

Engaging PNG's citizens in the fight against corruption: the impacts of education and institutional trust

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Introduction

- Millions of dollars spent educating citizens about the dangers of corruption – little evidence that it is working
- Some believe trust in institutions play a significant, and possibly greater, role in citizen perceptions about and responses to corruption (Gorta and Forell, 1995; Marquette, 2007; Lavena, 2013)
- Surprisingly very little research on what motivates citizen reporting, particularly in developing countries
- If anti-corruption actors are to engage citizens they need to know what motivates their reporting, and what undermines it.
- Key question: What determines the willingness to report corruption in PNG?

Hypotheses

The literature points to three key hypotheses, which we test:

- Hypothesis 1: *Those highly educated are more willing to report corruption.*
- Hypothesis 2: *The less trust that a person has that the state will respond to corruption, the less willing they will be to report it.*
- Hypothesis 3: *Education's impact on willingness to report will diminish with lower trust that something will be done about corruption*

Context: Awareness and education

- Explosion of awareness efforts since the late 1990s
 - TI PNG
 - Good governance prioritised by Australian aid program (1997); anti-corruption focus late 2000s
 - Sandline Crisis
 - Regular news stories about corruption: Post Courier Jan 2008-Dec 2011: corruption appears 1,279 times; 549 entries for the term 'human rights' and 646 for 'poverty'.
- Stagnating levels of educational achievement
 - Official literacy rate 63 per cent (World Bank, 2014),
 - *Functional* literacy rates are much lower; in some provinces they may be as low as 15 per cent (ASPBAE Australia, 2011).

Context: Capacity of anti-corruption agencies

- Diminishing capacity of police to investigate corruption
 - Few police per citizen – in 1975, 1:380; now 1:1404; UN recommends 1:450.
 - Financial Intelligence Unit – suffers from minimal resources, few staff, and little support from other agencies (Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering & World Bank, 2011).
- The *rise*: After years of inactivity between late 2011 and early 2015 anti-corruption organisations bit back.
- The *fall*: Is this resurgence now over?

How have these events affected people's ability to report corruption?

The Study

- Household survey (2010-11) with 1825 respondents across 9 (out of then a possible 21) provinces
 - Purposively selected provinces; random selection of census units (within limits) and households
 - Face-to-face interviews with a structured questionnaire
- Respondents were presented with a series of scenarios and asked about their likelihood of reporting them to authorities

Scenario	Code	Scale	Type
A contractor hands money to a public servant in order to be favoured in a contract bid	CONTRACTOR	Large	Bribery
A voter accepts an offer to sell his vote to a candidate for 50 kina	VOTER	Small	Bribery
A logging company gets logging access to customary land by flying customary leaders to Australia and giving them gifts, without consultation with other community members.	LOGGING COMPANY	Large	Undue influence
After a large company legally influences politicians, the government passes a law which helps them make greater profits	LARGE COMPANY	Large	Undue influence
A man is employed as a driver for a government department by his wantok [relation/friend] without going through a recruitment process. He is a safe and reliable driver.	DRIVER	Small	Nepotism
A teacher takes pens and note pads from her school stores cupboard to use for her church meetings.	TEACHER	Small	Embezzlement
Electoral workers are provided with food and drink by a candidate.	ELECTORAL WORKER	Small	Undue Influence
A Minister for Defence owns a company with which the Defence Department has a million dollar contract.	MINISTER OF DEFENCE	Large	Conflict of interest

	Contractor	Voter	Logging co.	Large co.	Driver	Teacher	Electoral worker	Minister of Defence
Education/knowledge								
Education	1.31***	1.22***	1.15*	1.25***	1.25***	1.06	1.07	1.28***
Get news	1.10	1.22***	1.24***	1.14*	1.13	1.05	1.16*	1.21**
Know how to report	1.19	1.40	1.47*	1.78**	1.56*	0.95	1.09	1.81**
Institutional trust								
Nothing useful	0.64**	0.89	0.82	0.57***	0.79	1.04	0.72*	0.78
Other controls								
Conceptualise: corrupt	1.13	1.29**	1.58***	1.28**	1.21*	1.16	1.26**	1.43***
Conceptualise: unacceptable	0.88	0.98	0.95	1.04	0.95	0.98	1.23*	1.08
Impacts future	1.09	0.99	1.16*	1.09	1.08	1.13	1.14	1.10
Lived poverty	0.95	0.85*	1.02	1.02	0.90	0.88	0.85*	0.99
Female	0.69**	0.81	1.28	1.05	0.54***	0.66**	0.91	1.15
Urban	0.83	1.12	0.85	0.70*	0.74*	0.69**	0.81	0.77
Age	1.01	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.02*	0.99	1.00
Political interest	1.15*	0.89	1.11	0.99	0.91	0.93	1.12	1.05
Catholic	1.27	1.28	1.13	0.99	0.88	0.78	0.74*	0.95
N	1711	1720	1721	1692	1724	1726	1716	1667
Pseudo R ²	0.063	0.055	0.064	0.063	0.061	0.030	0.050	0.076
Prob of Chi ²	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
Wald Chi ²	81.47	86.16	79.44	70.02	80.59	34.89	61.33	93.00

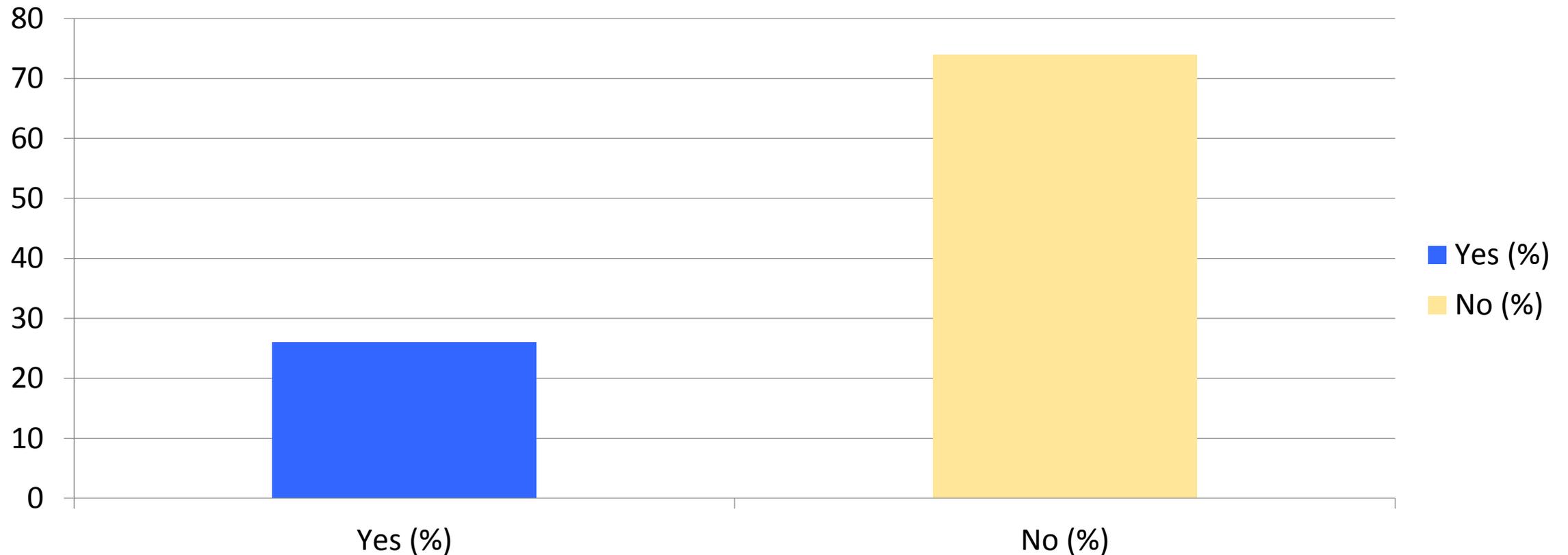
Hypothesis 1: *Those highly educated are more willing to report corruption.*

- Higher levels of *formal education* **increased** the likelihood of a respondent being willing to report by up to 31 per cent, and this relationship was significant across 6 out of 8 scenarios;
- More frequent *consumption of news* **increased** the likelihood of reporting by up to 24 per cent, and this was significant across 4 out of 8 scenarios;
- Knowing how to report **increased** it by up to 78 per cent, which was significant across 4 out of 8 scenarios.

So, higher education levels improves willingness to report in most cases

Working from a low base: very few knew the process for reporting corruption.

Respondent knows the process to report corruption



Hypothesis 2: The less trust that a person has that the state will respond to corruption, the less willing they will be to report it.

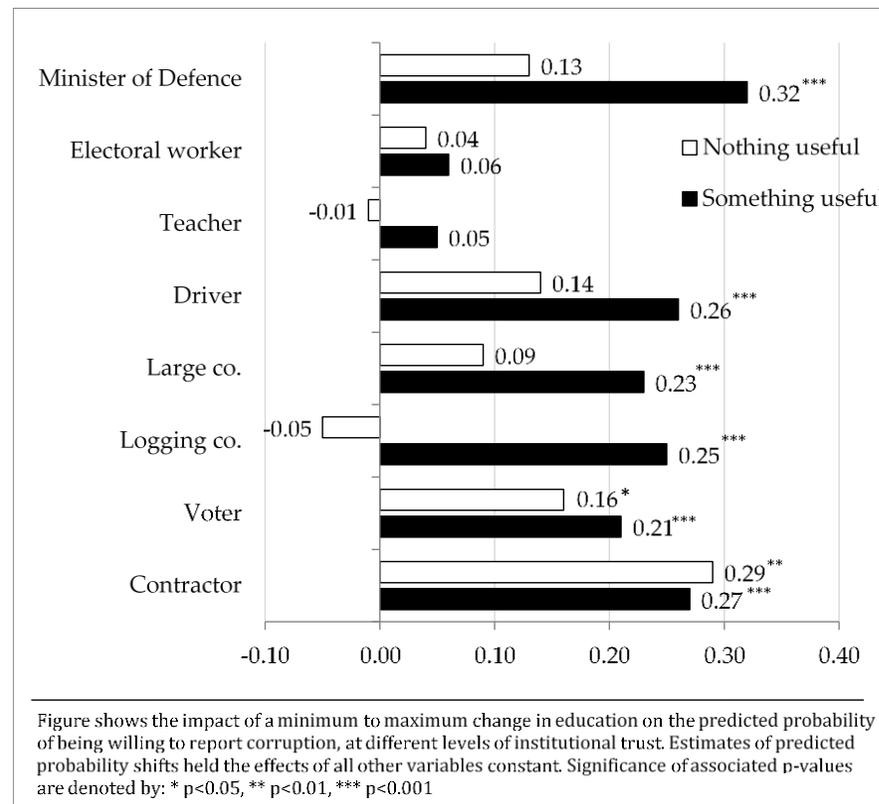
We tested this by examining responses to the statement: 'there is no point in reporting corruption because nothing useful will be done about it'.

- Believing that nothing useful will be done about corruption reduced the likelihood of being willing to report by up to 43 per cent; significant in 3 out of 8 scenarios

So, lower institutional trust diminished willingness to report, but at lower rates of significance than education.

Hypothesis 3: Education's impact on willingness to report will diminish with lower institutional trust.

- To test this hypothesis we designed an interaction model
- Examined how improved education levels impacted willingness to report given different attitudes towards the likelihood that corruption would be addressed



Hypothesis 3: Education's impact on willingness to report will diminish with lower institutional trust

- A belief that *something* would be done about corruption **and** higher levels of education, resulted in an improvement in likely willingness to report
 - Up to 32 per cent improvement
 - Significant in 6 out of 8 scenarios
- When people believe *nothing* will be done about corruption, education's positive impact reduces in 7 out of 8 scenarios
 - Dramatic reduction with scenario depicting corruption between logging company and community

So, in most cases education's impact on willingness to report diminishes with lower institutional trust

Conclusion

- When respondents were better educated and believed that corruption would be addressed, they were more likely to report various types of corruption to officials.
 - Impact of education on its own is stronger than institutional trust
 - Awareness important given low knowledge about how to report.
- But, the positive effects of education diminish when educated citizens did not believe authorities will act on corruption
- Education is important for reporting, but no magic bullet – as some of the literature suggests
- Convincing citizens that the PNG state will act on corruption will be very difficult given recent events. But this is where efforts need to be targeted if we are to convince Papua New Guineans to resist corruption through formal means.

Thanks!

Paper: <https://devpolicy.crawford.anu.edu.au/publications/discussion-papers>

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