**I**[**ntegrity pill for corruption ill**](https://nation.com.pk/10-Feb-2020/integrity-pill-for-corruption-ill)

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Reportedly, a total of 1.6 billion people around the world are affected by bribes paid to obtain public services each year, and non-financial corruption might be having, even more, worse statistics, because it is far more extensive, inexplicable, and challenging to capture. Corruption in the form of bribery, extortion or pressure, embezzlement; theft and fraud, misuse of authority, favouritism, partiality, nepotism, and inappropriate political influences, though in any form has devastating consequences for a country, its institutions, and the public at large. Examples like Prevention of Corruption Acts: 1947, 1950 and 1958, Provincial legislation against corruption, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa anti-corruption legislation, National Accountability Bureau Ordinance, 1999 etc. were always there.

But the present government poses to comprehend the detrimental nature of corruption fully, and explicitly coupled these facts with the misdeeds of political mafias in Pakistan, who established and gained deep roots in the last five decades. PTI’s entire campaign was based on or moved around a single agenda, and that was, and that is curbing corruption. After getting into government, raising corruption issue at every platform, showing zero tolerance to corruption, and giving teeth to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) are some parts of the anti-corruption drive by PTI. Sincere commitment to any cause lies in planning well. Otherwise, it stays like a wish but not as a goal. Therefore it is utmost essential to look into the matter of corruption as a whole, but plan and execute separately for each portion, section or sector.

Let us look into the existence, effects, and solution for corruption issues in the education sector. Isn’t it central? In fact, at the federal or provincial level we have never heard about this vital area from the current treasury benches in any house of representatives; isn’t it sad? Anyway, the deceptive and shadowy disposition of corruption makes it challenging to estimate its detrimental cost to education in purely monetary terms. The social cost of corruption is enormous, however. Youth is the first and direct victim of corruption in education because corruption inculcates an undesirable set of beliefs into these young individuals. The investment of society in future citizens fails when individuals observe and then start endorsing corrupt, see unethical and deviant acts but start considering it as a norm, start believing that success and merit have no relation, and later these kids fill the ranks of future leaders and professionals. Not only society, but even human life can be risked and compromised by forged or unqualified judges, engineers, doctors, or false scientific research carried out by immoral and corrupt academicians.

To be more specific, as precision is wisdom and discernment, corruption in higher education institutions (HEIs) is principally more harmful because it regularises and breeds a social acceptance of corruption among youth, who carry and transfer such acceptance into their professional career, which ultimately pours back to society. As young individuals, students rarely can question the integrity of a teacher, inapt division of opportunity, favouritism in grading, and unethical conduct in the classroom; thus they adopt and internalise corrupt views of what it takes to succeed. And not only carry these views forward into their own entire life, even pollute the views of other members of the society who are attached to them, thus when this turns into a social norm, but its series also begins anew in each generation.

All the key writers in the field realise the importance of watchdog, but they also agree that it could be a stop-gap arrangement that is indeed a transactional model, not a transformation model. The long-lasting and social change anti-corruption program is a “holistic integrity approach” to handle corruption in all fields precisely in HEIs for the sake of this write-up. This perspective involves advocating integrity in every feature of the educational enterprise: from university mission and vision statements and its branding to the entire process of admissions, proclaimed and sensibly expressed institutional integrity policies to assessment practices and curriculum design, comprehensive integrity orientation to all its members too frequent and visual reminders on campus, embedded and targeted institutional support at every level for staff, faculty and students, professional development and research training for staff, and using new technologies as a tool to assist its members to detect and avoid academic integrity breaches when and where they occur in administrative as well as academic practices of the institution.

Moreover, a holistic integrity approach acknowledges that integrity in an educational intuition is more than an individual’s responsibility rather universities having a role to play in developing student perceptions and understandings toward the value of integrity in life. Of course, the ‘character of the actors themselves’ is integral to the development of an honest university. Still, at the same time, these actors internalise the university’s ethical standards gradually. Therefore reliance on the honesty of the individual is not enough, but to create a framework that offers a multifaceted approach to calculate the level of integrity, pinpoint areas of concern in establishing integrity, and infuse integrity into overall university structure, from administrative hierarchy to academic ladder.

Besides all indices and indicators such as Corruption Perception Index (CPI), Global Corruption Barometer (GCB), Bribe Payer Index (BPI), and Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) etc. are based solely on linearly taking people perception, whereas coupling of organizational efforts and gathering people perception have been mostly ignored. This will not happen just by saying the word honesty, but a proper and persistent effort to develop integrity codes, their orientation, training, and development on one hand and assurance of compliance of those codes, on the other hand, is required. Furthermore, the multidimensional view of integrity needs to be shared with employees and students, so even if one perceives him/herself honest must consider values other than honesty, for instance, a student could face situation where sharing answers with his friend confirm the honesty with the friendship but knowing that it is an academic misconduct, brings him to a point where either he leaves the value behind or refuse to do this and risk losing the friendship. In the words of Benjamin Franklin “failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” We have high hopes; though hopes are losing their grounds, we don’t afford failure on consistent bases; therefore we look forward to presenting government of PTI to step ahead and beside NAB, use integrity pill for corruption ill.