“Islands of integrity”: Understanding the politics of corruption reduction

Professor Heather Marquette, Dr Caryn Peiffer & Dr Rosita Armytage

Australasian Aid Conference, ANU, 14-15 February 2018
The Positive Outlier Approach to Understanding How Corruption is Controlled

Why Did Anticorruption Policy Fail?

MICHAEL JOHNSTON

WHY DO SO MANY ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS FAIL?

I. Introduction ................................................................. 2
II. Challenges Inherent in Checking Corruption .......... 472
   A. Corruption Eludes Precise Definition .......... 472
   B. Corruption Undermines Collective Action for Reform ........................................ 472
   C. Corruption Is a Transnational Problem .... 475
   D. Corruption Is Systemically Embedded ........ 475

Why Anticorruption Reforms Fail—Systemic Corruption as a Collective Action Problem

ANNA PERSSON,* BO ROTHSTEIN,*, and JAN TEORELL**

With an increased awareness of the detrimental effects of corruption on development, strategies to fight it are now a top priority in policy circles. Yet, in countries ridden with systemic corruption, few successes have resulted from the investment. On the basis of an interview study conducted...
**1st phase**

**IDENTIFY**

**POTENTIAL**

**POSITIVE**

**OUTLIERS**

Quantitative methodology drawing on GCB

24 identified
2nd phase

**VET 5 POTENTIAL CASES**

Desk research, more quant digging, and lots of calls and emails

Narrow down to 2 cases

Types of errors

- **Type I error** (false positive)
- **Type II error** (false negative)
3\textsuperscript{rd} phase

INVESTIGATE THE POLITICS OF SUCCESS

Qualitative fieldwork into 2 cases

Uganda – Healthcare

2009 - 2013
Predicted: 11.2
Actual: -5

South Africa – Police

2013 – 2015
Predicted: -15.6
Actual: -25.6
Why did successful changes in bribery happen?

Leadership  Disruption  Fear
Don’t get too excited yet though…
Rethinking ‘successful’ positive outliers on governance in challenging environments

Policy Success, Policy Failure and Grey Areas In-Between

ALLAN McCONNELL Government and International Relations, University of Sydney

ABSTRACT
Policy protagonists are keen to claim that policy is successful while opponents are more likely to frame policies as failures. The reality is that policy outcomes are often somewhere in between these extremes. An added difficulty is that policy has multiple dimensions, often succeeding in some respects but not in others, according to facts and their interpretation. This paper sets out a framework designed to capture the bundles of outcomes that indicate how successful or unsuccessful a policy has been. It reviews existing literature on policy evaluation and improvement, public value, good practice, political strategy and policy failure and success in order to identify what can be built on and gaps that need to be filled. It conceives policy as having three realms: processes, programs and politics. Policies may succeed and/or fail in each of these and along a spectrum of success, resilient success, conflicted success, precarious success and failure. It concludes by examining contradictions between different forms of success, including what is known colloquially as good politics but bad policy.

Key words: policy success, policy failure, policy evaluation
Rethinking how corruption works in ‘real politics’

Grappling with the “real politics” of systemic corruption: Theoretical debates versus “real-world” functions

Heather Marquette1 | Caryn Peiffer2

1 University of Birmingham
2 University of Bristol

A growing body of research argues that anticorruption efforts fail because of a flawed theoretical foundation, where collective action theory is said to be a better lens for understanding corruption than the dominant principal-agent theory. We unpack this critique and advance several new arguments. First, the application of collective action theory to the issue of corruption has been, thus far, incomplete. Second, a collective action theory-based approach to corruption is in fact complementary to a principal-agent approach, rather than contradictory as is claimed. Third, applications of both theories have failed to recognize that corruption persists because it functions to provide solutions to problems. We conclude by arguing that anticorruption effectiveness is difficult to achieve because it requires insights from all three perspectives—principal-agent theory, collective action theory, and corruption as serving functions—which allows us to better understand how to harness the political will needed to fight corruption.

Despite health workers working in some of the worst conditions, they are blamed for the poor service delivery yet the government avoids tackling the causes of the crisis in the health care system. FILE PHOTO
Rethinking our own potential unintended consequences as researchers

Corruption research: Hunting for glimmers of light in the gloom

25th July 2017

In most countries that struggle with endemic corruption, discussion of corruption is everywhere. It dominates national newspapers and is the subject of political infighting and point-scoring between politicians. Corruption scandals and allegations are discussed in family homes, social gatherings, and on street corners. Strong opinions and rumours are easy to come by.

But the challenge for researchers is to find people who can shed objective light on where and why it happens. Corruption is located 'elsewhere'—always attributed to other sectors, organisations, units, or individuals. For obvious reasons, few will admit their own involvement.

We thought we would have better luck focusing on anticorruption success stories. If people are generally willing to join in a conversation about corruption but reluctant to blame or attribute responsibility, we thought—perhaps naively—that it might be easier to start a discussion about what is going right. Not so.

Perhaps naively, we thought it might be easier to start a discussion about what is going right in anticorruption work. Not so.
Thank you!

@hamarquette
@drcarynpeiffer
@pakrosi