerous forms. Because education is the main factor in the formation of public consciousness. If honesty, justice, and equality are violated in this area, then these vices will become established as a kind of "norm" in the minds of future generations. This situation in the education system is primarily closely related to the general environment formed in society. When the notion that "it cannot be achieved by the right way" is ingrained in people's minds, they choose detours, not honesty. This indicates a weakening of the principles of justice in society. While parents are trying to "find more ways" to enroll their children in school, this process relies on personal interests rather than social justice. In such a state, corruption begins to be perceived in people's minds not as a way, not as a means, but as practically the only means of achieving the goal.

In such a situation, the problem is not merely at the level of personal morality but is also tied to the generally accepted views and perceptions formed within the public consciousness. When teachers rightfully see that their labor is undervalued, when students observe others achieving success through connections rather than knowledge, and when parents start to value an "acquaintance" more than their own child's true potential, it indicates that the very foundation of trust in society has eroded. It is precisely when this trust - the main unifying force of society - weakens that a fertile ground for corruption to flourish is created. In such an environment, relationships between people are based not on honesty and openness, but on personal gain and opportunity. The goal becomes "obtaining a certificate" rather than acquiring knowledge. Achieving a desired outcome through "shortcuts" instead of hard work becomes the guiding principle. This gradually leads society toward a deep spiritual crisis. This is because, in such an environment, individuals grow accustomed to relying on external means rather than their own natural talents and potential. This situation, first and foremost, destroys a person's self-confidence, and subsequently, their trust in others.

Corruption begins where trust in society ends. People prefer to rely on connections rather than laws, and on money rather than knowledge. In this case, the primary blame lies not with the individual, but with the environment that compelled them to make such a choice. This environment, in turn, is the result of confusion in the collective consciousness, a breakdown in the value system, and the loss of moral anchors. To understand corruption, it is necessary to view it not only as a legal violation but also as a crisis of the social psyche. Corruption in

¹ Денисова-Шмидт Е.В., Леонтьева Э.О. Коррупция на Дальнем Востоке: компромисс между народом и властью. – М.: Common place, 2022. – 144 с. – С. 34–36.

² Матвейчев О., Акопян А. Мифы о коррупции. – М.: Книжный мир, 2018. – 576 с. – С. 111–115.

Uzbekistan's education system is not simply the misconduct of a few individuals. It is the culmination of an atmosphere of moral instability, inequality, distrust, and discontent that has emerged within society. To combat it, it is necessary not only to strengthen the punitive system but also to change people's consciousness, worldview, and attitudes toward values. Such an approach serves to restore honesty and justice in the public consciousness and strengthen the foundation of trust in society. Otherwise, corruption will continue to erode not only education but the entire society from within.

One of the philosophical roots of corruption is the erosion of the value system. If moral norms lose their power in a society and self-interest is prioritized over integrity, corruption becomes a normative phenomenon. Many scholars have interpreted corruption as an institutional problem. For example, J. Naisen shows that in the Soviet education system, corruption developed not as a struggle against the apparatus, but as an adaptation to the existing system. Such an approach calls for an anthropological study of corruption - that is, through its manifestations in human behavior and social roles. However, these views are not sufficiently normative; approaching corruption solely as a cultural phenomenon can serve to justify it. In contrast, E. Campos and S. Pradhan, in their research, propose specific systemic anti-corruption solutions based on cross-sectoral analysis. They identify vulnerabilities in the healthcare, education, and financial sectors, linking the fight against corruption to institutional and technological solutions³. Corruption in the education system is a mirror of the crisis in the system of social consciousness and values. This is not just a crime, but a manifestation of the moral deformation of society. Legal measures alone are not enough to eliminate it; on this path, it is necessary to form socio-philosophical consciousness and revise the approach to education.

Today, corruption is recognized globally as a dangerous phenomenon that destroys social and political systems, leading not only to economic weakness, but also to social instability, a crisis of cultural values, moral degeneration, institutional distrust, and a weakening of human criteria. In particular, the manifestation of this negative phenomenon in the education system requires a deeper philosophical analysis of its socio-cultural roots. After all, the education system is a crucial area for the conscious reproduction of society, a guarantee of the continuity of moral heritage, and the preservation of cultural genetics. From a socio-philosophical point of view, the phenomenon of corruption is the result of the deformation of public consciousness in the education system, the relativistic interpretation of moral absolutes, and the crisis of the norms of moral choice in society. It is noteworthy that modern Western and domestic scholars have proposed many approaches reflecting corruption in education. For example, the Russian researcher G.K. Mishin "evaluates corruption as a "corruption of the heart and psyche" (corruptum), emphasizing that this process undermines the axiological freedom of the individual"⁴. This approach considers corruption not only as external, but also as internal moral corruption, mental disorder. However, this position overly metaphysifies internal human choice, neglecting social determinants, that is, macrostructural factors - the political environment, cultural context, social inequality, and the effectiveness of institutions.

In Western approaches, in particular, according to the point of view put forward by S. Rose-Ackerman, "corruption is considered as an inoptimal form of state intervention in the

³ Campos, E., Pradhan, S. (eds.) The Many Faces of Corruption: Tracking Vulnerabilities at the Sector Level. – Moscow: Альпина Паблишер, 2020. – 551 с.

⁴ Мишин, Г.К. Коррупция: политические, экономические и правовые проблемы, М.: Юрист, 2001, –В.364.

distribution of economic resources"⁵. This economic functionalist interpretation often sees corruption as a "cost-effectiveness" problem. However, this approach does not take into account the deep philosophical factors influencing social consciousness, moral and existential motives, personal freedom, and social identity. In the sociological approach (Giddens, Habermas, Parsons, Blumer), corruption is interpreted as an unauthorized, unacceptable exchange of social roles. This approach emphasizes the asymmetry of the system of social relations. In particular, based on the theory of Niklas Luhmann, it is assessed that corruption arises as a result of discursive differences between communication systems. However, in this model, there is a strong tendency to perceive corruption as a process of naturalization in structural networks, and there is a risk of presenting it not as a vice that should normally be rejected in society, but as a functional necessity.

In Uzbekistan, the socio-philosophical causes of the phenomenon of corruption are largely explained by relic situations in the system of mentality, historical and cultural transformations, and values. However, these approaches often acquire a deterministic character: for example, there are many simplifying approaches to the ancient acceptance of bribes as "gifts" or the legalization of artificial ways to gain social status. This leads to insufficient attention to the instability of social agency, personal responsibility, and normative discourses. In the political-philosophical approach, corruption is understood as a mechanism of monopolistic seizure of power resources. These approaches are especially important when analyzing the vertical structure of the political system in Uzbekistan. However, they often overlook psychosocial components such as ambiguous roles in the education system, weak control, or declining personal confidence capital. From a socio-philosophical point of view, corruption is the result of the disruption of the harmony between social systems, cultural codes, and moral orders, that is, the disintegration of "axion-normative discourse." Since the education system is the main arena for the development and transmission of these discourses to the next generation, it can be the most affected by corruption, and at the same time, a tool for its eradication. However, for this, it is necessary to form in public consciousness a "normative hatred" for corruption - a position of ontological rejection, non-corruption. This can be achieved through social criticism, the development of alternative knowledge, and the activation of social agency. The general cause of corruption can be expressed in the fact that we understand and define it as a persistent or temporary negative imbalance between all the factors of restraint and motivation acting between civil servants (higher and lower-ranking government officials), as well as in the fact that there is a tendency to intensify and refining motivational factors.

Corruption is extremely relevant for the education system of Uzbekistan not only as an administrative-legal, but also as a socio-philosophical problem. Its roots lie in the moral crisis in society, the violation of the criteria of social justice, and the low level of legal awareness and civic culture. From the point of view of social philosophy, corruption is the destruction of the essence of man, that is, his essence as a "moral being." Corruption destroys a person's moral and ethical nature, subordinating their consciousness to utilitarian interests. As a result, a person prioritizes "material benefit" over the existing value system in society, thereby losing their essence - existence based on the principles of honest work, justice, and conscience. As A.J. Aslonov noted, "the most important factor in eliminating the negative consequences of bribery is the formation of moral immunity in society." This moral immunity is a mechanism of self-

⁵ Rose-Ackerman, S. Коррупция и государство. М.: Логос, 2003, –В.400.

defense of the social spirit, which protects society from internal spiritual corruption. In the system of categories of social philosophy, this process manifests itself as ontological deformation, that is, the true content of human existence - the spirit of honesty and truth - is replaced by false criteria

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