CrossMark

ORIGINAL PAPER

Corruption, Re-corruption and What Transpires in Between: The Case of a Government Officer in India

Ranjan Vaidya[1]

Abstract Empirical studies suggest that re-corruption is a common occurrence in developing countries, and we know little about what transpires between corruption and re-corruption. The objective of this empirical study is to discuss the practices of government officers in between phase of corruption and re-corruption. It does so by considering the case of a government officer working in an agricultural marketing yard of India. The findings from the case suggest that officers choose to mimic honest dispositions after their transfers to new postings as it gives them more choices in the practice of corruption. The hibernation model of re-corruption is used to explain this behavior of the officers. The study is critical and inspired by Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice. The findings from it will directly contribute to the design of anti-corruption policies.

Introduction

Ever since Bandfield ([1975](#)) suggested the principal–agent model of corruption, many studies have presented models that explain corruption in developing countries. Some examples of such models include the transfer model of corruption (Wade [1982](#), [1985](#)), principal–supervisor–agent model (Tirole [1986](#)), the transit–permit model (Corbridge and Kumar [2002](#)) and the overloaded bureaucrat model (Bertrand et al. [2007](#)). Each of these models has successively enhanced our understanding of corruption. For example, we now know that corruption can be of many types such as paternal (Wade [1985](#); Shah [2006](#)), grand, retail and petty (Heston and Kumar [2008](#)) and inefficient corruption (Bertrand et al. [2007](#)).

A direct, tangible outcome of deliberations on corruption modeling is that we now have specific strategies to curb corruption. Many e-government services in developing countries like India are now delivered through services delivery windows as past studies have indicated that this reduces corruption (Davis [2004](#)). Discussions with field experts on the usual avenues of corruption have also helped in the design of developmental intervention (Klitgaard [2011](#)). The inclusion of accounting information system module as a mandatory part of information systems is a direct outcome of the deliberations on corruption (Shleifer and Vishny [1993](#)).

We have become more aware of the relationship between culture and corruption, as studies demonstrate that corruption is a characteristic of the state and not a reflection of the moral quotient of society (Véron et al. [2006b](#)). We also know that there is a relationship between religion and corruption and that religious affiliations have a bearing on the perceptions about corruption (Marquette [2012](#)).

Though we have become more aware of corruption, there are research gaps in the theorization of corruption. First, there is a gap in our knowledge of the practice of corruption and the kind of "worlds" produced by them (Anjaria [2011](#)). Secondly, we need to know more about how perceptions of corruption change across the different sections of our society (Marquette [2012](#)). There is a gap in our understanding of what is called as the "industrial organization" of corruption, i.e., how agents and industry

✉ Ranjan Vaidya
r.vaidya@auckland.ac.nz

[1] Information Architect, Information Technology Strategy, Policy and Planning Unit, The University of Auckland, 58 Symonds Street, Auckland 1010, New Zealand

collude to benefit from corruption (Bertrand et al. 2007, p. 1672). There is also a gap in the conceptualization of re-corruption, as there are only a handful of studies that discuss re-corruption (Dininio 2005; Klitgaard 2011).

Empirical studies have indicated that re-corruption presents a difficult challenge to anti-corruption strategies as it may result in a feeling of resignation among the people who fight corruption (Klitgaard 2011). The phenomenon of re-corruption indicates the cyclical nature of corruption as there is an interlude between the corruption and re-corruption. While the existing models of corruption have focused on the nexus between stakeholders, the extant literature does not model the interlude between corruption and re-corruption. The purpose of this paper is to problematize this interlude specifically in the case of India. The study does so by analyzing the career trajectory of an officer. The officer joined the Indian government services at a young age and has steered his career in an environment that he describes as "rampant with corruption."

The paper is structured as follows. The next section presents the research method used in the study. Research progress presents the evolution of corruption research in India and also presents the models that are used to explain corruption in India. Case study presents the case of an officer working in an agricultural yard. The case describes the corrupt practices of the officer and how these practices impacted the implementation of an information technology project. The paper then discusses the hibernation model of corruption which is the main theoretical contribution of this study. Finally, the study draws the conclusions.

Research Methodology

Past studies suggest that the research approach can be positivist or interpretive. A positivist study is suitable when the phenomenon to be studied does not get influenced by its surrounding context or environment such as in the case of experimental studies. On the other hand, interpretive or qualitative research is suitable when the phenomenon and its social context have intricate links. Corruption has organizational and social linkages, and hence, our study uses a qualitative approach.

Qualitative studies have discussed different types of generalizability and, while acknowledging that generalizations from sample to populations are "legitimate," have argued that this is only one of the many forms of generalizations (Lee and Baskerville 2003). In their conceptual paper, Lee and Baskerville make a clear distinction between the "first"- and "second"-level constructs, i.e., the facts and the interpretations made by the researcher. Whenever such constructs are involved in a study, the methods of generalizations may differ from those in natural

sciences (Lee and Baskerville 2003, p. 231). The authors go on to discuss four types of generalizability, and our study corresponds to the fourth form of generalizability, i.e., from concepts to theory.

There are different approaches to qualitative research, and this research uses a critical epistemological approach (Klein and Myers 1999). Within the critical approach, studies use "reflexivity" and "reflection" interchangeably. According to Finlay (2002), "reflexivity" and "reflection" lie at two ends of a continuum. Reflexivity is related to self-awareness, while reflection is more about an external object. Pillow (2003) traces the dependency of reflexivity to the "ideal of reflection." According to the author, "reflection" does not presuppose another entity. On the other hand, reflexivity requires a conscious awareness of the self, the other and also of the process of acquiring the knowledge. Following these guidelines, a critical reflection in the current study refers to reflection about the phenomenon of corruption as practiced by a government officer. The study draws its inspiration from Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu 1977) which suggests that stakeholder practices are an outcome of their habitus, their accumulated capital and the properties of the field (Bourdieu 1984). Also, the principles for conducting a critical information systems study provide the guiding framework for the study (Myers and Klein 2011).

Background

This research started with the goal of understanding the implementation challenges of information systems projects in developing countries. While discussing these challenges with the stakeholder groups, the discussions centered on corrupt practices of government officers. The analysis of the implementation challenges revealed that corruption was the only problem that was commonly discussed by all the stakeholder groups (Table 1).

Data Collection and Analysis

The field work for the study started in 2009 and continued till 2012. During this period, the author made three visits to India. The first visit was conducted between January and March 2009. During this visit, initial discussions were undertaken with the government officers and the employees of the private vendor company. An initial field visit was made to six yards to understand the workings of the yards. From these six yards, four yards were chosen on the basis of factors such as a number of transactions, type of agricultural produce brought to the yard and the status of project implementation. The government officers and the private partners were interviewed at their back offices in the yards and during the field visits to the yards. The

Table 1 Key themes of stakeholder discussions

	Stakeholder category				Total
	Farmer	Trader	Government officer	Private partner employee	
Yard problems discussed by stakeholders[a]					
Corruption	2	1	3	3	9
Administrative	1	0	5	2	8
Implementation of rules and regulations	1	0	5	2	8
Day-to-day yard management	0	0	4	4	8
Infrastructure	1	0	2	2	5
Organizational processes	2	0	2	1	5
Yard policies	0	0	2	1	3
Total	7	1	23	15	46

[a] Percentages and totals are based on responses; dichotomy group tabulated at value 1. "0" indicates that the problem was not discussed by the stakeholder group

Table 2 Number of interviews

Stakeholder Group	Interviews	Number of yards
Farmers	7	2
Government officers	8	4
Private partners	5	4
Traders	3	2

farmers were initially interviewed at the yards and then at their farms. Two traders were interviewed at the yards, and one was interviewed at his farm. In all 23 respondents were interviewed from four stakeholder groups, namely farmers, traders, government officers and the private partners. Table 2 presents a summary of the interviews conducted across the stakeholder groups. Based on the terminologies proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), the data corpus comprised of field notes and interview transcripts. After the data corpus was prepared, and initial coding completed, another visit was undertaken in 2010. During this visit, the author met the government officers, the private partners and two of the farmers who were interviewed at their farms. The final field visit was conducted in 2012. By this time, the project was at the closure because of the conflicts between the government officers and the private vendor company. The 2016 correspondence with the officers indicated that the government was implementing the project with a new strategy and vision, under which the project was to be launched in a piecemeal manner as against the previous full-scale implementation. The details of which are published (Author).

The data analysis followed a two-pronged approach. Initially, thematic analysis was used for coding the interview transcripts. Braun and Clarke (2006) guidelines were used for guiding the approach of thematic analysis. For implementing thematic analysis, the guidelines provided by

Boeije (2002) were followed. Subsequently, each interview was coded inductively and its summary was written. The interview summaries were compared across the participants within the same stakeholder group to arrive at the key discussion themes. Finally, the themes were compared across the stakeholder groups to obtain a list of problems that were negatively impacting the implementation of the project. These problems were used for developing a multiple response set to understand which problem category was referred by all the stakeholder groups.

Corruption by government officers was the only implementation problem that was commonly discussed by all the stakeholder groups (Table 1). Out of all the interviews undertaken with the officers, the case of one officer (pseudo-name "Kumar") provided some unique insights on corruption. This case is presented for drawing the conclusions about the hibernation model of corruption. Before discussing the case of Kumar, two sections are presented. The section below discusses Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, and the next presents the research progress on corruption in India.

Theory of Practice

Overview

The theory of practice explains the interrelationships between practices of agents and their social structures. The core concepts of this theory that are applicable in the current study are habitus, capital, field and practice. Habitus refers to the various class factors that shape the tastes and behavior of agents (Swartz 1997). One description of habitus is obtained from Olsen and Neff (2007, p. 12) who describe it as "socialized subjectivity upon which everyone draws when deciding how to act."

According to Bourdieu, the social norms and practices—those that are acceptable and praiseworthy within a group or class—are tacitly recognized as acceptable and are imbibed by individuals as dispositions. These dispositions which are primarily rooted in class and group affiliations give an idea of habitus. The tacit recognition of these norms and practices stands against the rational choice theory, and according to Bourdieu, this is done through a "feel for the game" approach (Olsen and Neff 2007). Habitus can be conceptualized as a relationship between a specific environment, people inhabiting that environment, and their dispositions and practices. The collective behavior ascribed to the people belonging to an environment presents the idea of Habitus (Chopra 2003).

Habitus is not a static property of agents. It is open to improvisations and innovations. For example, for the rural farmers, it is described as a linking concept, an "in-between" concept of farmers and their landscapes. It is formed through reflection and constant communication between farmer and their landscape. Not only the farmers but, generally, habitus is the construct that unifies the agents with their social landscape (Setten 2004).

One feature of habitus that has received less attention is its ability to limit what is "thinkable" within that habitus. Since one person can have multiple habitus, each habitus also presents thinking limits that are acceptable in that habitus. These limits are described as doxa. Doxa is tantamount to heresy in the sense that it lies outside of what is deemed as "thinkable" in a space (Chopra 2003). Empirical studies from India also indicate that access to social networks is not only determined by economic and political capital but also by the ability to organize and participate in the "caste-specific styles of behavior" (Jeffrey 2001, p. 230). In other words, the habitus is also an important factor in the accumulation of social capital.

Another concept of importance in Bourdieu's theory of practice is capital—i.e., resources that have an exchange value. Bourdieu identifies four types of capital, namely social, symbolic, economic and cultural. Social capital refers to collective and individual social capital. Collective social capital is the "stock" owned by a group. The individual form of social capital is suggestive of an unequal distribution of social capital just like economic and cultural capital. The contribution of Bourdieu is to the individual form of social capital (Levien 2015). These forms of capital are mutually convertible, and also these are peculiar to the field, i.e., a capital that is of value in one field may be of no value in another. For instance, the stout manners of farmers which may be valuable in the agricultural occupation are less worthy in artistic professions. Of these four capitals, Bourdieu is most known for elaborating the concept of cultural capital—the cultural tastes, values and manners that have an exchange value or those that are highly revered by a particular class or community (Carolan 2005). According to Bourdieu, the middle class is more concerned with acquiring cultural capital, while the rich class relies on the inter-convertibility of economic and social capital (Jeffrey 2008). The struggle over capital is of three types, namely the volume of capital, legitimacy of capital and convertibility of capital (Chopra 2003, p. 428).

Field refers to the social space where agents struggle against each other to acquire resources. According to Bourdieu, interests of agents are "historical constructions," and there may be as many fields as the interests (Bourdieu 1990, p. 88). The location of agents in their field is based on the composition and volume of their capital.

The practices of agents are their patterns of their behavior. These patterns are shaped after improvisations over a period. According to Bourdieu, a practice has two components: the "opus operatum" component that represents the historicity of practice and a "modus operandi" component that relates to the delivery of the practice (Carolan 2005, p. 389). Practices are shaped from the requirements of success in a field and the offerings of the habitus. This relationship is summarized by Bourdieu (1984, p. 101) as follows:

$$(\text{habitus})(\text{capital}) + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

Studies indicate that perceptions about objective constructs—those that can be measured with precision—such as rainfall, are also shaped by habitus. For example, the study by Vedwan and Rhoades (2001) on the apple farmers of India suggests that farmers' perception of climate change was shaped through the cultural and economic activity of agriculture. The study indicates that local factors shape the farmers' perception of the universal, social and environmental problems. This study also suggests that Bourdieu's concepts are not mere theoretical concepts but also have high empirical value.

Applications in Agriculture and Rural Management

Bourdieu's theory of practice has been found suitable for the analysis of the sociology of agricultural (Moritz 2010). Many India-specific studies, as well studies of farmers in the developed countries, have used Bourdieu's conceptual elements to explain the behavior of farmers. For example, Olsen and Neff (2007) use Bourdieu's theory of practice to study the social phenomenon termed as "aspiration paradox." Aspiration paradox is a specific problem in economics whereby the poor classes take debt that they cannot afford to repay. The primary motivation of this debt not need but want to acquire products through which they can be perceived to be in a better class (see also Olsen and Morgan 2010). In their study, the authors study the cow buying practices of farmers in India and describe that the

poor farmers "overcommit" themselves, to acquire a cow that has a cultural value in India and end up being unhappy as they are unable to repay their debts. Bourdieu's theory has also been used to explain the differences between the strategies of different agricultural communities and their use of social capital. For example, Moritz (2010) uses the theory to explain the differences between the strategies of pastoral farmers in Africa. A strong social bonding of the pastoralists provided them better leadership as compared to the farmers who lacked strong bonds. Also, the pastoralists invoked all forms of capital to minimize their risks of loss of cattle. Vasan (2007) applies Bourdieu's concepts on social capital to explain how rural Indians activate their social capital to obtain timber quickly through a process that is otherwise extremely bureaucratic. The theory has been used to study the political strategies of the children of rich farmers of India. For example, the study by Jeffrey (2008) reveals various strategies of children and how they can use their habitus as well as social capital to carve a career from politics. While before winning the college elections, the children were concerned for student welfare, and after winning, they saw "student politics as a business" (Jeffrey 2008, p. 527). In sustainable agricultural studies, Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and practice have been used to address change issues in agriculture. For example, the study by Carolan (2005) uses these concepts to discuss the change strategies that can help sustainable agricultural on rented farms.

One way in which the Bourdieu's theory of practice is used is to compare two fields, before and after a certain type of intervention. For example, the study by Carolan (2005) suggests that the powerful farmers can be motivated to use the sustainable agricultural practices. This may motivate the other stakeholders to adopt sustainable agriculture. The exercise of developing a plan of changing the field in the desired direction of change is what Carolan (2005, p. 406) calls as "field work"—a process of steering it in the direction of required change. Similarly, the study by Raedeke et al. (2003) suggests that in a situation of interaction between two fields, there may be three possibilities. First, the new intervening field can be incorporated in the existing field. Second, the new intervening field can be used to transform the existing field, and finally, the new intervening field can be developed as a separate field having its habitus (Raedeke et al. 2003). Another example of the application of Bourdieu's theory of practice is obtained from the study by Chopra (2003). This study shows how neoliberalism has been established as a doxa in the deliberations of Indian civil society when there is ample of evidence to suggest that liberalization has not delivered what it had promised—creation of more jobs

and hence the development of Indian economy. In a similar manner, the theory has been used to study the conflicts between two different types of habitus. For example, the study by Olsen and Neff (2007) discusses the conflict between old habitus and new habitus, as well as the conflicts between the habitus and practices of the rural social workers.

Authors have also presented models of the field that are based on Bourdieu's theory of practice. For example, Raedeke et al. (2003) describe the farming field through three types of relationships, namely economic relationships, family relationships and the rental relationship of farmers with their landlords. Carolan (2005) presents a model of conventional agriculture and the sustainable agriculture model. The two fields are described as overlapping, and it is also suggested that agriculture comprises of many such subfields. Schiltz (1982) provides a framework for studying the peasantization of farmers and suggests that habitus represents the internalization of the history and hence is an important starting point for studying the peasants.

Clearly, Bourdieu's theory is used to investigate the interactions between habitus, practice, field and capital. The current study uses the constructs from this theory to reflect on the corruption practices of Kumar. Before these practices are discussed in the case study, the next section presents the research progress on corruption in India.

Research Progress: Corruption in India

Corruption is one of the worst problems faced by developing countries, and India is no exception. Estimates are that over 50% of the public works contracts in India are obtained after paying kickbacks (Davis 2004). In petty corruption alone, Indians pay over five billion US$ per year (Bussell 2010). Recent Indian governments have been marred by scams ranging from information technology and defense to distribution of natural resources such as coal. The quantum of public money misappropriated in these scams is in billions of dollars.

While the earlier studies of corruption suggested that corruption was limited to the people in high echelons of power (Wade 1982), the research in the last decade suggests that corruption is prevalent in corporates and civil society (Véron et al. 2006b; Heston and Kumar 2008). In fact, the focus of corruption research in India has gradually shifted from the government toward the private and non-government sector. Earlier studies on corruption were centered on the bureaucracy–politician–business nexus; the more recent studies discuss corruption in other strata of the Indian society.

The early research discusses the nexus between bureaucrats and politicians, especially in the departmental transfers. The politicians are deeply involved in the transfer decisions, a yearly quota is assigned to ministers, and the posts are sold to the bureaucrats who can pay the most. There is a stiff competition between the government officers to get transferred to popular cities and towns where their children may have better educational prospects. The officers who can pay higher bribes are able to get favorable transfers (Wade 1985).

The studies in the last decade have discussed the role of other stakeholders in corruption. For example, apart from the bureaucrats and politicians, the involvement of the middlemen in the corruption system is also discussed (Davis 2004). Contractors act as the dummies of the government officers in all the government works such as work specification, bidding and inspection. This organization of the contractors is so strong that even with strong auditing mechanisms, contracting frauds remain undetected. Estimates are that nearly 50–75% of the government contracts in India are obtained after paying kickbacks (Davis 2004). The study by Bertrand et al. (2007) on corruption in obtaining the driver's license in India emphasizes the role of agents in the corruption system. The agents provide services that help in circumventing the government rules and regulations. Their nexus with officers results in "inefficient corruption" whereby incompetent drivers are given driving licenses.

Apart from the politicians, bureaucrats and the middlemen, the study by Véron et al. (2006a) suggests that corruption has made inroads in the civil society of India including the community organizations. This study exposes some corrupt practices such as forging the false signs of the project beneficiaries, underpayments to the laborers, over-reporting the number of laborers in developmental works and using inferior quality materials.

In the last decade, the deliberations on corruption have spread to include the corporates and the civil society. Heston and Kumar (2008) discuss the corruption prevalent in the private sector organizations. The purchasing departments take kickbacks and bribes, companies report increased costs, mortgages are manipulated and sold off the records, and firms defraud with the stockholders. It seems that corruption has penetrated all the institutions of public and private life alike and is reported as a status symbol of the elites in India. Consequently, there is a change in the conceptualization of corruption. Corruption is now viewed as an important process in the interaction with the state. Earlier studies on corruption suggest that corruption is one of the central ideas that characterize the local discussions about the Indian state (Gupta 1995). Recent studies on

corruption have conceptualized it as a means of negotiation between the state and the stakeholders. Corruption is described as an instrument for the management of illegality, and the state is viewed as an agency that can be negotiated (Anjaria 2011).

While corruption discussions about other developing countries have discussed corruption as well as re-corruption (for example, see Dininio 2005), the empirical studies on India have ignored the phenomenon of re-corruption. Consequently, our knowledge of corruption has increased substantially, but there is a gap in the conceptualization of re-corruption. Re-corruption is much more detrimental than corruption as it results in the complete resignation of those who fight against corruption (Klitgaard 2011). The current study fills this gap as it discusses re-corruption by presenting the case of a government officer. In the light of the re-corruption phenomenon, an important question addressed in the case study is why the corruption problem is difficult to resolve in India? Before discussing this case study, a brief discussion about the models of corruption is presented below with emphasis on the transfer model of corruption as this is particularly relevant to the government officer.

Models of Corruption

The analysis of past literature identifies five models that explain corruption. Four of these are empirical studies conducted by the authors in developing countries. One model, namely the neo-institutional economic (NIE) framework, is discussed in a World Bank policy document (Shah 2006). Also, one model, namely the principal–supervisor–agent model of corruption, is excluded as it is based on the earlier principal–agent Model of corruption (Bandfield 1975). Tables 3 and 4 present a brief description of the models and lists the studies citing the models. One of these models, namely the transfer model of corruption (Wade 1982), is particularly relevant to the study and is briefly discussed below.

Transfer Model of Corruption

Government officers have control over the distribution of resources and have an opportunity to extract illicit revenue from the users of such resources. Examples include minerals, forests and water. The politicians have no control over the resources directly but are empowered to transfer the government officers. Similarly, bureaucrats have the authority to transfer officers. Desirable posts are sold to those officers who can pay the best price. The officers acquire these posts and collect illicit revenue through the

Table 3 Corruption models and description

Model	Research Study	Description
Transfer model	Wade (1982)	Corruption is practiced through the transfer and promotion of government officers. Politicians accept bribes to sanction the transfers. The bureaucracy is given a free hand to collect corruption money from the stakeholders. These funds are again utilized to procure favorable transfers and promotions. Transfer of government officers links the administrative and political corruption
Principal–agent model	Bandfield (1975), Klitgaard (1984), Shah (2006) and Shleifer and Vishny (1993)	Corruption is practiced through the mutual association of an authority (principal) and the subordinate (agent). Corruption will continue to perpetuate in the government organizations unless the "formal decentralization" is replaced by "informal centralization"
Transit permit model	Corbridge and Kumar (2002)	Corruption is practiced through the issuance of government permissions (permit) that allow the transit of commodities. The transit of commodities is monitored by multiple government authorities. Each of these seeks a bribe to issue the permissions for the transit
Neo-institutional economics framework	Shah (2006)	Corruption is practiced through the information asymmetry between the society and government officers. The society acts rationally given the limited information it has about the government functioning. The high "transaction cost" of obtaining the information dissuades them and at the same time provides an opportunity of corruption to government officers. The weak legal institutions of developing countries increase the transaction costs of information
Overloaded bureaucrat model	Bertrand et al. (2007)	Understaffing of the government organizations makes the access of services difficult (such as availing driver licenses). This provides opportunities for private agents to provide some services. The private agents form a nexus with the government officers and share the earnings

Table 4 Types of solution strategies on corruption

Solution category	Solutions to corruption	Author
Administrative, governance and macro-solutions	Administrative, law-based and social solutions to corruption	Bertot et al. (2010)
	Decentralization of the local governance structure	Shah (2006)
	Effective policing solutions	Shleifer and Vishny (1993)
	Institutionalize the markets (canals and other natural resource based)	Wade (1982)
	Punish people at top echelons	Klitgaard (2011)
Procedural solutions to corruption	Breaking a large contract into smaller contracts may help prevent formation of contract cartels	Davis (2004)
	Delegate organizational process to the private sector	Svensson (2005)
	Design of service delivery window and space may be helpful in controlling corruption	Davis (2004)
	Increasing competition in bidding may help reduce the corruption in contract bidding	Klitgaard (1984)
	Introduce competition between bureaucrats for providing government services, system solutions such as accounting systems	Shleifer and Vishny (1993)
Solution based on the type of corruption	First step in solution of corruption is to identify the types of corruption, first solve the simple and easy corruption problems	Klitgaard (1984, 2011)
	Formulate anti-corruption strategy on basis of extent of corruption and its type	Shah (2006)

allocation of resources. Over the duration of their postings, they accumulate funds to buy suitable postings. The suitability of a post may depend on various factors including its corruption profitability and the availability of the appropriate educational facility for the children (Wade 1982).

Case Study: A Government Officer of Yard

Background

In India, the agricultural commodities are traded at specialized wholesale commodity markets commonly referred as "yards." Yards are regulated by state agricultural marketing boards. At these yards, farmers bring their commodity which is auctioned in front of traders. Board employees endorse the auctions. After the payments are made to the farmer, the traders deposit a service charge which forms yard income. A part of this is used for paying the salaries of the employees and maintaining the yards, while another part is transferred to the board.

Generally, across all the Indian states, this is the process structure of the commodities market, though in some cases, there may be specialized commodity boards (for example see Banker et al. 2011). The current study relates to one state agricultural marketing board in India. The organizational structure of the board and yard is presented in Figs. 1 and 2, respectively.

The board implemented an information technology project to interconnect over two hundred yards of the state. This interconnectivity would reduce the price dispersions across the yards, remove the role of mediators and would help the farmers achieve better prices for their commodities. The implementation of the project was assigned to private vendor company that was selected by contract bidding. The project was under implementation for over a period of 9 years. However, it was abandoned as the vendor felt that successful project implementation was

impossible as most of the government officers were corrupt. A detailed description of the project is available in the study (Author).

The current case is that of one government officer in the yard. The officer was involved in the implementation of the project from its beginning. The officer's case is presented as the officer candidly discussed corrupt practices prevalent in the yards, including his own. For the purpose of confidentiality, the officer is given a pseudo-name of "Kumar" in this study.

Background of Kumar

Kumar is a government officer working for the last 30 years in the yards. During these years, he has been placed at 14 different yards and has worked through the lower, middle and higher levels of the yard hierarchy. Table 5 presents the details of his posting (the number of years served at the posting, his age at the time of joining the posting, the rural/urban status of the posting, designation).

Kumar is frank in admitting that corruption is an inseparable part of government machinery in India. Kumar is frank in admitting that "I am no sage, and I also do it (corruption) but only as per my needs, not with an objective of making exorbitant wealth." In this subsection, the trajectory of Kumar's career is traced to understand his context and practices.

Upon graduation, Kumar applied for a teacher's job with the tribal welfare department of the state. He successfully got the job and was assigned the responsibility of teaching science subjects in a middle school in a remote tribal

Table 5 Posting details of Kumar in yards

Posting number	Year	Duration of posting	Age of Kumar (years)	Designation
Initial trainee posting	1982	2 years	24	Trainee
One	1984	4.5 years	26	Inspector
Two	1989	1.5 years	31	Inspector
Three	1990	1 year	32	Secretary (Additional Charge)
Four	1991	4 years	37	Inspector
Five	1995	2 years	39	Inspector (Member of Special Team); Working Secretary (Temporary posting)
Six	1997	1 year	40	Inspector
Seven	1998	2 years	42	Inspector
Eight	2000	2 months	42	Inspector
Nine	2001	10 months	43	Inspector
Ten	2001	10 months	44	Inspector; Working Secretary
Eleven	2002	2 years	46	Inspector
Twelve	2004	22 months	48	Working Secretary
Thirteen	2005	3 months	49	Inspector
Fourteen	2006–2012	6 years	55	Inspector; Promoted to Secretary

village. Upon joining the job, Kumar started feeling dissatisfied as he was placed at a remote location, far from his family and relatives. Though it was a permanent government posting, Kumar was inclined to change the job. While working in the school, Kumar came across a recruitment advertisement by the state agricultural marketing board. He applied for the job, cleared the entrance examination and was recruited. He was sent for the induction training and was posted at a rural yard. He worked as an inspector for nearly 5 years at this yard, during which he got married and had children. After this posting, Kumar was placed at various other yards. In some yards, his work was highly commended, while in some he received severe reprimanding from the senior officers. Overall, he has managed to steer his career in a system that he describes as rampant with corruption. He has adapted well to this system and has used combinations of practices to sustain himself. A study of Kumar's career trajectory and the discussions with him reveals patterns related to the practice of corruption.

Patterns and Impact of Corrupt Practices

First, officers prefer a posting period ranging between 1 and 2 years. Kumar's case clearly indicates this. Of all the fourteen postings of Kumar, 50% (7 postings) are for a duration of 1–2 years. This fact is acknowledged by Kumar and in his words:

> If I have to stay at any place for more than two years then it becomes a problem for me. I am now trying to move from this yard. Yesterday, I talked to a senior officer. Also, met the minister. I know that they want to remove someone from another posting. I have told them that I want to be posted there, but will not be paying any bribe because I do not have any money, but if I earn I will share it.

An exception to this rule is observed when the children of the officers are about to complete a critical part of their education. In such situations, officers want to remain posted in the same location. In the case of Kumar for example, his current posting (Posting fourteen in Table 5) is at the same district since last 6 years (though within this district, he has been transferred to different departments). He was able to secure this posting by procuring a promotion for himself, for which he paid bribes. Kumar describes his procurement of promotion as follows:

> The Confidential Report (CR) is written by the senior officers for their subordinates. I have to submit a report on the works done by me. The seniors analyze this report, and then they provide comments. CR is a decisive document in the promotions. I did not submit

the report, and yet the Secretary commented on my report. The deputy director who is the deciding authority gave a lower grade to me based on the CR. My promotion was canceled, and I presented my justifications. I tried every possible thing, even went to the state capital a couple of times to convince the authorities there but nothing worked. At last, I used money and got promoted.

During the 6 years of his current posting, his children have completed their education—one child has completed bachelor's qualification, while another, the master's.

More generally, it can be concluded that trajectory of transfer-related corruption follows a cyclical pattern. Officers prefer to get transferred just in about 2 years, and then during their postings, they accumulate funds so that they can secure favorable postings. Also, the trajectory of transfer–promotion-related corruption bears some relationship with the education trajectory of their children. As children education reaches the completion stages, the transfer–promotion corruption gains momentum.

Secondly, at the new posting, officers temporarily practice honesty as doing so helps them to strengthen their authority. Once the authority is established, practicing corruption becomes easier. In one of his postings, Kumar observed that the trade that was registered at the yards was a little portion of the trade that happened. Often the traders would bribe the officers who would overlook the unregistered trade. Upon observing the quantum of the unregistered trade at the yard, Kumar presented himself as an honest officer. Many traders approached him with bribes, but he refused. Quickly he was recognized as an honest officer. In the words of Kumar:

> Within a few days of my joining, I started getting messages asking me what I want. Then after a few days, I started getting the messages through the yard president as he was also involved in the unregistered trade. I said: I do not want a penny. I stopped taking bribes just for one month, and within a month all the trade outside the yard was stopped.

After the officers have established their authority, they may choose to ignore, encourage, discourage or imbibe corruption. Thus, by acting honest, Kumar had increased his alternatives. For example, in one such situation, Kumar choose to ignore the unregistered trade transactions as the traders had political connections. In the words of Kumar:

> I have been posted twice in that yard. A trader there has contested parliamentary elections many times and has won every time. His cousins have licenses to trade in the yard. They all do things that they should not do in front of me, if I try to stop them then I am putting my job in danger. Such things happen in

yards. It depends on your objectives as an employee. If you want money then obviously you will look for yards where there can be a lot of development or construction work. Fifteen percent of all the construction work goes to the yard secretary that's fixed.

Third, the case of Kumar suggests that corruption-related transactions consume a bulk of time and energy of the officers. For example, the event of the confidential report discussed above indicates that Kumar had made multiple visits to the senior officers and also went many times to the state capital. These visits consume much time and widen the gap between what Kumar is meant to do and what he does. One example will elucidate this point. While the author was having a discussion with Kumar, a journalist came to his office. He introduced himself as one working for a local magazine. He wanted some contribution from Kumar for the publication of the next issue. The journalist insisted Kumar for it. Kumar was very reluctant but could not categorically say "no" to the reporter. The journalist sat in Kumar's office for about an hour, and Kumar appeared to be disturbed during and after the meeting. An excerpt from the field notes is presented below:

> A journalist comes in between our discussion and sits…he asks for some financial help for the next issue of the magazine…he sits there for around an hour and presses hard for the contribution. Kumar refuses politely but promises to help.
>
> Journalist: I wanted contact number of people who could contribute to the next issue of the magazine…
>
> Kumar: I can arrange for these contacts, but it will take some time…I will bring my latest diary…in that, I have all the latest details…however, it will take some time to arrange these for you…
>
> Journalist: I can arrange for these quite easily on my own …but if you can do this…it will be easy
>
> Kumar: I am a bit occupied presently…however, I will arrange these for you in some time…I will also introduce you to some resourceful people…however, this will take some time…not now…
>
> Kumar tries his best to avoid the journalist…but he is reluctant…why?)
>
> Journalist: OK Sir…

After the departure of the journalist, Kumar told the author that most of his time goes in such discussions and that he can hardly concentrate on his work. The question arises why Kumar did not refuse to the journalist immediately and gave an hour's time to him. The reason lies in the corruption of Kumar. After all, the journalist could have

come to investigate corruption. Thus, only after assessing the intentions and power status, Kumar indicated his reluctance to the journalist. Kumar acknowledges this fact as he mentioned:

> Anyone who comes here knows that a government officer can be suppressed easily…because they can complain against me anytime, so I need to assess the overall strength of the person, his background and then deal with him. If he has a political background, he needs to be treated differently. I have to assess the background of the person first.

Lastly, since corruption-related transactions consume a substantial portion of officers' time and energy, officers lose their interest in resolving the field issues. Traveling back and forth to the capital or their seniors, officers get alienated from their field of work. Resolution of problems on the ground becomes their last priority as the bulk of their energy is already consumed in the corruption transactions. Instead of being active participants, they become mere passive observers of their field. For example, describing the menace of corruption in the yards, Kumar mentioned about the corrupt practices of one of his subordinates and said

> I know that person who sits on the gate manages a motorcycle, mobile and other things that he cannot afford. How he generates the money for all this? I know that he does so by ignoring some commodity bags that enter or exit the yard.

The statement of Kumar clearly indicates that he was well aware of the subordinate's corrupt practices. After a few days of data collection, when the author went to meet Kumar, he looked very distressed. He was surrounded by two of subordinates and was dictating something to them. This dictation was regarding an incident that had happened at the entrance gate of the yard. After the dictation was over, Kumar described the situation as follows:

> The employee today misbehaved with a farmer. This farmer was politically well connected and immediately filed a complaint against him. The farmer has complained that the employee was under the influence of alcohol. His medical check-up needs to be done. Please excuse me but I will be occupied for the day; such problems are difficult to resolve.

Notice here that Kumar was aware of the corrupt practices of the same employee. He ignored the problem for a long time possibly because he was himself corrupt on many occasions. The corruption-related transactions consume the bulk of employee time and alienate them from their field work. This alienation further exacerbates the corruption in the yards. For these reasons, Kumar mentions:

> Everyone here is looting his share, and no one is concerned, that is why I have become disinterested in the affairs of the yards, let it go who cares.

The case of Kumar reveals that he uses corrupt practices for getting promoted and transferred, gives a momentary pause to these while disposing of as an honest officer, to establish his authority, and then resumes them to achieve his objectives. It is within the context of such corrupt practices that information technology projects are implemented. The next section discusses the impact of corruption on the implementation of IT projects.

Information Technology Implementation and Corruption

Before the implementation of the information technology project, over two hundred yards of the state were all governed by their separate bylaws. Each yard had evolved its auction system that was based on the agro-climatic as well as the cultural factors. The state is contiguous with others that speak completely different languages. Within the state itself, there are at least seven cultural regions. Following these diversities, the practices at the yards changed, and the rules governing these practices also changed. The current information technology project was initiated in the year 2001. Just before the implementation, the board prescribed a model act to govern all yards of the state. The board asked the yards to give up their current practices and adopt the model act. Once all the yards had approved the model act, it became easy to link the yards by using similar software technologies. By the year 2003, the first phase of the project was scaled out, connecting over fifty yards of the state. However, changing the local practices to meet the requirements of the software was nearly impossible. Following this, the yard employees continued with their old manual practices. They were collating the data manually using the paper-based transaction documents. On the other hand, the teams implementing the project collected the digital data using sophisticated data capturing devices. A collection of two different types of data resulted in massive reconciliation problems. The digital data were accurately representing the receivables from the traders, while the manual data were grossly understated. Consequently, the officers in the yards started receiving show-cause notices from the board head office asking them to explain the reasons for ignoring the underreporting by the traders.
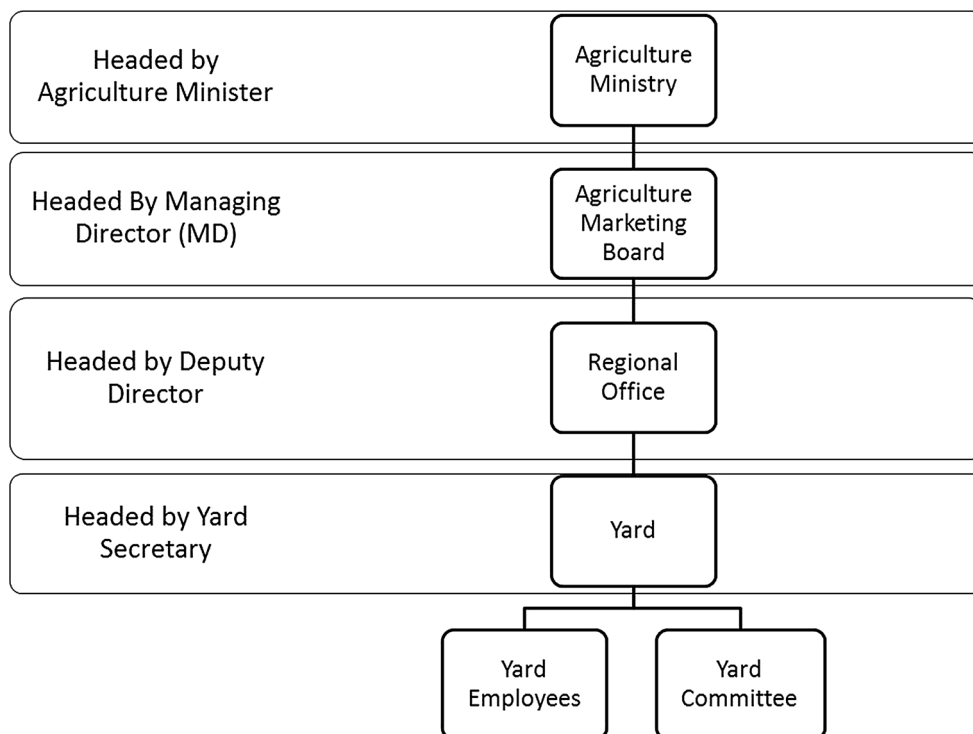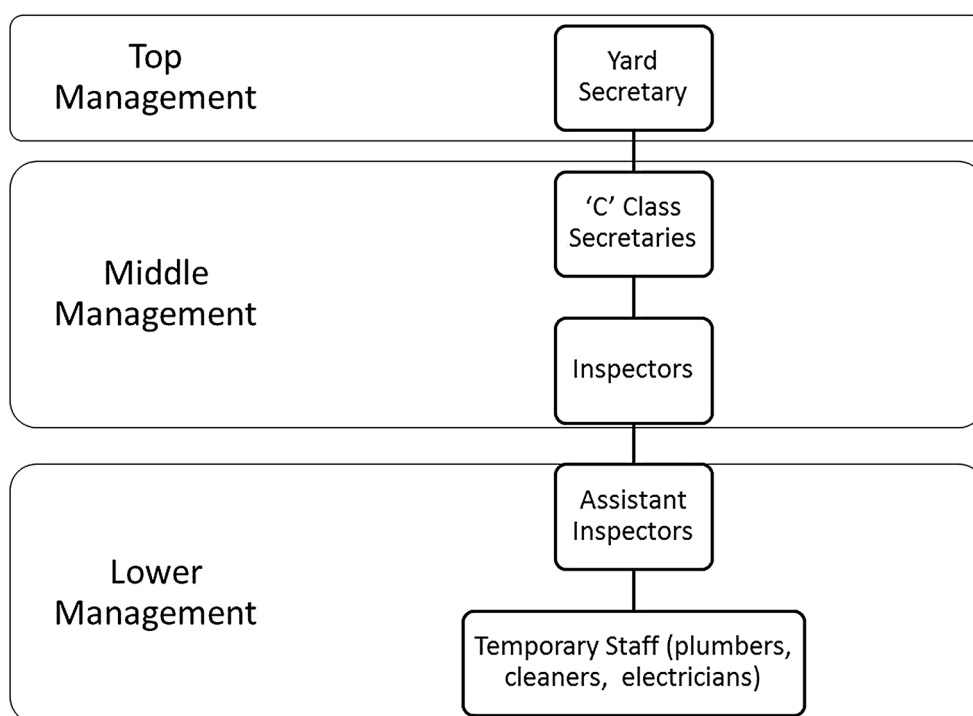
With the introduction of IT, all the trade transactions at the yard started getting documented, and the avenues of corruption were closed. A series of conflicts between the yard employees and the private vendor employees started emerging. The yard employees blamed the vendor employees for incorrectly entering the data. On the other hand, the vendor employees blamed the yard employees for corruption. Interestingly, the higher authorities in the board also started pressurizing the private vendor companies. Their payments were stopped, hardware equipment seized, and income tax raids were conducted at their offices. Following this, the private partners abandoned the project. The board filed a case against them alleging them of not fulfilling the contractual obligations. As per the 2012 discussions with the employees, the private partners had lost the case on the court, and the project was abandoned.

The abandonment of the project which continued for almost 9 years can be attributed to corruption. First, at a macro-level, the policies were changed suddenly neglecting the regional variations in the yard practices. Why was this done hastily? One legal framework was the first requirement for implementing the project on computerization as developing unique software for each yard, and making these data available across all the other yards would be a tedious task. Instead, the board decided to have a uniform law for all the yards. It is very likely that the decision to have a uniform law was an outcome of corruption at the highest level of policy making. Secondly, at the micro-level, the documentation of all trade transactions curtailed the corruption opportunities of the yard employees. The above discussion indicates that corruption not only presents a massive challenge to the socioeconomic development, but it also negatively impacts the implementation of public sector information technology projects in India. The next section reflects on the case of Kumar in the light of the theoretical models that explain corruption. This reflection helps to answer the question: Why the problem of corruption is difficult to resolve in India?

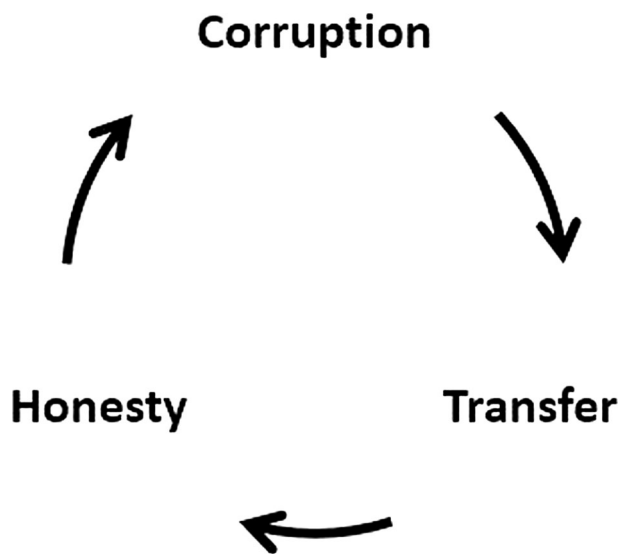## Hibernation Model of Re-corruption

The case of Kumar presents an interesting dimension to the hitherto discussion about corruption. Officers mimic honesty after their transfers as this helps them to establish their authority at new postings. Kumar, for example, readily accepts that upon transfer to a new location, he stopped accepting bribed for 1 month. This made all the stakeholders, including the yard president, fearful of Kumar. They started perceiving him as an honest officer. Once his authority was established, Kumar again started accepting bribes. The display of honesty gave more choices to Kumar. He could agree to a bribe offer that fulfilled his expectations and reject others. The rejected offers would convey that he was an honest officer and will help maintain his authority in the yards. Acceptance of all the bribe offers has an inherent risk. The officer who accepts all the bribe offers becomes easily approachable, and there is a loss of authority. Consequently, it becomes necessary for the

Fig. 1 Organizational structure of board

Headed by Agriculture Minister	Agriculture Ministry
Headed By Managing Director (MD)	Agriculture Marketing Board
Headed by Deputy Director	Regional Office
Headed by Yard Secretary	Yard

Yard Employees   Yard Committee

Fig. 2 Organizational structure of yards

Top Management	Yard Secretary
Middle Management	'C' Class Secretaries
	Inspectors
Lower Management	Assistant Inspectors
	Temporary Staff (plumbers, cleaners, electricians)

government officers to be selective in accepting the bribes. Use of honesty provides them this choice. This suggests that between two corruption phases (or transfers), there is an intermediate stage when the officers display honesty.

The presence of honesty in the corruption–transfer cycle makes it extremely difficult to distinguish between an honest officer and a corrupt officer who is in the honesty phase. The presence of honesty in the corruption–transfer cycle may be the reason behind the lack of success of anti-corruption strategies. Figure 3 presents the model of re-corruption showing the hibernation phase.

Corruption

Honesty   Transfer

Fig. 3 Hibernation model of corruption

Past studies such as by Bardhan (1997) indicate that new recruits maintain their honesty for some time before they are lured in the "corruption system." Bourdieu and Nice (2008) argue that habitus is a dynamic concept that gets changed over a period and that the habitus of the people in high power influences the habitus of others. The study by McKay (2001) provides an important argument that corroborates the transformation of habitus. The author makes a distinction between the terms mimicry and mimesis. According to the author, mimicry is a conscious emulation of the dispositions of other people. However, mimicry over a period gets transformed into mimesis—the unconscious mimicry of the people that influence the agents. This is the internalization of the external world that is the crux of Bourdieu's term of habitus. In the light of this argument, it follows that re-corruption relates to the flexibility of officers to adapt their habitus as per the corruption levels of their postings. A corrupt officer may portray honesty when he perceives the peers and seniors as honest. It is related to the ability of the officers to alternate their habitus between corruption and honesty. Also, re-corruption can happen at the level of agents as well as at the level of organizations. Studies have specifically discussed the re-corruption in the organizations. For example, Klitgaard (2011) specifically mentions the case of the Philippine Bureau of Internal Revenue that saw re-corruption. However, empirical studies that discuss re-corruption at an individual level are not available. The current study fills this gap. Organizational studies on re-corruption have conceptualized re-corruption as "backsliding" to corruption (for example, see Larmour 2007; Banuri and Eckel 2015). At an individual level, however, re-corruption is much more than the reversion to corruption. It is not a temporary halt in the corrupt practices of officers. For example, officers may not involve in

corrupt activities because of various reasons such as traveling. An essential characteristic of the re-corruption is the mimicking or use of honesty as an interlude between phases of corruption. Bourdieu's concept of practice also supports this as it goes on to suggest that agents reflect on their practices and improvise these so as to strengthen their field positions (Jenkins 1992). This improvisation requires time as well as reflection. This is perhaps the reason as to why Bardhan (1997, 2006) concludes that new officers over a period get lured to the corruption system. The case of Kumar also supports this who admits to resorting to an "honest" disposition so that he could establish his authority in the new posting. It follows that while the officers are not context agnostic, the information technology interventions that are brought to curb corruption are. Numerous information and communications technology for development (ICT4D) studies have shown that ICT is useful in curbing the transactional and petty form of corruption (Cisar 2003). Studies have also shown that ICT provides solutions to the problems of corruption because the users of government services can interact with computer applications that do not have the discretionary powers, i.e., when "discretion" is removed from the "equation of corruption" (Mahmood 2004). Ojha et al. (2008, p. 166) presents the case of building plan approvals and suggests that the approval of building plan could be done through ICT applications to control the rent-seeking practices of the government authorities. While ICT has been widely successful in curbing the transactional form of corruption, it has been unable to change the attitude of officers. For example, Caseley (2004) studies the much-discussed Computer-Aided Administration of Registration Department (CARD) project and concludes that the use of technology did not change the hegemonic behavior of the government officers. Studies have also suggested that ICT interventions not impact the contextual motivations behind corruption (Heeks 1999). This again points out to what Salbu (2001, p. 74) points out as "mindless conformity," which the bureaucracy promotes. A direct outcome of this conformity is that the officers end up imbibing the habitus of their senior officers. This is particularly relevant given that ICT research studies have suggested that officers adapt to corruption by using what is called as "practical wisdom" (High et al. 2006). If their senior is an honest, incorruptible person, the officers choose to hibernate from corruption. In situations where there are no opportunities to hibernate, for example when the senior officer is honest and has past experiences of working with a corrupt officer, the corrupt officers resort to other mechanisms. One of such mechanisms is the transfer. Here it is worth noting that multiple ICT studies have suggested that transfer is the cause of administrative corruption in India, and it forces the honest officers to participate in the corruption system (Davis

2004). Another mechanism through which the officers adapt is through what Bardhan (1997) calls "despair and resignation." It is to be noted that one explanation of resignation is obtained from Bourdieu's works which suggest that resignation is one possible strategy for the powerless people when their habitus does not meet the requirements of success in a field that is dominated by the powerful people (Swartz 1997). The hibernation model of corruption adds to this discussion and suggests that given there is an opportunity to hibernate, the officers choose honesty as a mechanism to adapt to the corruption system.

Conclusion

This research sought to provide an understanding of the interlude between corruption and re-corruption. Based on the case of Kumar, two conclusions about the characteristics of this interlude can be drawn. First, that this interlude is usually an outcome of departmental transfers and that the transfers happen after or around 2 years of posting. Close to the transfer decisions, the quantum of corruption by the officers may reach its acme as officers make all possible efforts to get favorable postings. The fact that transfers are intricately linked with corruption has been a major theme of corruption studies for at least 3 decades (Wade 1982). Studies have also indicated that transfer-based corruption is highly organized and that the amount of bribe paid is calculated highly systematically such as pro rata to the monthly salary of the transferred officers (Davis 2004). Studies have also indicated that quick transfers, i.e., transfer before 2 years, may be because of corruption (Wade 1985).

Apart from this, the second conclusion that can be drawn from the case of Kumar relates to the mimicking of honesty by the government officers. This helps them to establish their authority and also gives them the freedom to accept or deny the offers of bribes. Past studies have indicated that people often rationalize their corrupt practices through various strategies and that one of these is popularly termed as "balancing the ledger" (Anand et al. 2004, p. 13). Under this rationalization strategy, officers rationalize their corrupt behavior by convincing themselves that they have been consistently honest in their endeavors and that these honest endeavors can be used to balance their corrupt practices. The officers' mimicking of honesty at their new postings, which is also confirmed from the case of Kumar, is also an attempt to balance the ledger. In other words, officers rationalize the use of honesty so as to offset their corrupt practices, and then resume the corrupt practices again when they feel that they have been honest for a sufficiently long time.

Apart from these two conclusions that relate to the nature of the interlude, this study makes a specific contribution in the area of information technology-based entry point activities. Past studies on corruption have suggested that a significant concern in the design of anti-corruption strategy relates to the identification of appropriate entry point activities (Marquette 2012). This study suggests that EPAs should address the transactional form of corruption.

Within the qualitative research tradition, a study can be taken with three different approaches, namely critical, interpretive and positivist (Myers 2009). Features that are unique to critical research include its emphasis on exposing the contradictions in the social structures (Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991), stressing on the emancipation of the marginalized people (Stahl 2008) and the use of reflection (Howcroft and Trauth 2004). The current study is a critical research study as it exposes the corruption hibernation practice of the government officers. Also, reflection can be used with different objectives, namely, of knowing the self or others, knowing the truth and also for transcending these (Pillow 2003). The current study is reflective in the sense that it reflects on the corrupt practice of a government officer and conceptualizes this in the form of a hibernation model of corruption.

An important aspect of a critical research study is the extent to which it conforms to the principles of conducting a critical research study (Myers and Klein 2011). One of these principles is the principle of taking a value position. This principle has three dimensions. First, values should be subjected to a critique. Second, a comparison between differing values. Last, suggesting an appropriate guideline ("ethical stance") to inform the public policies. The case of Kumar clearly demonstrates that in the Indian corruption system, corrupt practices (such as accepting bribes) are in tandem with honest practices (such as not accepting bribes). Past researchers have presented many convincing reasons that in such situations, the "Western denotative" understanding of corruption presents a better choice (Bayley 1966, pp. 721–722). Given the interlude between corruption and re-corruption, the study suggests that solutions of corruption problem lie in the implementation of transactional information technology-based entry point activities. Past studies show that addressing corruption alone helps to improvise the practices of corrupt officers (Heeks and Bhatnagar 1999). Another important principle is the principle of improvements in social theory. The current study problematizes the interlude between corruption and re-corruption and suggests that one possible mechanism of adapting to this interlude is through mimicking honesty, i.e., through hibernation from corruption. To the author's knowledge, this is the first study that models the interlude between corruption and re-corruption.

Past studies have indicated that re-corruption presents a major challenge to developmental initiatives (Klitgaard 2011). The current study discusses the interlude between corruption and re-corruption in the context of agricultural marketing. Based on the case of Kumar, it argues that this interlude is characterized by officers' mimicking of honesty. Depending on the domain of study, there may be other methods of re-corruption. For example, "incrementalism" and "compromise" are forms of socialization methods through which corruption is practiced (Anand et al. 2004). Thus, the nature of the interlude between corruption and re-corruption may depend not only on the domain of the study but also on the type of corruption being studied. This also is a limitation of the current study. For example, corruption can be of various forms such as bureaucratic, administrative, centralized or decentralized (Bardhan 2006); grand, retail and petty corruption (Heston and Kumar 2008); or it can also be parochial and paternal corruption (Shah 2006). Future research studies may explore the variations in the interlude across the different types of corruption.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest The author declares that he has no conflict of interests.

Ethical Approval This study is based on the doctoral thesis of Dr. Ranjan Vaidya. The study obtained the approval of University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

Human and Animals Rights All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

References

Anand, V., et al. (2004). Business as usual: The acceptance and perpetuation of corruption in organizations. *The Academy of Management Executive, 18*(2), 39–53.

Anjaria, J. S. (2011). Ordinary states: Everyday corruption and the politics of space in Mumbai. *American Ethnologist, 38*(1), 58–72.

Bandfield, E. (1975). Corruption as a feature of government organization. *Journal of Law and Economics, 18*(3), 587–605.

Banker, R., Mitra, S., Sambamurthy, V., & Mitra, S. (2011). The effects of digital trading platforms on commodity prices in agricultural supply chains. *MIS Quarterly, 35*(3), 599–611.

Banuri, S., & Eckel, C. (2015). Cracking down on bribery. *Social Choice and Welfare, 45*(3), 579–600.

Bardhan, P. (1997). Corruption and development: A review of issues. *Journal of Economic Literature, 35*(3), 1320–1346.

Bardhan, P. (2006). The economist's approach to the problem of corruption. *World Development, 34*(2), 341–348.

Bayley, D. H. (1966). The effects of corruption in a developing nation. *Western Political Quarterly, 19*(4), 719–732.

Bertrand, M., Djankov, S., Hanna, R., & Mullainathan, S. (2007). Obtaining a driver's license in India: An experimental approach to studying corruption. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 122*(4), 1639–1676.

Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & Grimes, J. M. (2010). Using ICTs to create a culture of transparency: Egovernment and social media as openness and anti-corruption tools for societies. *Government Information Quarterly, 27*(3), 264–271.

Boeije, H. (2002). A purposeful approach to the constant comparative method in the analysis of qualitative interviews. *Quality & Quantity, 36*(4), 391–409.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction* (R. Nice, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Nice, R. (2008). *The bachelors' ball*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.

Bussell, J. L. (2010). Why get technical? Corruption and the politics of public service reform in the Indian states. *Comparative Political Studies, 43*(10), 1230–1257.

Carolan, M. S. (2005). Barriers to the adoption of sustainable agriculture on rented land: An examination of contesting social fields. *Rural Sociology, 70*(3), 387–413.

Caseley, J. (2004). Public sector reform and corruption: CARD facade in Andhra Pradesh. *Economic and Political Weekly, 39*(11), 1151–1156.

Chopra, R. (2003). Neoliberalism as doxa: Bourdieu's theory of the state and the contemporary Indian discourse on globalization and liberalization. *Cultural Studies, 17*(3–4), 419–444.

Cisar, O. (2003). *Strategies for using information technologies for curbing public-sector corruption: The case of the Czech Republic (CR)*. Budapest: Open Society Institute.

Corbridge, S., & Kumar, S. (2002). Community, corruption, landscape: tales from the tree trade. *Political Geography, 21*(6), 765–788.

Davis, J. (2004). Corruption in public service delivery: Experience from South Asia's water and sanitation sector. *World Development, 32*(1), 53–71.

Dininio, P. (2005). The risks of recorruption. In B. I. Spector (Ed.), *Fighting corruption in developing countries: Strategies and analysis* (pp. 233–250). Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.

Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research, 12*(4), 531–545.

Gupta, A. (1995). Blurred boundaries: The discourse of corruption, the culture of politics, and the imagined state. *American Ethnologist, 22*(2), 375–402.

Heeks, R. (1999). Information technology and the management of corruption. *Development in Practice, 9*(1–2), 184–189.

Heeks, R., & Bhatnagar, S. C. (1999). *Understanding success and failure in information age reform*. London: Routledge.

Heston, A., & Kumar, V. (2008). Institutional flaws and corruption incentives in India. *Journal of Development Studies, 44*(9), 1243–1261.

High, C., Slater, R., & Rengasamy, S. (2006). Are shadows dark? Governance, informal institutions and corruption in rural India. In L. Cheshire, V. Higgins, & G. Lawrence (Eds.), *Rural governance: International perspectives* (pp. 273–288). London: Routledge.

Howcroft, D., & Trauth, E. M. (2004). *The choice of critical information systems research* (pp. 195–211)., Information Systems Research Berlin: Springer.

Jeffrey, C. (2001). 'A fist is stronger than five fingers': Caste and dominance in rural North India. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 26*(2), 217–236.

Jeffrey, C. (2008). Kicking away the ladder: Student politics and the making of an Indian middle class. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 26*(3), 517–536.

Jenkins, R. (1992). *Pierre Bourdieu.* London: Routledge.

Klein, H. K., & Myers, M. D. (1999). A set of principles for conducting and evaluating interpretive field studies in information systems. *MIS Quarterly, 23*(1), 67–93.

Klitgaard, R. (1984). Managing the fight against corruption: A case study. *Public Administration and Development, 4*(1), 77–98.

Klitgaard, R. (2011). Fighting corruption. *DICE Report, 9*(2), 31–35.

Larmour, P. (2007). *A short introduction to corruption and anti corruption.* CIES e-Working Papers (ISSN 1647-0893), Portugal, Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology.

Lee, A. S., & Baskerville, R. L. (2003). Generalizing generalizability in information systems research. *Information Systems Research, 14*(3), 221–243.

Levien, M. (2015). Social capital as obstacle to development: Brokering land, norms, and trust in rural India. *World Development, 74,* 77–92.

Mahmood, R. (2004). Can information and communication technology help reduce corruption? How so and why not: Two case studies from South Asia. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology, 3*(3), 347–373.

Marquette, H. (2012). 'Finding god' or 'moral disengagement' in the fight against corruption in developing countries? Evidence from India and Nigeria. *Public Administration and Development, 32*(1), 11–26.

McKay, D. (2001). *Migration and masquerade: Gender and habitus in the Philippines.* Geography Research Forum, Ben-Gurion University of the NEGEV Press.

Moritz, M. (2010). Crop–livestock interactions in agricultural and pastoral systems in West Africa. *Agriculture and Human Values, 27*(2), 119–128.

Myers, M. (2009). *Qualitative research in business and management.* London: Sage Publications.

Myers, M. D., & Klein, H. K. (2011). A set of principles for conducting critical research in information systems. *MIS Quarterly, 35*(1), 17–36.

Ojha, A., Palvia, S., & Gupta, M. P. (2008). A model for impact of e-government on corruption: Exploring theoretical foundations. In J. Bhattacharya (Ed.), *Critical thinking in e-governance* (pp. 160–170). New Delhi, India: Gift Publishing.

Olsen, W., & Morgan, J. (2010). Aspiration problems in Indian microfinance: A case study exploration. *Journal of Developing Societies, 26*(4), 415–454.

Olsen, W., & Neff, D. (2007). *Informal agricultural work, habitus and practices in an Indian context.* Global Poverty Research Group Working Paper GPRG-WPS-079.

Orlikowski, W. J., & Baroudi, J. (1991). Studying information technology in organizations: Research approaches and assumptions. *Information Systems Research, 2*(1), 1–28.

Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 16*(2), 175–196.

Raedeke, A. H., Green, J. J., Hodge, S. S., & Valdivia, C. (2003). Farmers, the practice of farming and the future of agroforestry: An application of Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus. *Rural Sociology, 68*(1), 64–86.

Salbu, S. R. (2001). Information technology in the war against international bribery and corruption: The next frontier of institutional reform. *Harvard Journal on Legislation, 38,* 67.

Schiltz, M. (1982). Habitus and peasantisation in Nigeria: A Yoruba case study. *Man, New Series*, *17*(4), 728–746.

Setten, G. (2004). The habitus, the rule and the moral landscape. *Cultural Geographies, 11*(4), 389–415.

Shah, A. (2006). *Corruption and decentralized public governance.* World Bank Policy Research Working Paper (No. 3824).

Shleifer, A., & Vishny, R. W. (1993). Corruption. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 108*(3), 599–617.

Stahl, B. C. (2008). The ethical nature of critical research in information systems. *Information Systems Journal, 18*(2), 137–163.

Svensson, J. (2005). Eight questions about corruption. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *19*(3), 19–42.

Swartz, D. (1997). *Culture and power: The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu.* London: The University of Chicago Press Ltd.

Tirole, J. (1986). Hierarchies and bureaucracies: On the role of collusion in organizations. *Journal of Law Economics and Organization, 2*(2), 181–214.

Vasan, S. (2007). Timber access in the Indian Himalaya: Rethinking social capital in public policy. *Journal of Development Studies, 43*(7), 1215–1233.

Vedwan, N., & Rhoades, R. E. (2001). Climate change in the Western Himalayas of India: A study of local perception and response. *Climate Research, 19*(2), 109–117.

Véron, R., Williams, G., Corbridge, S., & Srivastava, M. (2006a). Decentralized corruption or corrupt decentralization? Community monitoring of poverty-alleviation schemes in Eastern India. *World Development*, *34*(11), 1922–1941.

Véron, R., Williams, G., Corbridge, S., & Srivastava, M. (2006b). Decentralized corruption or corrupt decentralization? Community monitoring of poverty-alleviation schemes in Eastern India. *World Development*, *34*(11), 1922–1941.

Wade, R. (1982). The system of administrative and political corruption: Canal irrigation in South India. *The Journal of Development Studies, 18*(3), 287–328.

Wade, R. (1985). The market for public office: Why the Indian state is not better at development. *World Development, 13*(4), 467–497.