

Criminological aspects of corruption

Abstract

This master thesis focuses on several selected criminological aspects of corruption, aiming to explore them from the criminological point of view. This master thesis, however, does not necessarily aim to provide practical solutions for control of corruption.

The first part is focused on the criminology as a science, since it is the basis of this master thesis. The main topics of this part are the criminology as a term, its subject and its brief history. Next, the attention is pointed towards definition of the term of corruption, given its disunited approaches to its definition, and compares the numerous takes on the definition from the literature and various institutions. The master thesis also brings forward various types and kinds of corruption, including petty corruption, grand corruption or state capture, as well as distinguishing between the types of corruption based on various factors. Given that the corruption may manifest in multiple forms or degrees of institutionalization, variants and syndromes of corruption according to Johnston are not omitted.

Corruption is an important social phenomenon causing far-reaching consequences that may, however, not necessarily be easily seen, or they may even be overlooked. In order to understand this pathological phenomenon it is also crucial to consider causes of the corruption in the society – what does it arise from and where do the opportunities to commit acts of corruption occur. For the above mentioned reasons is the fourth chapter of this master thesis dedicated to causes and consequences of corruption.

A research on offenders and victims is another important area within criminology to consider. This master thesis explores the issue of corruption offenders in terms of their character traits, possible mental processes leading to committing an act of corruption, as well as bringing forward some statistical data on whom the typical offender is. The victims of corruption unfortunately tend to be a bit overlooked, given the fact that they are often very difficult to identify. That, however, does not decrease the severity of such criminality, considering its direct or indirect impact on groups of individuals or society as a whole.

Finally, the focus is aimed towards the issues of measuring the rate of corruption, and offers an overview of various methodologies – composite indexes and public opinion surveys. While working with such indicators, it is necessary to be aware of their possible problems and limitations that are caused by the issue of latency of corruption.