

Strengthening State and Society Responses to Corruption in Papua New Guinea

Anti-Corruption Messaging

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Research Background

Development actors spend millions on raising awareness about corruption

However, messages may exacerbate corruption as a collective action problem

- Research findings from Jakarta

Do anti-corruption messages fuel a greater acceptance of corruption?

Research: An experiment examining responses to different anti-corruption messages from citizens in Port Moresby.

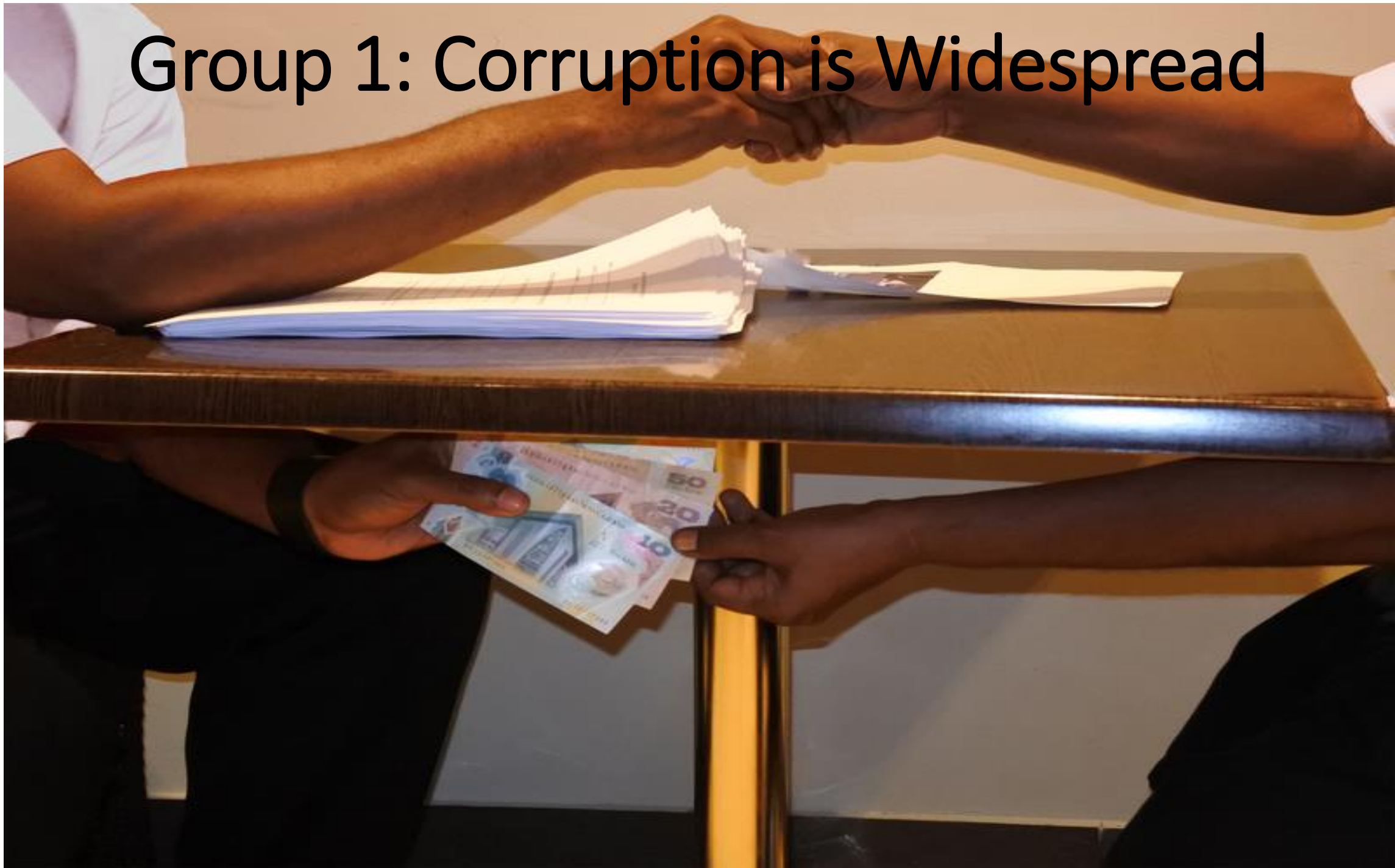
Fieldwork

- English/Tok Pisin Questionnaire piloted in January 2017
 - Changes made to research instrument
- Research in February 2017
- Interviewed 1,520 respondents across Port Moresby
 - Sites of research purposively selected in each of Port Moresby's three electorates
- Respondents selected to ensure representation of gender/ages.
- Anti-corruption messages randomly assigned to individual respondents

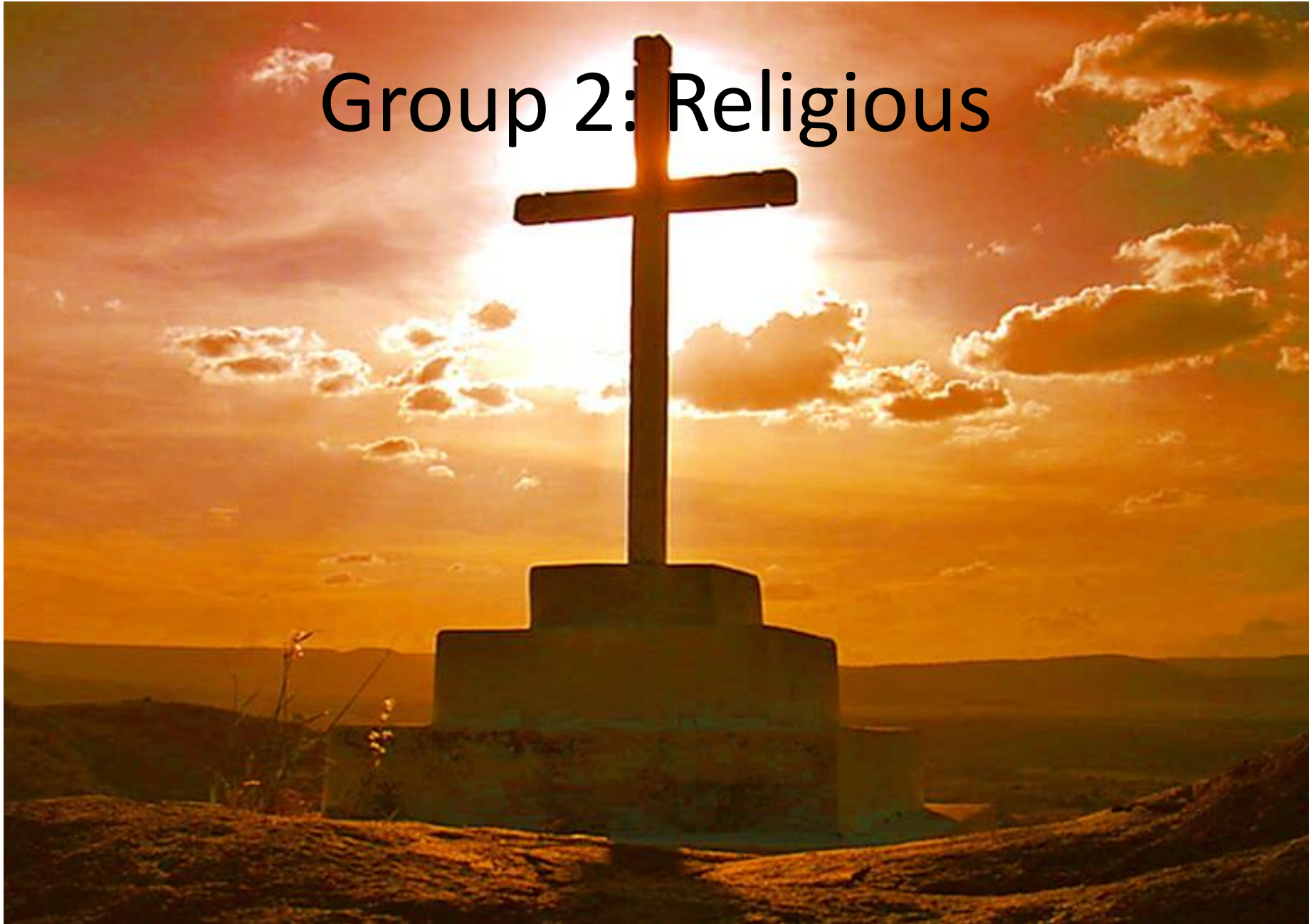


Five groups, four messages

Group 1: Corruption is Widespread



Group 2: Religious



Group 3. Legal



Group 4: Wantoks
(local/community impacts)



Group 5: Control Group

Research questions (dependent variables)

Types of questions

1. Perceptions about corruption and anti-corruption efforts in Papua New Guinea
 - Eg: How effective do you think your government's actions are in the fight against corruption?
 - Extent of corruption among public servants.
2. Interest in reporting and resisting corruption
 - Eg There is no point in reporting corruption because nothing useful will be done about it.
3. Perceptions about politics and government
 - Eg: How much interest would you say you have in politics?

Q: Which message most shaped perceptions about corruption/anti-corruption?

A: It depends

Variable	Treatment	Impact
How effective do you think your government's actions are in the fight against corruption?	Widespread	Negative
It is not corrupt if everyone does it	Widespread	Positive
Corruption has increased over past two years	Widespread	Positive
Hard to get things done if you don't pay a bribe	Wantok	Positive
Corruption common among public servants	Wantok	Positive
Most people I know have paid a bribe	Legal	Positive

Q: Which message most shaped perceptions about politics and government?

A: Legal

Variable	Treatment	Impact
How much interest would you say you have in politics?	Legal	Negative
How much do you trust the government?	Legal	Negative

Q: Which message is likely to improve willingness to report?

A: *Wantok* (and watch out for Widespread)

Variable	Treatment	Impact
No point in reporting corruption because nothing useful will be done about it	Wantok	Negative
I would report corruption to the authorities because it is the morally right thing to do.	Wantok	Positive
I would report a case of corruption even if I would have to spend a day in court to give evidence.	Wantok	Positive
Ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption	Widespread	Negative

Even more benefits to the *Wantok* message!

Variable	Treatment	Impact
How worried are you that grand corruption is harming development in PNG?	Wantok	Positive
How worried are you that petty corruption is harming development in PNG?	Wantok	Positive
A good citizen of PNG will always choose to fight corruption, even if it involves their friends or wantoks	Wantok	Positive

Variation

- By and large women were influenced by the messages in the same way as men
 - Although the *religious* message heightened women's concern about petty corruption
- *Legal* message made older respondents (> 35 yo) more concerned with petty corruption
- Those with lower levels of education more sensitive to *widespread* message
 - More likely to think corruption is a collective action problem

Conclusions

Assumptions about the impact of anti-corruption messages are being challenged

The impact of anti-corruption messages is heavily determined by context

- One message might work in one context (PNG) and not in another (Indonesia)

In PNG:

- *Messages stressing local impacts matter:* To encourage Papua New Guineans to report tell them about how corruption impacts their *Wantoks*
- Messages about how widespread corruption is may be undermining citizens' willingness to resist/report
- Similarly, messages about the illegality of corruption may be undermining people's trust in politics and government

Future research

- Comparative work examining the impacts of anti-corruption messages in Jakarta, Port Moresby and Lagos
- Internet-based experiment with a sample from 20 developing countries

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