INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE: THE GLOBAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DISCOURSE—TOWARDS INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT?

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SUMMARY

In introducing the special issue, this essay draws together international experiences by way of examples that have appeared in the Public Administration and Development journal over recent decades. What has worked in global anti-corruption? What has not? And is there a need for a more holistic approach to global anti-corruption in terms of integrity management, given that the nature of public sector corruption is changing and boundaries between public and private sectors have become politically blurred?

Against the background of key concepts, what have been the trends and issues of corruption and integrity in the public/civil services and honest government at national and international levels? The range of approaches and strategies are outlined, followed by selected national cases across the regions. Second, the essay assesses the major institutional approaches and their shortcomings and presents elements of an alternative approach on the basis of civic education and the nurturing of reflexivity. Citizens are central to this thinking in terms of sensitising them to public ethics. (Re)orienting public officials towards becoming reflective public officials, that is, why they are public officials and who is the public, could not be more pertinent to recent revolutionary events in much of the Arab world. The debate continues. Recent developments such as political corruption and corruption at the sectoral (e.g. water and education), decentralised, local government and city levels are discussed. Although we cannot switch entirely to personal values, the technical solutions by themselves have not proved as successful as their proponents had hoped, and other approaches are essential to replace and/or complement them.¹

Finally, the focus of the special issue is outlined, with its stress on providing perspectives that not only add to the discourse on global anti-corruption but provide practitioners with policy-relevant guidance. Copyright © 2012 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

KEY WORDS—corruption; ethics; integrity; public sector; honest government; reflexivity

DEFINITIONS AND CONTEXT

‘No system of regulation, whether internal or external, can safeguard against calculated wrong doing’, Clive Wright, The Business of Virtue (2004).

‘The basic principles of this world . . . its rules . . . such regulations have . . . an appearance of wisdom . . . but they lack any value in restraining . . . indulgence’, St Paul, Colossians 2:20-3-4.

OECD’s definition of corruption—’abuse of public or private office for personal gain’—is useful for policy development. Corruption’s pervasiveness and increasing cross-border and sophisticated forms are well recognised. The boundaries between public and private sectors have become blurred since the new public management (NPM) and retirement from high public office to the corporate world is common, with implications for conflicts of interest. At the same time, the search for restoring or nurturing integrity in public life and corporate social responsibility in business has been variously pursued. ‘Integrity management’ is now the fashion, with a thrust on ethics as wholesomeness: knowing where to draw the line. Boundaries between public and private are questioned, with recognition of the need for the assertion of values in the workplace. Old questions therefore arise as to whether ethics can be

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¹An alternative strand in the literature is particularly critical of conventional technocratic attempts to deal with widespread neopatrimonialism (see, e.g. Booth, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Booth and Golooba-Mutebi, 2011).
taught through training. New experiments based on retreats and reflexivity suggest that traditional training and education approaches may not be sufficient per se.

Approaches may be seen in two broad categories. On the one hand, there are those in vogue for some time that place emphasis on restraining unethical or corrupt behaviour: through legal and regulatory sanctions, codes of conduct and independent watchdogs in the public sector or through the practice of whistle-blowing in the private sector.

On the other hand, there is increasing stress on the role of civic education (Marquette, 2007) to increase public awareness of their rights to standards from government and innovative experiential learning and facilitated reflexivity aimed in public and private sector alike at the rediscovery of higher purpose. This has been seen as fundamental to the restoration of ethical business and public service values and better integration of private and public domains. The emphasis has been on ways and means of awakening and developing reflexive and discerning practitioners through experiential learning and the kinds of resources (often spiritual or meditative) that they may be able to draw upon in dealing with professional work situations in the post-modern world.

TRENDS AND ISSUES IN CORRUPTION AND INTEGRITY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND HONEST GOVERNANCE AT NATIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

Over the last decade or so, Public Administration and Development (PAD) has paid increasing attention to issues of corruption and integrity in the civil service and to honest governance at national and global levels. Corruption has clearly taken on cross-border and transnational aspects. Thus, in recent landmark legislation, UK now allows government to prosecute companies for corrupt behaviour outside UK.2

Since the late 1990s, PAD has addressed underlying concepts. Thus, Nolan (1998) in his official findings on declining standards in UK public life (although the decline may still be continuing if we take for example the recent MP expenses cheating scandals in the UK Parliament) argues that the demise of fundamental values such as justice and honesty has a direct correlation with current fashions for the NPM with its stress on value for money and short-term gain. Thus, five key values need restoring from a public administration point of view: service, impartiality, duty, respect and honesty. In his essay around the same time, Klitgaard (1997) also addressed the strategies for ensuring integrity in public or semi public organisations and agencies. He argues that the study of corruption is difficult because of confidentiality, secrecy and non-transparency. Indeed, there is a need to distinguish its various kinds, especially in the domain of natural resource extraction. The role of Kennicot Copper in the overthrow of President Allende of Chile is well known, as are the corporate interests of the Bush family in oil underlying the invasion of Iraq.

Klitgaard first drew attention to corrupt donor–government relations in Africa. As an international issue, aid and corruption is being more generally linked (e.g. the UK aid for arms scandal in Malaysia). In addition, debate has continued in the 60th Anniversary Issue of PAD in the post–Paris Declaration era about more real government ownership of the development process and more genuine external partnership (McCourt and Gulrajani, 2010). In Kenya, where the Department for International Development’s aid to education has been frozen because of corruption, many donors prefer to work with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society directly.

PAD has in fact carried case studies from a range of regions (British Commonwealth, Latin America and Eastern/Central (EC) Europe; Grodeland et al., 1997). Several of these cases have been concerned with the impact on public service integrity of recent approaches to public administration reform (the so-called NPM, agency creation, privatisation and the like; Collins and Kaul, 1997)—in particular, contracting out, loosening of central controls and weakening of the authority chain that have led to corrupt practices on the parts of a newly established airports authority in Tanzania (Fjeldstad, 2003).

The transition from the centrally planned to the market economy, with its inherent utilitarianism and short-termism, the imperatives of political will (Brinkerhoff, 2000) and leadership in countries where public trust in government is

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2 For more examples of how other states deal with the issue of jurisdiction, see, for instance, Transparency International: Progress Report, 2008—OECD Anti-Bribery Convention, Paris, June 2008. See also the OECD country reports (http://www.oecd.org/info/country/0,3380, en_2649_37447_1_1_1_1_37447,00.html; Council of Europe–GRECO http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/greco/evaluations/round3/ReportsRound3_en.asp).
quite low (Hewitt et al., 2002) have all compromised standards in public life. This has been especially the case with the transition to market economies where there has been a weak institutional, especially regulatory, framework (e.g. Mongolia; Fritz, 2007). In some cases, the state itself has become effectively privatised (Nickson and Lambert, 2002).

Crisis in public service delivery have also been linked to the issue of integrity. A later section of this article discusses more recent cases of integrity management in specific sectors such as health, education and water. Girishankar (Collins, 2000) stresses the dynamic links (both policy and institutional) between market failure, trust in government and equity in service provision. Christoplos (Collins, 2000) argues for the dangers of delinking humanitarianism and public integrity (the civil–military complex) and the need to rethink roles and integrity in complex emergencies and natural disasters in Central America. In China, for the first time in Chinese history for a top leader, Hu Jintao apologised for inadequate disaster relief after recent natural disasters.

In other regions, an increasing number of failed and war-torn states have been the subject of studies in the context of approaches to institution rebuilding (Brinkerhoff, 2005). Some war-torn states may have been undermined by corruption and decline of trust in central government. Basic issues in the ethics of governance arise: how for example are former freedom fighters in S. Sudan supposed to be transformed, overnight, into accountable and democratic leaders (Blunt, 2003).

There are also critical challenges in development management here, in particular concerning delivering public services to those affected by conflict and homelessness (Brinkerhoff, 2000). An ongoing challenge is access to justice in a growing number of states. Ironically in a globalised age, many groups and communities in a range of states, both rich and poor, remain vulnerable and excluded from access to basic goods and services, including justice. They include ethnic minorities, refugees and inhabitants of remote impoverished areas—sometimes because of civil strife. International development experience is growing of civil society engagement in donor supported poverty alleviation for marginal communities and the strategies being adopted and the lessons learned in embracing the state–community divide by enhancing outreach and access.

In these domains, as well as others such as natural disasters (Sims and Vogelmann, 2002) or epidemics (e.g. HIV/AIDS—Moran et al., 2004), in meeting these challenges, actual or potential roles for NGOs and development agencies are prominent. Yet both donor (e.g. Saltmarsh et al., 2003, on the Department for International Development) and NGO/hot-for-profit organisation (Lips-Wiersma, 2006) worlds have become infected by managerialism, in the sense of over concern with internal performance management systems, ‘value for money’ and the like. As Nolan has pointed out, there are clear tensions between ‘old’ and ‘new’ values.

Ever present are issues of partnership and cooperation in situations where trust in basic institutions is all but gone or where there is an uneven NGO tradition to build on. In E/C Europe, although civil society blossomed as a major influencing factor at the very end of the communist era, albeit in non-institutional ways, the situation thereafter in the overall region has been variable. In Eastern Europe and especially the Balkans, the quantum of outside resources and assistance aimed at increasing such civil awareness has been significantly less than in the ‘Visegrad group’.

With the dominant thrust of the global market, questions have now been raised about the extent that there are shared or universal values across cultures (+) with diverse faiths and belief systems. In what sense and to what extent are the values that underpin the UN Human Rights Charter, for example, universal? How in any case do we find the common interest and good or define ethics at any jurisdictional level? What are its alleged sources?

COMMON FINDINGS AND SOLUTIONS: THE NEGLECT OF THE ‘HUMAN’ OR ‘PEOPLE’ FACTOR

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<th>Key findings</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
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<td>Nolan: demise of justice and honesty in government</td>
<td>Restoration of key values compromised by NPM</td>
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<td>Klitgaard: variety types corruption, including corrupt donor–government relations</td>
<td>More transparency and involvement of civil society</td>
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The table summarises the key findings and solutions—proposed and implied—across some 15 writers in PAD cited. The common ingredient of success or lack of it in assessing what works and what does not is the focus on and neglect of the ‘human’ and ‘people’ factor. Key, cross-cutting elements include the values of government and state actors (service, impartiality, duty, respect and honesty), transparency and responsibility (both upwards and downwards to civil society), leadership attitudes and quality, public trust, adequacy of civic awareness and making accountability frameworks work by engaging with all actors and stakeholders. Subsequent studies, cited later in this essay, also examine political corruption, with its distorting effects on public policy priorities, and the need for multiple strategies and approaches, especially political democracy, wider participation and accountability. They likewise observe the potentially perverse links between decentralisation and corruption and, again, the need for committed political leadership.

In contrast to the previously mentioned articles, pointing as they do to the key human or people factor, more mainstream articles by Doig et al. (Doig, 1995; Doig and McIvor, 2003; Doig, Watt, and Williams, 2005; 2007; Doig et al., 2006), in dealing with the traditional approaches to public integrity (anti-corruption agencies, enforcing commissions, whistle-blowing, formalised guidelines, etc.), conclude that these approaches have met with limited success. Even aside from factors such as context and external pressures, the main limitation has been the very neglect of the people/human factor and need to embed virtue and values in the individual (Saint Paul, ibid.; Wright, 2004).

INSTITUTIONAL APPROACHES TO PUBLIC INTEGRITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING REFLEXIVE

Being reflexive is important because it involves critical thinking about self and others—in public administration determining the impact of individual actions and policy interventions (beneficial or otherwise) on citizens and the recipients of services. Citizens are central to this thinking in terms of sensitising them to public ethics. (Re) orienting public officials towards becoming reflexive public officials, that is, why they are public officials and who is the public, could not be more pertinent to recent revolutionary events in much of the Arab world.

As discussed in the last section, externally managed and regulated approaches have not often produced the behavioural results. A more critical determinant of change may be the capacity to think (reflexivity or critical thinking) at both organisational and individual levels rather than just the ability to follow rules or, at least, a more judicious combination of the two: the ‘dehors’ and the ‘dedans’, as the French would say. The need for ‘reflexivity’, we argue, arises contextually from some of the currently fashionable ‘reform’ trends (NPM, agency creation and privatisation) and the attendant pressures for change. The net result has been the removal of the individual from why he or she chose the job in the first place, work overload, ambiguity and competition. Examples abound, for example, in UK education with schools competing for places on league tables and universities likewise under research assessment exercises.

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3Doig (2007) argues that (a) anti-corruption agencies are also prone to the same problems as the public sector generally and (b) there is too much donor pressure for quick results.
Several *PAD* articles have addressed the issues of why, in that context, it is so important to stand back and reflect. Collins and Kakabadse (2006) and Lips-Wiersma (2006) discuss how reflexivity can be organised in the corporate and not-for-profit domains and the implications for the public sector.

Retreats have potential in both corporate and government entities. They have contributions to make with regard to a hitherto neglected aspect of public integrity, ethics and governance: the process of nurturing and sustaining values in public and non-government organisations. This is partly an age-old concern of education and training; it is also a core preoccupation of modern change management. Tudway and Pascal (2006) have examined the need for better connection between ethics and policy in terms of articulation and honesty in terms of the following:

- Mismatch between policy goals and privatisation or de-regulation
- The global crisis and loss of direction—particularly in relation to the above
- Corporate social responsibility movement that has emerged—even before global crisis
- Until recently, the persistence of market values (corporate bonus) and the avoidance of dishonesty as just another risk to manage
- How core values are conceived—need for return to basics

These concerns have proved to be enduring if we take into account the recent global financial crisis, with major banks and financial institutions such as the Royal Bank of Scotland and Goldman Sachs biting the dust.

Tudway and Pascal (2006) also argue for the need for dealing with issues of spirituality, in so far as in some countries the latter are crowding out rational discourse. At the same time, the connection between morality and policy needs better articulation: honesty should be the best policy. This argument is premised on the fact of mismatch between policy goals and outturns, for example, over privatisation or de-regulation in contemporary Europe. Values (public and private) that we once thought we stood for are now compromised, the democratic process looks shop soiled and the increased lack of control over our destinies is debilitating. They also find an increasing problem of workplace alienation connected often with corporate scams such as the so-called social responsibility and the advent of market-based values that see the avoidance of dishonesty as just another of the risks to be managed. In brief, both policies and institutions are in a poor state of repair and there is loss of direction and uncertain prospects for progress.

Their prognosis is that we need to go beyond the ‘big gesture’ kind of reforms (consisting of mission statements alone and the brandishing shop window type ‘values’). Instead, the improvement of ethical substance in public and corporate life implies two things. First, there has to be a change in how core values are conceived (they should be active principles and involve accountability). Second, and pursuant to the last point, it is important to equate what we say with what we do. In short, we need an all-level encompassing perspective that enables the addressing of specific symptoms in the context of the wider whole.

Tools for facilitated reflexivity and experiential learning (participative enquiry method) are readily available. Elements of the process include the following:

- (Re)discovery of higher purpose
- Relevance to restoration of ethical business and public service values
- Better integration of private and public domains
- Ways and means of awakening and developing reflexive practitioners
- Resources to draw on in dealing with professional work situations in modern world

Collins and Kakabadse (2006) echo Tudway and Pascal (2006) in taking their cue from the unprecedented crisis of professional identity and integrity that pervades many levels and sectors and the increasingly insecure and alienating work environment. They discuss the relationship between, on the one hand, the dogmatic, institutionalised, codified and potentially dangerous characteristics of many approaches and, on the other hand, the more intuitively contemplative characteristics of spirituality with its stress on awareness of self, impact on others and feeling of universal connectedness.

In particular, they examine the interrelations between the latter. Several models are advanced concerning relationships between belief, belonging and ritual. It is argued that attention needs to be given to inward-focussed
spirituality, which requires individuals to embark on a journey through contemplation and reflection, rather than the more visible side of religion expressed in ritual. Spirituality as a journey to becoming and sense making provides then a basis for building spiritual community through engagement.

In sum and in confronting the challenges stated at the outset, dialogue is offered as a way forward and as mechanism for building spiritual community. Thus, the core messages are (i) spirituality rather than dogma, (ii) reflexivity rather than symbolism and (iii) dialogue rather than combat.

Against a background of a crisis in professional identity, integrity and alienation in the workplace, Collins and Kakabadse (2006) present a pilot group initiative in terms of facilitated reflexivity and experiential learning. With transatlantic provenance, the London-based pilot, like its US counterpart, aims at the development of more meaningful professional work orientation: the rediscovery of higher purpose and its relevance to the restoration of ethical business and public service values and better integration of private and public domains. The emphasis has been on ways and means of awakening and developing reflexive and discerning practitioners and the kinds of spiritual resources that may be able to draw upon in dealing with professional work situations in the post-modern world.

Participative enquiry methodology can produce powerful results, as Collins and Kakabadse (2006) conclude in drawing lessons for practice at three levels—individual, corporate and public policy. Key learning points and valued insights are shared concerning the scope for influence in the workplace, the processes and the resources required: public service–related values such as trust, honesty, humanity, equity and responsibility (the moral ‘non-negotiables’) and pursuit of more vocation in one’s professionalism; changing the corporate culture and the role of leadership; and in the domain of public policy the need to realign institutions—public and private—with the groundswell of humanity in its unprecedented and often man-created poverty.

Finally in terms of application and practice at the workplace, the process of discernment and decision making is considered as central. Despite fragmentation and market-based pressures, a role for reflexivity is described, aided by tools and other resources—including the role for a circle of learning. Nevertheless, there are challenges of outreach and the need to expand dialogue on a more cross-cultural and inter-faith basis in an economy and society (UK) increasingly multi-ethnic.

Such pilots have been part of a transatlantic dialogue, initially focussed on business ethics and spirituality (Woodstock/Paternoster) but with broader implications for the worlds of public and not-for-profit non-government organisations.

Another interesting case study is by Marjo Lips-Wiersma (2006), ‘The Role of Spiritual Retreats in Higher Education in a New Public Management Context’. It carries forward the Paternoster Pilot project in terms of the application of reflexive or spiritual retreat methodology to employees of a specific, not-for-profit organisation in another OECD country—The Netherlands. Contrary to most organisational retreats that are focussed on the goals of the organisation, the retreats described in the article are focussed on the inner life of the individual. Thus, the case study assesses the impact on both the individual and the organisation. The retreats enable employees to become (re)acquainted with self and prioritise deeper values, make conscious choices based on such values and re-assess the balance between different roles and priorities. The study underscores the importance of an organisation taking responsibility for employees reconnecting with their values, particularly in the NPM context.

In terms of its potential applications, the case study provides clues about practice, much discussed at the Paternoster pilots, about putting insights into action, where to draw the line (e.g. the moral non-negotiables) but at the same time how to reconnect or build the bridges. The architecture and geography of an individually integrated approach is less than simple, and balances are hard to achieve in NPM contexts where incompatible or confused values have to be handled. It is nothing less than a struggle in which reflexivity can play a role in the quest to restore meaning at work and a sense of vocation in face of apparent moral vacuum.

However, as both Collins and Kakabadse (2006) and Lips-Wiersma (2006) indicate, there are challenges as well as limits to what this kind of project can achieve, including the process of developing a structured approach to delivering the appropriate context, how far organised spiritual practice, under whatever form, also has the potential to put too much emphasis on the individual response (e.g. to the burdens of NPM, rather than questioning the administrative reforms themselves) and their relationships to corporate personnel or human resources policy and the development of new organisational culture per se.
They should only be seen as an additional means to promote individual life enhancement—and thereby confidence at the workplace. Nevertheless, as Lips-Wiersma finally points out, initiatives that draw on the whole self hold promise and therefore require more study, especially because NPM is not likely to wither away any time soon. Particularly important would be case studies of ‘other initiatives that enable the individual and the organisation to decide on and hold on to some non-negotiable values during the NPM implementation process’.

THE PRIVATE–PUBLIC DIVIDE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ETHICS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

A consequential issue is the public–private divide and its implications. Hellsten and Larbi have identified the economically driven tension between public and private ethics in developing countries as the very source of social plagues such as corruption and suggest ways of bridging that gap, thereby inducing a sense of genuine integrity in the public life.

In their essay, the same authors explore the ideally complementary but effectively contradictory issues of public values and personal faith in developing countries. At various levels, they address both the challenges (including apparent irrationalism where faith imperils all forms of discourse) and the opportunities afforded by the abovementioned tension. For example, what is and what could be the role for bottom–up approaches within the community to rebuild social cohesion—inducing trust from local levels all the way up to decision-making centres of power? In other words, what is/could be the contribution of individual moral commitments and faith-based organisations to improving public service ethics, trust and integrity at any of the three key levels of society?

At the most general level, the authors question whether public service values and norms are indeed universal, despite social and cultural differences, and to what extent are they effectively embodied by public officials and institutions.

A less than categorical answer to the above query (either way) leads to the insight that public and private may not be as opposite to each other as commonly considered, and that what we take for their unfortunate overlapping in ‘collectivist’ societies might actually be the symptom of entirely different illnesses—such as economic problems or gaps in the system of governance.

Exploring the tension between public and private ethics at both theoretical and practical levels, the authors bring forth ideas about how they could and indeed ought to be bridged, in the context of the transition towards ‘non-collectivist’ societies—that is, where public integrity springs from individual confidence and achievement.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In conclusion, although we cannot switch entirely to personal values, the technical solutions by themselves have not proved as successful as their proponents had hoped, and other approaches are essential to replace and/or complement them. The debate over anti-corruption in fact continues. Recent developments reported in PAD have included increasing attention to political corruption and corruption at the sectoral (e.g. water and education), decentralised, local government and city levels.

In terms of political corruption, Larbi (2007) in his PAD collection argues that the ‘third wave’ of democratisation in developing and transitional countries since the early 1990s has been accompanied by increasing emphasis on anti-corruption initiatives, often encouraged and funded by development agencies. The essays reviewed suggest that tackling corruption in the public and political spheres requires a multiplicity of approaches and strategies. Political democratisation provides the environment for a wider participation in the anti-corruption efforts, but the effectiveness of such efforts depends on strengthening compliance and accountability mechanisms.

It has long been pointed out that political corruption distorts priorities for public policy (Ouma, 2006). Most dramatically, political corruption has reached the ‘Mother of Parliaments’ recently, with MPs cheating on their official expenses claims—as if they were above the law. Nevertheless, some OECD countries are showing some political will and moving towards national integrity systems. For example, South Korea now debars former ministers for serving on boards of private corporations for at least 2 years.

At the sectoral level, Knox (2009) has shown how in the case of Bangladeshi health and water, the poorest have been found the most penalised by corruption. Although external interventions (e.g. Transparency International (TI) )
have helped to ameliorate this, committed political leadership is needed if anti-corruption efforts are to be effective and sustainable. Likewise, Asthana (2008), writing on two Indian states, argues with regard to decentralised water provision that the ‘closer to the people’ argument does not necessarily reduce corruption. He finds that corruption in local water services higher than in those provided by regional agencies.

In other regions (E/C Europe) and with regard to the link between decentralisation and corruption, Sorin Ionita (2005) has shown how in Romania political parties allocate decentralised funds on a politically biased basis. Coxson (2009), writing on Armenia, indicates several variables making municipal government prone to corruption. First, there is the degree of awareness and reporting. Although municipal government is a smaller arena than national government and more may know therein about what is going on, the same size factor can be an inhibitor on reporting (especially whistle-blowing) about people well known within the local community. Second, there is a robustness of procurement practices, especially when politically influenced. Third, there are the internal control practices and procedures and the extent in developing and transitional countries to which they are modernised and effective.

Political ingenuity never ceases to abound. The most recent dimension to be highlighted is the positive or negative impacts of gender on corruption. On the basis of Ghanaian data, it is questioned whether women have in practice higher standards (Alhassan-Alolo, 2007). The reality is that women are often captives of the gender system. Discrimination, it is argued, therefore makes women vulnerable and liable to recruit more women in preference to men to redress historical imbalances.

**THE SPECIAL ISSUE**

Against the background of the foregoing, the articles included in the special issue seek to reflect on current discourse about how to address corruption at institutional and country levels. They are predicated on an awareness that no single approach has been particularly or consistently successful. At the same time, issues ranging from globalisation to decentralisation, of the blurring of public and private sector boundaries and the specific characteristics of sectoral corruption all create a dynamic that affects the effectiveness of existing approaches over time and country.

Currently, the emphasis has been retribution for unethical or corrupt behaviour—for example, through legal and regulatory sanctions, codes of conduct, independent watchdogs in the public sector, whistle-blowing and, more recently, the restitution of illicitly obtained assets, which is a ‘fundamental principle’ of the UN Convention on Corruption. Much of the emphasis has been derived from the transferability and adaptation of preferred approaches by donors and consultants, who have failed to live up to institutional expectations or to make inroads in specific country contexts.

At the former level, in relation to the focus on the use of anti-corruption agencies for example, the ‘lack of visible results is making the option of terminating their work tilting in the back of the minds of decision-makers, donors and the international community’ (de Sousa, 2009, p20). In terms of the latter context, there are arguments for re-engineering anti-corruption commissions in terms of country-specific requirements and a lower level of performance expectation (Doig et al., 2005).

How this is done, and how it is integrated into public service functions and delivery, is one dimension—and one where there is often a focus on procedures, audit, oversight, and so on. This brings into place a greater attention to those agencies that have not had the prominence or support that has normally been given to, for example, anti-corruption agencies. On the other hand, even this approach tends to externalise the focus when another interesting dimension that is often bypassed is less about what makes people dishonest (and thus placing the focus on accountability, detection and deterrence) than what makes people honest; in other words, embedding within the individual.

In such circumstances, it is not surprising that there is increasing interest in what makes people honest—on the role of civic education to increase public awareness of their rights to standards from government, on innovative experiential learning and facilitated reflexivity aimed in public and private sector alike at the rediscovery of higher purpose, on developing ethical business and public service values and on the kinds of sources and resources public officials may be able to draw upon in dealing with professional work situations.

Clearly, this does not mean that existing approaches are to be discounted, but the balance between the two perspectives, the questions of priority, sequence, timing and measurement, require discussion and evaluation—if only because the discourse is generally in agreement that existing approaches by themselves are not addressing...
corruption and that, for the many countries that have ratified UN Convention on Corruption, they should be fostering ‘a culture of rejection of corruption’.

The special issue focusses on this discourse—alternatives to current approaches and emphasis—and the options open to countries and donors, either in terms of what has not worked, (and why) and what should be done, or in terms of what appears to work in what sector or context or in which country. As a consequence, the special issue is less interested in the definitions of corruption, or general literature-based overviews, than in analytical and empirical work. Although the appropriate academic rigour applies and conceptual frameworks are referenced, the purpose of the special issue is to provide several perspectives that not only add to the discourse but also provides practitioners with policy-relevant guidance.

REFERENCES


