



Overview of Corruption and Gender Research

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Against Corruption

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Correlations between gender and corruption



- Corruption is a major destructive force for humans and human societies.
- Women suffer disproportionately from the effects of corruption, as women are overrepresented among the world's poor.
- Women tend to be less involved in corrupt transactions.

Central research question



How and under what conditions is gender likely to have an impact on corruption?

Origins of the Field (1)



Bigger patterns: between levels of corruption and women's descriptive representation in parliaments (Dollar et al, 2000)

The greater the representation of women in Parliament, the lower the level of corruption.

Origins of the Field (2)

Bigger patterns: between corruption and women's participation in general (Swarmy et al, 2001)

- Female participation: women ministers, women in national parliaments and women in the labor force
- Greater female participation is associated with less corruption
- Firms owned by women in Georgia are more likely to “never” pay bribes.

Conflating correlation and causation



Simplistic assumptions:

“Women, in essence, are less corruption than men”

“Women more trustworthy and public spirited than men”

“Women are more effective in promoting honest government”

“Increasing the proportion of women in positions of power will reduce corruption”

Presumed causal relationships

- These simplistic assumptions assume causation rather than correlation
- The results of Swamy et al's survey of firms in Georgia could have been driven by female respondents having fewer opportunities to engage in corruption

Could it be the other way around?



- Are opportunities for corruption gendered?
- Are these processes related to the achievement of political office?
- Evidence from Europe
 - Where levels of corruption are high in 167 regions of 18 European countries, the proportion of women elected to councils is low and vice versa (Sundstrom & Wangherud, 2016)

Corruption as a barrier to women



- Clientelism, patronage and patriarchy
- Evidence from Argentina:
 - Women rarely hold central nodes in clientelistic networks, yet holding such positions is seen as a qualification for party candidacy (Szwarcberg Daby 2016)

Institutional logics matter

- **Democracy versus autocracy**

Regime type produces different outcomes in relation to gender and corruption; democracy is associated with corruption control.

- **Legislatures vs. bureaucracies**

Gender and corruption relationship plays out differently in different arenas; bureaucracy constrains asymmetric experiences.

%Women in parliament is associated with control of corruption

%Women in administration do not tend to affect corruption levels unless the bureaucratic organization is weak

Research in MENA region

Corruption and Gender in the MENA Region (Jaidane-Mazighet al 2022).

- Increase in women's involvement in economic and political sphere decrease corruption.
- Joint impact of women's participation and institutional variables is more effective in lowering corruption.
- Democracy and political stability context play an important role in explaining the negative impact on corruption, especially when women are policymakers.
- Robust evidence that when country perform in gender equality, the link gender-corruption become stronger.

Findings in Arab region

Recent research (2022) explaining the correlation between women in political life and corruption levels, suggests that rather than women being more moral and just, it may be because they are minority groups or because they are less willing to take risks.

Previous research (2015) (1) Women are more vulnerable to corruption. (2) Corruption leads to the fragmentation of the social structure by increasing inequality, Income gaps, weak public infrastructure, impeding economic development. (3) The causes of corruption are the lack of proper public and private institutions, anti-corruption legislation, regulations, laws and instructions.

Gender mainstreaming in anti-corruption

Key questions that need to be considered (Sample 2018):

- 1) Do men and women benefit equally from a program and how can we know that?
- 2) Are women providing and accessing information?
- 3) Do women have a voice in decision making?
- 4) Are there gender-based risks?
- 5) Are women reached access social, economic and ethnic/racial identities?

