



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2021/ACT/SYM/005

Agenda Item: D1 2.1

Gender and Corruption

Submitted by: New Zealand (On Behalf of Speaker)



**Symposium on Gender Mainstreaming and
Mentoring for Anti-Corruption Agencies
21-23 April 2021**



Gender and Corruption
Anne Marie Goetz 2021

A myth-in-the-making: women are less corrupt than men

- 1998 Fujimori : the 2,500-strong traffic police force in Lima to be all-women
- 2003: Mexican Customs Service: new crack force of anti-corruption officers on land and sea borders would be entirely female.
- 2011: replacement of all male traffic cops in Mexico State with women.
- Uganda: most positions of treasurer in local government are assigned to women, where it is hoped they will apply their prudence in managing domestic accounts to curb mis-spending in local public office.
- Commander Pedro Montoya (Lima): ‘the women are more honest and morally firm than the men. It’s undeniable’.

Montoya also posited that women are more honest because of their family role -- they have an aversion to taking money from male drivers, because they feel this act would resemble prostitution

(Associated Press, CNN, August 21, 1998)

Mexico state transit police



There are now exclusively women in the Transit Police for Mexico State

Women as ‘Political Cleaners’

- Daniel Kauffman (WB): ‘there is a significant level of correlation between the level of women’s rights that exist in a country and the level of corruption. This indicates the need for a broader-based anti-corruption agenda’
- World Bank 2002:9 - ‘... a growing body of evidence suggests that gender equality in rights and resources is associated with less corruption and better governance...’ (‘Integrating Gender to the World Bank’s Work: A Strategy for Action’)
- Dollar, Fisman and Gatti (1999) – using behavioural studies: women are more trust-worthy and public-spirited than men. The greater the representation of women in parliament, the lower the level of corruption.

The gender and corruption debate

Nature or System?

1. Gendered attributes:

gendered behavioral differences: women are less risk averse, more ethical and community-minded, less impetuous, either because of 'nature' or socialization.

Since corruption involves rule-breaking, ruthless, selfish and even dangerous behavior, it is not associated with female characteristics.

Consistent gender differences in attitudes towards corruption

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>

(a) Gender and socially cooperative attitudes, World Values Surveys

	% Saying the behavior “can never be justified”	
	Male	Female
(1) Claiming government benefits which you are not entitled to	63.7	67.9
(2) Avoiding a fare on public transport	60.3	64.9
(3) Cheating on taxes if you have the chance	54.4	61.5
(4) Buying something you knew was stolen	72.9	79.5
(5) Taking and driving away a car belonging to someone else	83.1	87.2
(6) Keeping money that you have found	43.9	51.6
(7) Lying in your own interest	45.1	50.9
(8) Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties	72.4	77.3
(9) Fighting with the police	52.0	57.1
(10) Failing to report damage you’ve done accidentally to a parked vehicle	61.8	67.6
(11) Throwing away litter in a public place	69.1	74.4
(12) Driving under the influence of alcohol	74.2	83.4

Sample sizes vary between 52,107 and 83,532. All differences are significant at the 0.0001 level.

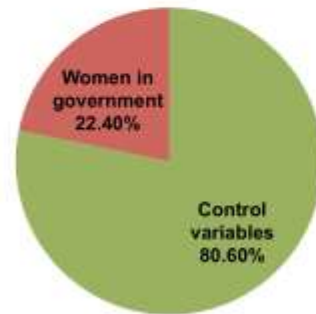
Gender and corruption debates

- 2. Political system:

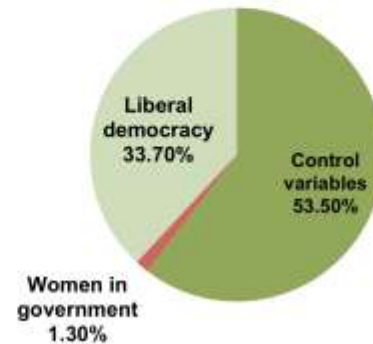
Gender and corruption relationship is spurious and is caused by political system – there are more women in power (and better anti-corruption measures) in **liberal democracies**.

Quality of the participant or quality of the institution?

Proportion of Variance in Corruption Explained by Women in Government before Controlling for Liberal Democracy



Proportion of Variance in Corruption Explained by Women in Government after Controlling for Liberal Democracy



From: Hung-En Seng, 'Fairer Sex or Fairer System?'

Also Veronika Holmgren 2015: both the gender and the democracy effect is minimal when controlling for anti-corruption laws.

- To expect that women's gender alone can act as a magic bullet to resolve a corruption problem that is much bigger than they are, that is systemic, is unrealistic. Reflects not just wishful but almost desperate thinking.

Short-term effect?

- If women do exhibit preferences for less corrupt behavior, that may simply be because they have been excluded from opportunities for such behavior, and that effect is bound to change over time as greater numbers of women enter public office.

Should Explore:

- how gender shapes opportunities for corruption- and engagement in fighting corruption;
- gendered currencies of corruption,
- gender differences in everyday corruption (eg women more likely to pay bribes for services in education and health sectors),
- consequences for women's citizen and consumer rights.

Explore consequences for women of engaging in anti-corruption efforts



i Investigative journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia was killed in a car bombing. Photograph: Darrin Zammit Lupi/Reuters

Women's *Policies*, not Innate Moral Virtue

- Jha and Sarangi 2015: data for 150 economies over 1998-2011, find that a higher share of women in parliaments associated w/a higher fraction of government spending allotted to education and health.
- 1. Lower scope for misappropriation of funds in the programs implemented under these policies.
- 2. If women politicians spend more money on education and health, this leads to higher human capital in the long term which in turn may have a negative impact on corruption.

- Instead of exploiting supposed feminine virtues in the fight against corruption, (what can women do for good governance) we should combat corruption in ways that respond to women's concerns (what governments should be doing for women)