

Workshop Paper



Gender and Corruption in Development Cooperation

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PREFERENCE FOR CORRUPT PROFESSIONS: DOES IT POVERTY INDUCED OR SOCIAL NORM?

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ABSTRACT

Corruption is use of public positions for private benefits mostly financial. Income and education are two determinants of corruption. Low income and low level education lead to higher level corruption in a country. Women are considered as less corrupt and employment of more employment in public jobs may reduce corruption. Using primary data of a survey, this paper observes that education and income are not effective determinants of corruption in Bangladesh. Men and women have similar preference for corruption in the country. People have high preferences for those corrupt professions that have high power. Hence, the social norm for holding corrupt positions by higher educated people is the major cause of corruption in the country.

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is use of public positions for personal benefits like bribery, embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, nepotism and patronage etc. Any discussion on corruption refers to corruption in public offices though there are corruptions in private activities. A person employed in any profession that is responsible to deliver some economic, social or religious service to other people may be involved in corruption by using professional authorities. Corruption is directly related to professions and involves exercise of some formal authority. Higher power and authorities in a profession may bring more opportunities do corruptions. Low incomes may encourage people to use the profession for private financial benefits (Svensson, 2005). Culture may be another reason because financial gains through corruption may not be considered as a serious unethical practice in some societies (Tsalikis and Nwachukwu, 1991). It is often argued that poverty and social norms don't motivate men and women equally towards corrupt activities. Women are less corrupt because of their higher

ethical standards and thus feminisation of professions may reduce corruption in countries (Schimmel and Pech, 2004).

The Transparency International (TI) has identified Bangladesh as most corrupt country in the world for consecutive three years since 2001. Corruptions prevail in all type of professions in this country because opportunities and attractions. Corrupts mostly go unpunished in this country and corruption brings fortune and power for them. The objective of this paper is to examine preference or desire of citizens of this country to hold corrupt professions and thereby intention to do corruptions.

A field survey was conducted in March 2007 on corruption in Bangladesh. Based on the primary data from the survey, this paper examines the level of preference of citizens to corruptions and how income and education affect preferences. Gender differences in corruption preferences have been explored simultaneously to understand if feminisation of professions may reduce corruption in Bangladesh. The hypothesis of this paper is when preferences to corruption is not dependent on gender, education and income level, then there is a culture that supports of doing corruption in this country.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The level of corruption or existence of corrupt professions may not be same in all countries. Common determinants of corruption are stage of economic development, level of education, religion, culture, social structure and opportunity for corruption. Svensson (2005) argues that economic factors and level of education shape the quality of institutions in a country. Reviewing existing literature, he predicts high level of corruption in the institutions of those countries where income and literacy levels are low. Religion may influence corruption indirectly by affecting attitude towards education and work or entrepreneurial abilities. Limited spread of modern education and learning in Catholic and Muslim countries has lowered quality of institutions and ability of population to challenge activities of corrupts in these countries (Landes, 1998). Ethics in many religions discourages entrepreneurial or economic activities and encourages dependence on spiritual power (Hill, 2007). Ethical values of this type may work against poverty reduction in many Muslim and Catholic countries. German sociologist Max Weber suggested a strong connection between Protestant ethics and the capitalism (Giddens, 1971) that caused poverty reduction in Western Europe. The culture of high masculinity, high power distance and high uncertainty avoidance in a

society may lead to more corruption (Husted et. al., 1999). Masculinity encourages material success and personal wealth accumulation. High desire for material success in a masculine society leads to greater willingness to participate in corrupt activities for private gains (Hofstede, 1997). In a society with high power distance, common people are highly dependent on the individuals with statutory power and have limited ability to challenge the decisions of public offices (Takyi-Asiedu, 1993). In some countries people intentionally accept corrupt practices in public offices just to avoid uncertainty in receiving public utility and social services and thereby encourage corruptions (Alam, 1995; Rashid, 1981; Montinola and Jackman, 2002). Low probability of detection of and punishment for corrupt activities motivate civil servants to be corrupt who are in administration that control of lucrative activities (Palmier, 1985). The absence of effective anticorruption strategies that broadens the opportunity for corruption and narrows down policing has increased corruption in some Asian countries, such as, Bangladesh, Indonesia, China, India etc (Quah, 1999; Palmier, 1985).

Effective strategy is necessary to curb corruption in countries. Femininity is often considered as opposite to masculinity where material success is not considered as ultimate objective of life. Gender dimension of jobs may have critical impact on level of corruption in a country. Feminisation of public offices may limit incidence of corruptions in countries (Schimmel and Pech, 2004). Using broad multivariate cross-country statistical analyses, researchers observe inverse correlation between percentage of public jobs occupied by women and level of corruption (Swamy et al, 2001; Dollar et al, 1999; Gokcekus and Mukherjee, 2002). The idea of feminisation of public jobs to reduce corruption is supported on the ground of gender gap in risk preferences, social preferences and competitive preferences (Croson and Gneezy, 2004). Women are risk averse and perception of danger of doing corruption restrains them from corrupt activities. In contradiction male are more confident than women to avoid unwanted consequences of corruptions and involve themselves in corrupt activities. Women are more responsive to social conditions and have high level of altruism (Andreoni and Vesterlund, 2001). Women are less competitive than man (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007) and are less interested to achieve material gains through corrupt activities (Croson and Gneezy, 2004). Through an experimental study on bribery, Rivas (2006) collected empirical data on participation of men and women in corruption and concluded that women are indeed less corrupt than men. Therefore, it is a general hypothesis that more employment of women in public offices will be an effective strategy to reduce corruption.

Some researchers are reluctant to accept the argument that women are less corrupt and their participation in public jobs may reduce level of corruption. A survey observes no statistically significant gender-based difference in ethical judgement about corruption and concludes that men and women have similar ethical behaviour (Kerbs et al, 1994). A meta-analysis of 100 studies concludes that the overall pattern of ethical behaviour of men and women is similar (Walker, 1984). Pharr (1998) claimed no gender based difference in attitude towards corruption. Similarly, Aldrich and Kage (2003) observed no statistically significant gender-based difference in moral standard toward corruption from statistical analysis of nationally representative data set of Japan. Women and men have the same level of moral judgement, however, judgement changes at different ages irrespective of gender. Reduction of level of corruption by increasing participation of women in public offices is not a definite proposition. Goetz (2007) firmly argues against the strategy to reduce corruption by employing more women on the ground that gender-based difference in ethics is not empirically proved yet. Failure of this strategy may affect the social equality and women empowerment issues in a country. If women attitude to corruption is not different from men but they avoid corruption only to averse risk, empowering women with public jobs without cutting opportunities for corruption may ultimately create corrupt “elite women” in countries (Schimmel and Pech, 2004). Hence, the relation between women in public positions and level of corruption is an unsolved issue.

METHODOLOGY

Most of studies those analysed the relation between gender and corruption issue evaluated the association between number of public jobs occupied by women and level of corruption in the organisation. This methodology was applied by Swamy et al (2001), Dollar et al (1999) and Gokcekus and Mukherjee (2002) to cross-country data set to study relationship between women and corruption level. Pharr (1998) and Aldrich and Kage (2003) conducted survey to analyse the reactions of men and women to situations when they encounter opportunity for corruption under existing socio-political environment. Rivas (2006) conducted an experimental study to analyse behaviour of men and women in giving and taking bribes. However, no significant study is found that has analysed the temptation or preference of men and women to hold professions that they themselves consider corrupt. This study analyses preferences of people to corrupt professions or jobs. It asked respondents to weigh up corruptions in different public professions and then obtained strength of desire of respondents

to hold those professions. In multiplicative association of corruption weight and desirability of professions, this study measures temptation or preference of men and women to corruptions. This study evaluates affect of gender, education and income on preferences for corrupt professions.

Design of Research

This research is designed as a formal descriptive study to evaluate preferences of adult citizens of Bangladesh for corrupt professions through a cross-sectional survey. Primary data were collected from respondents of age above 18 using a semi-structured interviewer administered questionnaire. Seventeen professions are identified on the basis of regular newspaper reports on corruptions. The questionnaire has three parts. First part is to collect demographic data of respondents, desire of respondent for each of 17 selected professions. Second part is to obtain data on the definition of corruption by the respondent and the quantification of the level of corruption in each 17 professions done by the respondent. The third section gathered data on the experiences of respondents dealing with corruptions and economic impact of corruption on them. This paper uses data of the survey and looks into four specific research questions as following.

- How people in Bangladesh define corruption.
- How much corruption respondents assign to professions in Bangladesh and strength of preference of people to hold corrupt professions.
- Whether men and women have similar or differential preferences to corrupt professions.
- How education and income affect preferences of men and women for corrupt professions.

Sample Size and Data Collection

The survey used non-probability purposive sampling technique for data collection. Target sample size was 4000 respondents, half men and half women, from all over Bangladesh. In absence of financial support for this survey, it utilised volunteer services of students of Dhaka University for data collection under strict quality control procedure. 400 students participated in data collection process during the month of March of 2007 and each of them administered only ten questionnaires. They had instruction to use their judgement to select adult respondents and interview them in their hometowns. They reported unwillingness of the women to participate in survey and finally good interviews were 2395 that could be used for analysis. Among them 1781 (74.4%) are men and 614 (25.6%) are women.

Measurement Method

Respondents showed their desire to hold a profession on a qualitative scale consists of five choices and each choice has a quantitative value assigned to them. The choices and respective values are – like most (10.0), like more (7.5), like (5.0), like less (2.5) and don't like (0). Similarly the level of corruption in each profession is measured in five levels with assigned values. These are highly corrupt (10.0), more corrupt (7.5), corrupt (5.0), less corrupt (2.5) and not corrupt (0). The income of the respondents are transformed into percentile scale and arranged in five groups for analysis. For analytical purpose, the levels of education of the respondents are classified in six groups – primary, below secondary, secondary, higher-secondary, graduate and post-graduate.

Analytical Frame

All respondents expressed their level of desire for professions and measured level of corruption in professions separately. The formula below has been applied to calculate standardised score of respondents to corrupt professions. In the equation P is standardised corruption preference score (CPS) of a respondent, L_i strength of desire for a profession, C_i level of corruption in a profession. Standardisation is done to convert the total score into a score between 0 and 100.

$$P = \left[\sum_{i=1}^{17} L_i C_i \right] \times \left[\frac{100}{1700} \right]$$

To analyse people perception of corruption in professions average corruption weight of each profession is estimated in aggregate (\bar{C}) and separately for men (\bar{C}_m) and for women (\bar{C}_f). Similarly, average desire of people to hold professions is estimated in aggregate (\bar{L}), for men (\bar{L}_m) and for women (\bar{L}_f). With the intention of exploring association between corrupt profession and desire to hold jobs and similarity of men and women in perception of corruptions and desires for professions, four coefficients of correlation are calculated as following.

$Cor(\bar{C}_m, \bar{L}_m)$: Strength and direction of association between corruption in professions and desire to hold profession in case of men respondents.

$Cor(\bar{C}_f, \bar{L}_f)$: Strength and direction of association between corruption in professions and

desire to hold profession in case of women respondents

$Cor(\bar{C}_m, \bar{C}_f)$: Strength of similarity between men and women in perception of corruption in professions.

$Cor(\bar{L}_m, \bar{L}_f)$: Strength of similarity between men and women in desire for holding professions.

An important objective of this paper is to find the similarity in corruption preference score of men and women. It is achieved by two sample hypothesis test of means by calculating mean corruption preference scores of men (\bar{P}_m) and women (\bar{P}_f). This paper assumes a higher CPS for men than women. The hypothesis is tested using the following framework where level of significance (α) is 0.05.

$$H_0: \bar{P}_m = \bar{P}_f$$

$$H_1: \bar{P}_m > \bar{P}_f$$

Affect of education and income on CPS of men and women are examined by applying two-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique. In this two way ANOVA, the two factors are **a** and **b**, where **a** = {education, income} and **b** = {gender} and **ab** is treatment. For both ANOVA applications with respect to factors, the null hypothesis (H_0) assumes equality of all means and alternative hypothesis (H_1) assumes differences in mean.

RESULTS

This survey defined corruption as unethical activities help people in public offices to earn wealth for own or for some close ones that they should not get under existing rules and regulations. About 92 percent of the respondents agreed to this definition and they identified four common functions of corrupt officials are take bribes (83.5%), exercise nepotism and favouritism (66.8%), use official power to mischief common people (65.1%) and ignore own official duties and responsibilities (63.1%). 24.4 percents of respondents who are public officials have similar opinion like non-public officials regarding corrupt activities.

Corruption and Choice for Profession

Respondents' perception of the level of corruption in professions and their level of desire to hold those professions are given in Table-1. Politics, police and government bureaucracy are

identified as most corrupt professions. Respondents expressed least desire to become politicians and police. They show relative high desire to hold bureaucratic positions. Engineering, medical services, law offices have higher level of corruption and respondents also have higher desire to hold these positions. Women identify law offices more corrupt than men do. People consider international organisation least corrupt followed by teaching and defence. Interesting is that business as profession is ranked as more corrupt. Men have high desire to take this profession.

Estimated $\text{Cor}(\bar{C}_m, \bar{L}_m)$ is -0.436 and $\text{Cor}(\bar{C}_f, \bar{L}_f)$ is -0.534. Among, these two correlations, only $\text{Cor}(\bar{C}_f, \bar{L}_f)$ is statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. Women have statistically significant moderate disliking for higher corrupt professions. Men also have disliking but statistically not significant. $\text{Cor}(\bar{C}_m, \bar{C}_f)$ is +0.991 means there are strong similarity in perception of men and women for level of corruptions in professions. Respondents of both genders have strong similarity in choices for professions as $\text{Cor}(\bar{L}_m, \bar{L}_f) = +0.948$.

Table 1: Respondents perception of level of corruption in and strength of desire for professions

Professions	Level of Corruption Perceived			Level of Desire to Hold Profession		
	Male (\bar{C}_m)	Female (\bar{C}_f)	All (\bar{C})	Male (\bar{L}_m)	Female (\bar{L}_f)	All (\bar{L})
Business	5.54	5.92	5.64	6.08	4.69	5.72
Politics	8.62	8.85	8.68	1.89	1.27	1.73
Government Administration	7.53	7.32	7.48	5.80	6.05	5.86
Government Revenue	7.98	8.08	8.01	4.05	4.14	4.07
Government Other	5.95	6.08	5.99	3.90	4.25	3.99
Police	8.20	8.37	8.24	1.83	1.40	1.72
Defence	3.22	3.40	3.27	5.30	5.50	5.35
Engineering Services	5.46	5.11	5.37	5.56	6.58	5.82
Medical Services	5.31	5.04	5.24	6.08	6.71	6.24
Teaching	3.21	3.30	3.23	5.89	6.08	5.94
Law Offices	6.71	7.07	6.80	3.44	3.73	3.51
Religious Leaders	3.26	3.82	3.40	2.75	2.56	2.70
Financial Organisations	4.23	4.22	4.22	4.93	5.35	5.04
Private Firms	3.48	3.67	3.53	4.44	4.77	4.52
International Organisations	2.65	2.79	2.69	5.91	5.96	5.92
Non Government Organisations (NGO)	3.72	3.80	3.74	3.61	3.88	3.68
Journalist	4.78	4.41	4.68	3.88	4.23	3.97

Corruption Preference

Average CPS of all respondents is 22.93 on a scale between 0 and 100. Highest CPS is 69.85 and coefficient of variation is 47.01 percent. This low score indicates low preference of respondents for corrupt professions. The CPS score of men and women are 22.95 and 22.87 respectively. Women have lower CPS than men. The apparent low score of women is tested statistically. The calculated Z-statistics is 0.166 against the critical value $Z_{0.05} = 1.64$. It is not possible to reject null-hypothesis (H_0) when $Z < Z_{0.05}$. There is no statistical difference between CPS of men and women.

Effect of Income on Corruption Preference

Income is an important factor to affect preferences for corruption because it is common idea that corruption has inverse relation with level of income. Table 2 shows average corruption preference scores across five income groups by gender and also average income per month for each income group. Average income of top twenty percent is 12.84 times more than the bottom twenty percent, when CPS ratio between same two groups is 1.01. Table 3 presents ANOVA statistics where effect on CPS by two factors, gender and income, are examined. Two factors, income and gender have no affect on the CPS. Statistically insignificant interaction effect implies no dependence between income and gender. The power (ω^2) of factors to influence CPS shows that gender difference has least power to influence variation in CPS. Rather income has higher but statistically insignificant power to influence variations.

Table 2: Corruption preference score (CPS) by income group and gender

Income Groups	Average of Corruption Preference Score (CPS)			Average Income Per Month (BD Taka)
	Men	Women	All	
Top 20 Percent	22.40	22.79	22.51	73889.35
Second 20 Percent	23.03	22.05	22.74	26987.34
Third 20 Percent	22.98	23.28	23.05	18434.31
Fourth 20 Percent	24.29	22.98	23.96	12159.45
Bottom 20 Percent	22.11	23.53	22.39	5753.87

Table 3: Univariate two way ANOVA for CPS where income and gender are factors

Source of Variations	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (df)	Mean Square	F	Sig. of F (p)	Observed Power (ω^2)
Model	1260585.72	10	126058.57	1085.901	0.000	1.000
Income	300.84	4	75.21	0.648	0.628	0.214
Gender	0.49	1	0.49	0.004	0.948	0.050
Income * Gender	420.49	4	105.12	0.906	0.460	0.291
Error	276866.70	2385	116.09			
Total	1537452.42	2395				

Computed using alpha = .05
R Squared = .820 (Adjusted R Squared = .819)

Effect of Education on Corruption Preference

Education should have negative relation with corruption because it may raise ethical standard. The Table 4 shows that average CPS of respondents increase in Bangladesh as level of education increase. It suggests higher education encourage to hold corruption professions more. This finding is a contradiction to the common hypothesis about the relationship between education and corruption. Respondents with education at Masters or higher levels have 12.08 percent more CPS compared to respondents with education at primary level. The effect of education and gender on CPS is examined with a two way ANOVA. Estimated statistics are presented in Table 5. The affect of gender on variations of CPS is statistically insignificant and its power (ω^2) is low as well. Education also has statistically insignificant affect on variation on CPS but its power to influence (ω^2) is significantly high (0.546). The effect of education is not dependent on gender or vice versa as the interaction between two factors is statistically insignificant.

Table 4: Corruption preference score (CPS) by education and gender

Level of Education	Average Corruption Preference Score (CPS)		
	Men	Women	All
Primary Level	20.32	20.92	20.53
Below Secondary Level	21.57	27.18	22.36
Secondary Level	22.38	21.35	22.06
Higher Secondary	22.73	22.51	22.68
Graduate Level	23.57	23.29	23.50
Masters Level and Above	23.03	22.95	23.01

Table 5: Univariate two way ANOVA for CPS where education and gender are factors

Source of Variations	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (df)	Mean Square	F	Sig. of F (p)	Observed Power (ω^2)
Model	1260889.61	12	105074.13	905.370	0.000	1.000
Education Level	895.69	5	179.14	1.544	0.173	0.546
Gender	122.33	1	122.33	1.054	0.305	0.177
Education Level * Gender	525.52	5	105.10	0.906	0.476	0.328
Error	276562.82	2383	116.06			
Total	1537452.42	2395				

Computed using alpha = .05
R Squared = .820 (Adjusted R Squared = .819)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Bangladesh is a country of high incidence of corruptions. However, citizens of the country dislike corrupt professions and thereby corruptions as exposed from the low corruption preference scores (CPS) of respondents. The mean score about 23 is very low on a scale where possible highest score is 100. There is no statistically significant difference in CPS of men and women. Hence, it seems that people of the country are not enthusiast of corruption.

Poverty probably is not a cause of corruption in the country. A statistically non-significant effect of income on variation of CPS is supporting this conclusion. Rather mean CPS of different income groups show relative higher CPS for higher income groups. Education is not and effective determinant of corruption in the country. The effect of education on variations in CPS is not statistically significant. However, mean score of respondents increase as their level of education goes up. Hence an important finding of this paper is, though statistically not significant, people belong to higher income and education group are more interested in corrupt professions.

Professions like government bureaucracy, police, politics, engineering, medical and law are considered more corrupt by respondents. Except politics and police, respondents show high desire to hold these jobs as well. These professions need high level of education for entry and carry on. People in these professions also belong to high income group in the society. Higher education does not motivate to take politics as profession that has time bound tenure in

offices. People may remove politicians from offices through a democratic process. However, higher education motivates to take those corrupt offices that have permanent and long tenure. These positions have crucial decision making power and cannot be removed easily. A country with low literacy rate, few who get education at higher level probably engage themselves in corrupt professions. Another corrupt profession business is a preferred profession to many. Government bureaucracy, technical services and business probably are the primary sources of corruption in the country. Corruption is the act of administrative and economic elites of the country. Corruption is not poverty induced rather it is social norm of the elite class of this country.

Feminisation of professions may not reduce corruption in this country because men and women have statistically significant similar corruption preference score (CPS). Even for some corrupt profession women show higher desire to hold those. To reduce corruption in the country, it is necessary to address the permanent source of corruption and eliminate that.

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