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Relationship of Citizens' Engagement and Political Corruption to Government Effectiveness: An Empirical Analysis

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ABSTRACT : This study explores the relationship between citizens' engagement and political corruption to government effectiveness. World Bank defines government effectiveness as the reflection of the quality of public services, the quality of civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation as well as the credibility of government commitments to such policies (World Bank, 2017). Thus, this paper will provide a comprehensive study in defining the term "Government Effectiveness". There are several factors that influences the level of government effectiveness but this paper will focus on political corruption and citizens' engagement through civil society participation, political party ban, freedom of academic and cultural expression and media censorship. In order to establish the relationship association of the given variables this study utilized the correlational research design. Specifically, it examined the relationship of citizen's engagement and political corruption to government effectiveness. With these variables this paper will provide a precise research on better understanding of measuring government effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: *Political corruption, citizens, engagement, government effectiveness, civil society, political party*

I. INTRODUCTION

The government is viewed to be an essential agency of a state where the articulation of the will of the people is to be discussed, decided, and realized. Hence, the quality of public services, the quality of civil service as well as its degree of independence from political pressures, the quality of creating policies, and the implementation and credibility of the government's commitment to such policies (World Bank, 2018) which are all conceptualized as government effectiveness is deemed to be crucial.

This notion of government effectiveness is contingent on several factors including the levels of engagement of the people or the society [which is usually demonstrated through the participation of civil society, freedom of academic and cultural expression, and freedom of the press] as well as the extent by which bureaucratic instruments are able to serve their expected functions. As argued by Malena, Foster, and Singh (2014), civil society holds the government to be effective and accountable. This is furthered by the study conducted by Whitely (2009) in Britain who found out that level of political participation has a significant impact on the level of government effectiveness. Similarly, engaging the society in the political affairs of the country is also necessary for advancing good governance and sustainable development which capture government effectiveness (Seth and Mksal, 2019). Also, independent media is a crucial ingredient of liberal democracy and serves as an important check on government power and influence over the citizens (Lnych, 2012). This is because when the government was able to control everything including information regarding its own actions as well as in decision-making, the government tend to be less effective and less responsive to the necessary demands of the people.

Hence, this issue is interesting to be explored in the context of South Asia because some of the countries in the region are considered as rising powers including India and Pakistan as well as relatively higher in terms of the level of political participation (expressed through voting, civil society participation, and media freedom) yet are considered as relatively weak in terms of government effectiveness as provided by Fragile States Index (2014). Specifically, they are considered weak because they were not able to implement their existing policies successfully as well as they do not have sufficient capacity to ensure internal stability.

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II.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Literature argued that citizens' engagements are essential in ensuring an effective government. These engagements are usually expressed through voting, acknowledgment of freedom of academic and cultural expression, freedom of party system, and freedom of media. Thus, it is essential to examine whether these arguments are also similar in the context of South Asian countries during 2001-2016. Moreover, some South Asian countries are viewed to be a rising power in terms of the sphere of influence and participation in the international community along withthe level of political participation. However, in terms of the level of government effectiveness, they are considered as relatively weak. (Rahman 2012)Hence, it seems to be puzzling how these countries become rising powers and recognizable rates of levels of political participation but are not usually possessing effective government.

Central Question
1. How do citizens' engagement and political corruption affect government effectiveness in South Asian countries?

Specific Questions
1. What is the level of citizens' engagement in South Asian countries in terms of:
    a. Freedom of academic and cultural expression;
    b. Freedom of media;
    c. Freedom of political party and,
    d. Civil society participation?
2. What is the level of political corruption in South Asian countries?
3. Is there a significant relationship between government effectiveness and citizens' engagement in South Asian countries?
4. Is there a significant relationship between government effectiveness and political corruption in South Asian countries?

III.   PRINCIPAL-AGENT THEORY

The principal agent theory is best explained when one person who is the (agent) is able to make decisions that will impact the principal. In the case at hand, the "Principal" is the government effectiveness which is the dependent variable, while the agents are the independent variables, media participation, civil society participation, political ban, freedom of academic and cultural expression and political corruption. (Brandsma and Adruaensen J. 2017)

The theory is often used in asserting the principal agent. In this study, it is the notion of government effectiveness. In analyzing the principal agent theory, it is import that we establish and specify how the agents; media participation, civil society participation, political ban, freedom of academic and cultural expression and political corruption this is the core component of the principal agent theory. Through examining the model of the principal agent theory it is mainly noted that when an actor or in this instance the agent carry out an action the principal will be affected. This concept explains the structure of the theory. Putting all of this together, principal agent theory is mainly defined by its models who are using related attributes of study. The pattern of interaction between the main actors of the theory which is the principal and agent reflects what would be the outcome of the studies using the different variables provided.

The principal agent theory needs to specify its actors through examining the effect of the principal's action on the agent or vice versa in order to provide a suitable explanations of the outcomes carry out by the actors. According to (Gailmard 2012), the principal agent theory can be classified as game. Literatures regarding game theory also incorporates the concept of principal agent theory. Using the principle of game theory and incorporating it to the principal agent model, the actions by the actors is portrayed as such the principal uses incentive to make the agent act for the benefit of the principal. The relationship between the two parties will start when the principal uses authority on the agent. In retrospect this can be seen as the principal observing the action of the agents and will later on decide on the incentives to be given.

The principal agent theory can also be described as behaving in the concept of rationality, both the actors of the theory carry out actions individually but they maximizes the incentives of their actions. Putting the concept of the theory in incorporating the relationship of citizens' engagement and political corruption in government effectiveness, the principal in this instance government effectivity will demand from the agents a better performance in order to improve government performance. For this to be effective, the principal needs to put in account the necessary action to push the agents, in context the principal uses the agent to deliver public service. Citizens' engagement as an agent works when principal pushes them in a collective manner through engaging them to work together.

The use of incentive in the form of a good government performance fits well in conceptualizing the principal agent theory as we can thoroughly examine what actions the agent does for the benefits of the principal.

Table 1
Locale of the Study

Afghanistan	**India**
Bangladesh	**Pakistan**
Bhutan	**Nepal**
Maldives	**Sri Lanka**

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a correlational research design. Specifically, it examined the relationship of citizens engagement and political corruption to government effectiveness. The method of analyzing the collected data were *Descriptive Statistics, Pearson's R and Multiple Regression Analysis.*

Descriptive Statistics was used to measure the central tendency and range of variability of the following variables: "civil society participation, media censorship, freedom of academic and cultural expression, party ban and political corruption."

Pearson's R was employed to determine whether there is a correlation between independent variables "citizen engagement and political corruption" and dependent variable (Government Effectiveness).

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was utilized in examining therelationship of citizens engagement and political corruption to government effectiveness to government effectiveness in South Asian countries.

Table 2
Variables and Data Sources

Variables	Definition	Data Source
GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS	It reflects the perception of the quality of public services, the quality of civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation as well as the credibility of government	**World Governance**

		commitments to such policies (World Bank, 2017).	**Indicators**
POLITICAL PARTY BAN	Political parties are essential institutions of democracy. By competing in elections parties offer citizens a choice in governance, and while in opposition they can hold governments accountable. However, some parties poses extremist agenda that poses a challenge against democracy resulting for some parties to be banned.		**The National Democratic Institute**
CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION	The sphere of civil society lies in the public space between the private sphere and the state. Here, citizens organize in groups to pursue their collective interests and ideals. We call these groups civil society organizations (CSOs). CSOs include, but are by no means limited to, interest groups, labor unions, spiritual organizations (if they are engaged in civic or political activities), social movements, professional associations, charities, and other non-governmental organizations. The core civil society index (CCSI) is designed to provide a measure of a robust civil society, understood as one that enjoys autonomy from the state and in which citizens freely and actively pursue their political and civic goals, however conceived.		**Varieties of Democracy**
MEDIA CENSORSHIP	Media Censorship is the act of altering, adjusting, editing, or banning of any or all media resulting from the presumption that its content is perceived to be objectionable, incendiary, illicit, or immoral by the applicable legislative authority or Government within a specific jurisdiction.		**Censorship Laws**
POLITICAL CORRUPTION	The directionality of the V-Dem corruption index runs from less corrupt to more corrupt (unlike the other V-Dem variables that generally run from less democratic to more democratic situation). The corruption index includes measures of six distinct types of corruption that cover both different areas and levels of the polity realm, distinguishing between executive, legislative and judicial corruption. Within the executive realm, the measures also distinguish between corruption mostly pertaining to bribery and corruption due to embezzlement. Finally, they differentiate between corruption in the highest echelons of the executive (at the level of the rulers/cabinet) on the one hand, and in the public sector at large on the other. The measures thus tap into several distinguished types of corruption: both 'petty' and 'grand'; both bribery and theft; both corruption aimed and influencing law making and that affecting implementation		**Varieties of Democracy**

V.   RESULTS

Table 3
Trend of the Level of Citizens' Engagement in South Asian Countries

MEDIA CENSORSHIP	*POLITICAL PARTY BAN*	*FREEDOM OF ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION*	*CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION*
0.842583333	0.73425	0.762166667	0.70375

As indicated on Table 3, citizens' engagement in South Asian countries expressed through civil society participation (70%) and freedom of academic and cultural expression (76%) are relatively high. However, these results are joined with high media censorship (84%) and political party ban (73%).

Generally, levels of citizens' engagement are divided as to the area or field that they were actively involved with, that is, media and political party are not free whereas people are allowed to express their academic and cultural orientation as well as civil society participation are being acknowledged.

Table 4.A
Correlation Results the Association of Citizens' Engagement and Government Effectiveness

Indicators of Citizens' Engagement	Results
CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION	0.02
	0.85
MEDIA CENSORSHIP	0.06
	0.54
POLITICAL PARTY BAN	0.18
	*0.05
FREEDOM OF ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION	0.02
	**0.04

Note: First line refers to r-value; second line pertains to p-value
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

As to the correlation results of the association of citizens' engagement and government effectiveness provided in Table 4.A, it is shown that only political party ban and freedom of academic and cultural expression are qualified to be included as indicators in running regression analysis for the variable citizens' engagement. Moreover, as to the incidence of multicollinearity, there are no indicators of independent variables being related to other indicators of independent variables that obtain an r-value equal or greater than 0.9.

Table 4.B
Regression Analysis Results of the Relationship Between Citizens' Engagement and Government Effectiveness

	0.091189711
POLITICAL PARTY BAN	0.062804
FREEDOM OF ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION	0.982695546
	0.08621794

Note: Figures in the first line refers p-value; second line pertains to standard error
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

As depicted on Table 4.B, political party ban and freedom of academic and cultural expression are not [statistically] significantly related to government effectiveness despite that they are [statistically] significantly associated. This can be explained that the data utilized in the regression analysis are not sufficient enough to establish a statistically significant relationship among these variables. Moreover, this is supported by the (Forje 2012) he states that even though political parties has the role of providing the public an organize electoral process and explaining different political policies of the government, their method of influence can be both indirect and direct. Hence, it fails to establish a clear measurement in government effectiveness.

Table 5.A
Correlation Results the Association of Political Corruption and Government Effectiveness

POLITICAL CORRUPTION	0.16
	*0.08

Note: First line refers to r-value; second line pertains to p-value
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

It is shown in Table 5.A that there is a statistically significant association between political corruption and government effectiveness at 90% level of confidence hence can be considered as valid variable for running a regression analysis.

Table 5.B
Regression Analysis Results of the Relationship Between Political Corruption and Government Effectiveness

	0.62
POLITICAL CORRUPTION	**0.07**

Note: Figures in the first line refers p-value; second line pertains to standard error
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

As depicted on Table 5.B, political corruption is not [statistically] significantly related despite that they are [statistically] significantly associated. This can be explained that the data utilized in the regression analysis are not sufficient enough to establish a statistically significant relationship among these variables. Though, controlling political corruption in the government enhances the government effectiveness based on the results of correlation associations the data still lacks inputs on how political corruption as a variable can affect government effectiveness. This is notion was supported by (Kapoor and Ravi 2009) definition of corruption, a complicated concept which still lacks understanding and research as the indicators of corruption varies depending on the political behavior of the country or its cultural and societal behaviors.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this article we examine the relationship between government effectiveness using the variable of the citizens' engagement; civil society participation, media participation party ban, freedom of academic and cultural expression and political corruption in South Asia. The papers show five different analyzation.

The main conclusion is that the regression analysis deems the variables as not statistically significant this is generally attributed to an unaccounted factor in ways they have not yet been thoroughly explored. As we can see in the model of corruption, the engagement of controlling corruption in a state can enhance government effectiveness because of uncontrollable factors of a state and its government. Thus, it is recommended to conduct further research of the subject of measuring government effectiveness. Using the statistical data of South Asian countries examined five variables in measuring government effectiveness. By using the simple correlation analyses on the data's we were able to establish the significance of the given variables in measuring government effectivity. But after running it using the multiple regression analysis the significance of the variables in the study was not strongly established. The results must be because of the limitation provided by the variables at hand and ongoing debates in defining the variables use. Therefore, in order to thoroughly examine the measures of government effectiveness more work on and study regarding the variables are further needed.

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