ATTITUDES TOWARD ACCEPTING A BRIBE: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE USA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the changing attitudes in the United States on the ethics of accepting a bribe. The study used data gathered as part of the Human Values surveys for 1981 and 2006 in the United States. The study found that opposition to bribery declined over time. Several demographic variables were also examined. Men and women were equally opposed to bribery in 1982, but by 2006, men became significantly less averse to bribery. People tend to become more opposed to bribery as they get older. Married individuals were less opposed to bribery than were other groups. Those who work part-time were more opposed to bribery than were other groups. In 2006, full-time employees were least opposed to bribery. Happiness was a significant variable, but the relationship between happiness and the extent of opposition to bribery was not linear. In 1982, those in poor health were most opposed to bribery; by 2006, they were the least opposed. Protestants were somewhat more opposed to bribery than Catholics.

Key Words: bribery, ethics, rent seeking, demographic variables, gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, religion, religiosity, education level, employment status, occupation, social class, income level, size of town, health, happiness, confidence in the police, confidence in the justice system, confidence in government, left-right political spectrum, United States, USA

JEL Codes: D01, D23, D6, D72, D73, E26, I1, I2, I3, J1, J12, J14, J16, K14, K42, O51

INTRODUCTION

Bribery is a fact of life, especially in international business. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011) and others (Bonucci & Moulette, 2007; Cuervo-Cazurra, 2006, 2008; Darrough, 2010; Moran, 1999; Pacini, Swingen & Rogers, 2002; Scharf, 2008) have taken a position against bribery, which seems reasonable, in general.

Popular opinion suggests that bribery is always unethical. However, such a conclusion is premature. Before one can arrive at the ethics of giving or accepting a bribe, one must apply ethical analysis. Doing so may not be easy, since several ethical systems have evolved over the centuries, and the tools of ethical analysis they use are not identical.

Baron, Pettit and Slote (1997) discuss three ethical systems. Graham (2004) discusses eight. The main ethical systems in use today include utilitarianism (Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Brandt, 1992; Frey, 1984; Goodin, 1995; Graham, 2004; McGee, 2012a), rights theory (Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Brandt, 1992; Frey, 1984; Graham, 2004; McGee, 2012a & c), virtue ethics (Aristotle, 2002; Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Graham 2004) and duty ethics (Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Brandt, 1992; Graham, 2004; Kant, 1952, 1983). There is a lot of overlap between and among these main ethical systems, and this paper will not explore their similarities and differences in depth. However, we will discuss ethical principles from time to time, since any discussion of bribery is incomplete without a mention of ethics.

The main thrust of this paper is to report the findings of our study on changing attitudes in the USA toward accepting a bribe. We analyzed data collected from the World Values surveys of 1982 and 2006 (the most recent data available at the time). We compared the overall data and also examined a number of demographic variables.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The vast majority of economists are utilitarians, either all of the time or most of the time. Many policy makers and legal scholars also embrace utilitarian ethics to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, any discussion of ethics from an economic or legal perspective would be incomplete without a discussion of utilitarian ethics.

There are several approaches to utilitarian ethics. Economists would conclude that an act or policy is good if the result is a positive-sum game, which means there are more winners than losers. Such an approach might be a good starting point for analysis. However, there are some structural difficulties that must be overcome. For example, it is not always easy, or even possible, to identify all the winners and losers.

Another problem is measurement. What if a few benefit a great deal, while the vast majority lose just a little? How can one tell if the result is a positive-sum game? Another deficiency of utilitarian ethics is that it totally ignores rights violations, or if it considers them, it lists them as a negative in the utilitarian calculus. One strand of utilitarian thought holds that an act or policy is ethical if the result is an increase in efficiency. Richard Posner, the eminent legal scholar, is one proponent of this view (Posner, 1983, 1998). The efficiency approach has its critics (McGee, 2012a), but we will not go into the merits and demerits of the efficiency argument here.

The rights approach is another way to look at ethics. This approach basically holds that an act or policy might be ethical if no one's rights are violated, while violating one's rights always constitutes unethical conduct, even if the result is a positive-sum game, or even if the majority benefits (McGee, 2012a, b & c).

Virtue ethics holds that a policy or act is ethical if the result is human flourishing (Aristotle, 2002; Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Graham, 2004). Sometimes such a result is easier to see than at other times.

Another approach is to look at duty (Kant, 1952, 1983). If one has a duty to perform or not perform and one does not do one's duty, one is acting unethically. This approach is used to determine whether the agent is acting in the principal's best interest, for example.

One may justify bribing a prison guard to release a political prisoner (Roy & Singer, 2006), if the prisoner is being kept by a corrupt or evil regime. The fact that the guard (agent) is working against the interest of the employer (government) can be disregarded in such cases. Bribing guards to pass along food or medicine to a prisoner might also be considered an ethical act. Thus, one cannot say categorically that bribery always constitutes unethical conduct.

However, Logue (2005) takes the position that bribery is always unethical because it violates absolute moral principles that cannot be compromised. He discussed the unfairness of bribery, the inefficient allocation of resources it produces, and the violation of a divine paradigm.

Carson (1987) concluded that accepting a bribe is almost always unacceptable because it violates an implicit or explicit duty associated with the role one is in. If breaking promises is prima facie wrong, then bribery is wrong because it involves the breaking of a promise. However, he makes exceptions in cases of conscripted soldiers, some prostitutes and those who are held as virtual slaves.

Colombatto (2003) takes the approach that corruption is a rational approach to institutional failures. Houston (2007) examined whether corruption might expand a country's economic activity in some cases. For example, bribery might be used to circumvent a bad law or to lubricate commerce when few other options are available. Bribery and other forms of corruption are beneficial when they result in trade and productive investments that would not otherwise be possible. He sees corruption as having a positive effect when it is a substitute for bad governance.

The acceptability of bribery sometimes has cultural dimensions (Armstrong, 1996; Getz & Volkema, 2001). A study of a Korean company found that bribery was not unethical because it served a higher utilitarian purpose (Aupperle & Camarata, 2007). Husted (1999) found that corruption is correlated to per capita GNP, power distance, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance. Napal (2005) found that giving gifts to government officials in Mauritius was a normal way of doing business.

Sanyal and Samanta (2004) examined bribe indices for 19 countries and found that factors such as per capita income, degree of economic freedom in the country, and cultural factors, such as power distance and masculinity, and legal factors, such as accounting and tax treatment, played a role in determining the acceptability of bribery. A few other studies have also used the Hofstede approach to examine the bribery issue (Chen, Yasar & Rejesus, 2008; Sanchez, Gomez & Wated, 2008).

Whether corruption and bribery enhance or reduce foreign direct investment (FDI) is subject to debate. Several studies have concluded that bribery decreased FDI (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2006, 2008; Mauro, 1995), while Egger and Winner (2005) found that it enhances FDI. Egger and Winner's study of 73 developed and less developed countries found that corruption stimulates FDI, which supports the view that corruption can be beneficial in circumventing regulatory and administrative restrictions. Sanyal and Samanta (2010) found that bribery has a negative effect on economic growth.

Weitzel and Berns (2006) examined 4979 cross-border and domestic takeovers and found that host country corruption was negatively associated with target company premiums. They concluded that local corruption does not constitute a significant market barrier to foreign investors, but rather represents a discount on local takeover synergies.

Johnsen (2009, 2010) viewed bribery from a utilitarian perspective and concluded that bribery sometimes has positive effects on the economy or on individuals or groups. One way of looking at bribery from a utilitarian perspective is whether it involves a helping hand or a grabbing hand. If the person on the receiving end of the bribe does nothing to help the payer, it is a grabbing hand by someone who merely abuses his or her power. The result is a negative-sum game because it does not involve a mutually beneficial exchange. However, when the bribe receiver performs valuable services in exchange for the payment, it is a helping hand scenario, which can justify the payment of the bribe on ethical grounds (Egger & Winner, 2005; Wong & Beckman, 1992).

A few prior studies have been made using the World Values data. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a) found that, although opposition to bribery was strong in all four countries, the Brazilians were significantly less opposed to bribery than were participants in the other three countries.

A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that accepting a bribe was least acceptable in Argentina and most acceptable in Brazil (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). A third study was conducted of Egyptian attitudes (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c). The results of that study are discussed below.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study examines the evolution of attitudes toward bribery in the United States using the World Values Survey data from 1982 to 2006.

METHODOLOGY

The data used in this study were taken from the Human Beliefs and Values (HBV) surveys. Data for these surveys were collected by social scientists all over the world and cover a wide range of issues relating to perceptions of life, environment, work, family, politics and society, religion and morale and national identity. The present study analyzes the data reflecting attitudes on bribery. The question asked whether the respondent believed that accepting a bribe in the course of one's duties was justifiable. Responses were measured on a 10-point Likert scale where 1 is never justifiable and 10 is always justifiable.

Results were compiled overall and some demographic variables were also examined to determine whether differences in belief were significant. The next section reports on the findings.

FINDINGS

The next few pages present the findings.

Overall

Table 1a shows the statistics for all five waves, spanning 1982 to 2006. A comparison of mean scores finds that opposition to bribery increased with Wave 3, then declined in each of the next two waves.

Table 1a
Overall Statistics for All 5 Waves

	W1 (1982)	W2 (1990)	W3 (1995)	W4 (1999)	W5 (2006)
n	2277	1826	1529	1198	1182
Mean	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.7
S.D.	1.28	1.23	0.74	1.48	1.65

Table 1b shows the p value comparisons. The only comparisons that are not significant are the W1-W2 and W4-W5 comparisons.

Table 1b
p values - Overall

	W2	W3	W4	W5
W1	1.0000	<0.001	0.0384	<0.001
W2		<0.001	0.0440	<0.001
W3			<0.001	<0.001
W4				0.1198

Gender

Gender is perhaps the most commonly studied demographic variable. Some studies have found that women are more ethical than men (Akaah, 1989; Franke et al., 1997; Miesing & Preble, 1985; Swaidan et al., 2006), while other studies have found that men are more ethical than women (Barnett & Karson, 1987; Weeks et al., 1999). A third group of studies found that men and women are equally ethical (Babakus et al., 2004; Luthar et al., 1997; Ondrack, 1973). A survey of Greek students on ethical issues found that gender was not a significant variable (Peppas & Peppas, 2000). Premeaux and Mondy (1993) found that gender was not a significant factor in a survey of U.S. managers. Serap and Tezölmez (1999) surveyed Turkish managers and found that females had higher ethical scores than men.

The gender variable has also been examined in connection with tax evasion. Women were more opposed to tax evasion in studies of New Zealand business, economics and law students and accounting practitioners (Gupta & McGee, 2010) and philosophy professors in the United States (McGee, 2012d & e). Men were more opposed to tax evasion in studies of Romanian business students (McGee, 2006) and Turkish tax practitioners (McGee, Benk, Yildirim & Kayikçi, 2011). Men and women were equally opposed to tax evasion in studies of Chinese business and economics students (McGee & An, 2008) and Mexican accounting, business and engineering students, faculty and nonstudents (McGee, Petrides & Ross, 2012).

Alatas et al. (2009) found that Australian women were less tolerant of corruption than Australian men, and that there were no significant gender differences for India, Indonesia and Singapore. A study of 49 countries found that males were the targets of bribery more frequently, perhaps because males play a more important role in the labor market of many countries (Mocan, 2008).

A few studies have examined gender views on bribery. Women were significantly more opposed to bribery in studies of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a), and Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b), whereas men were more opposed to bribery in Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Torgler and Valev (2010) found that women are, in general, less likely to justify taking a bribe. Mocan (2004) found that men were more likely to be asked for a bribe. Swamy et al. (2001) found that women were less likely to be involved in bribery and were less likely to condone bribery. They also found that corruption was less severe where women held a larger share of seats in Parliament and in senior government positions and where women comprise a larger share of the labor force.

Table 2a shows the gender statistics for the oldest and newest wave for the USA study. Male and female mean scores were identical in 1982; by 2006, both genders became less averse to bribery, but the male sample because less averse than the female sample.

Table 2a
Gender Statistics for W1 & W5

		n	Mean	S.D.
Male	W1 (1982)	1083	1.5	1.37
Female	W1 (1982)	1194	1.5	1.20
Male	W5 (2006)	574	1.9	1.79
Female	W5 (2006)	608	1.6	1.50

Table 2b shows the p-value comparisons. Males became significantly less averse to bribery between 1982 and 2006. Males were also significantly less averse to bribery than were females in 2006.

Table 2b
Gender Differences
p values – Gender

	F-W1	M-W5	F-W5
M-W1	1.0000	<0.001	0.1645
F-W1		<0.001	0.1255
M-W5			0.0018

Age

The age variable has been studied in connection with several ethics studies. In general, people become more ethical and have more respect for the law as they get older (McGee, 2012d; Ruegger & King, 1992). However, there are some exceptions. Sims et al. (1996) found that older students had fewer qualms about pirating software than did younger students. Babakus et al. (2004) found that age makes a difference in terms of ethical attitude, but what difference it makes depends on culture. Young people in Hong Kong were less tolerant of stealing hotel towels than were older people.

A few bribery studies have also looked at age as a variable. Older people were more strongly opposed to bribery in a comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) found that people over 30 were significantly more opposed to bribe taking than were younger people. A study of Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c) found that, although older people were somewhat more opposed to bribe taking, the difference was significant only at the 10 percent level.

Table 3a shows the statistics for three age groups. For both waves, the trend is for opposition to bribery to increase with age. This finding confirms the finding in some of the studies mentioned above. A comparison of waves for the same age groups shows that opposition to bribery has declined over time.

Table 3a
Age Statistics for W1 & W5

	15-29	30-49	50+
W1 (1982)			
n	773	729	768
Mean	1.8	1.4	1.3
S.D.	1.61	1.03	1.07
W5 (2006)			
n	252	426	505
Mean	2.4	1.7	1.4
S.D.	2.25	1.50	1.27

Table 3b shows the p-values for the wave comparisons. The only comparison that is not significant is the 50+ comparisons between waves 1 and 5. In other words, attitude toward bribery has not changed over time within the oldest age group.

Table 3b
Age Differences
p values – Age

W1 (1982)	15-29	30-49	50+
W5 (2006)			
15-29	<0.001		
30-49		<0.001	
50+			0.1307

Table 3c shows the p-values for the Wave 1 comparisons. The most significant differences occur for the youngest age group. At the 10 percent level, all comparisons are significant. In other words, opposition to bribery increases with age.

Table 3c
Age Differences
p values – Age for W1

	30-49	50+
15-29	<0.001	<0.001
30-49		0.0661

Table 3d shows the p-values for the Wave 5 comparisons. All comparisons were significant. In other words, opposition to bribery increases with age.

Table 3d
Age Differences
p values – Age for W5

	30-49	50+
15-29	<0.001	<0.001
30-49		0.0010

Marital Status

A few studies have examined marital status as a demographic variable in connection with studies of ethical attitudes. Premeaux and Mondy (1993) found that marital status was not a significant factor in an ethical survey of U.S. managers. In the various tax evasion studies, the results are mixed. An examination of attitudes on tax evasion in more than 80 countries found that, overall, widows were most opposed to tax evasion, followed by married, separated, living together as married, single/never married, and divorced (McGee, 2012d). However, results often differed by country.

Table 4a shows the statistics for marital status for the oldest and most recent waves. For all three categories – single, married and divorced – opposition to bribery decreased between 1982 and 2006. For both waves, married individuals were more opposed to bribery than were the other two groups and single individuals were least opposed.

Table 4a
Marital Status Statistics for W1 & W5

	Single	Married	Divorced
W1 (1982)			
n	511	1291	143
Mean	2.0	1.3	1.5
S.D.	1.88	0.95	1.25
W5 (2006)			
n	280	641	159
Mean	2.1	1.6	1.7
S.D.	2.07	1.38	1.83

Table 4b shows the p values for Waves 1 and 5 by category. The only significant difference is that married individuals became significantly less opposed to bribery between 1982 and 2006.

Table 4b
Marital Status Differences
p values – Marital Status

W1 (1982)	Single	Married	Divorced
W5 (2006)			
Single	0.4910		
Married		<0.001	
Divorced			0.2746

Table 4c shows the p values for Wave 1. All differences were significant. Married individuals were significantly more opposed to bribery than were the other two groups and divorced individuals were significantly more opposed to bribery than were single individuals.

Table 4c
Marital Status Differences
p values – Marital Status for W1

	Married	Divorced
Single	<0.001	0.0029
Married		0.0213

Table 4d shows the p values for Wave 5. Single individuals were significantly less opposed to bribery than were married or divorced individuals.

Table 4d
Marital Status Differences
p values – Marital Status for W5

	Married	Divorced
Single	<0.001	0.0437
Married		0.4464

Education Level

Data for education level were not available for Wave 1, so this variable was not examined. However, education was examined as a variable in some other ethics studies. Mocan (2008) found that as the average level of education increases, the risk of bribery decreases. Premeaux and Mondy (1993) found that education level was not a significant factor in an ethical survey of U.S. managers.

Prior tax evasion studies that examined education level as a variable found the results to be mixed (McGee, 2012d). A study of attitudes on bribery in eight West European countries found that the more education people had, the less likely they were to justify bribery.

A comparative study of bribery in the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that, in general, the two groups most opposed to taking bribes were the most educated and the least educated groups (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of bribery in Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that there were differences between categories, but that there was no discernible trend (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). Education level was not a significant variable in an Egyptian study of bribery (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Employment Status

A few studies have examined employment status as a demographic variable. Mocan (2008) found that an increase in unemployment caused an increase in the risk of bribery.

Several tax evasion studies that examined this variable had mixed results (McGee, 2012d). A study of eight Western European countries found that self-employed individuals had more opportunity to evade taxes and bribe government officials. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that retired individuals were most opposed to bribe taking, followed by the self-employed, full-time and part-time workers, housewives, students and the unemployed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that housewives were most opposed to bribe taking, and that students and the unemployed were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). In Egypt, those who were retired and those who were full-time employees were most opposed to bribery, while students and the unemployed were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 5a shows that, in 1982, part-time workers and those in the "Other" category, which includes retired, housewives, students and other, were most opposed to bribery, while self-employed individuals were least opposed. In 2006, the group most opposed to bribery was the part-time group. However, this finding must be heavily discounted, since the sample size for the part-time group was only 4. The group least opposed to bribery in 2006 was the full-time employee group.

A comparison of the 1982 and 2006 data finds that the *full-time* and *other* categories became less opposed to bribery over time, while the *self-employed* group became more opposed.

Table 5a
Employment Status Statistics for W1 & W5

	Full time	Part time	Self employed	Other
W1 (1982)				
n	1104	239	25	871
Mean	1.5	1.4	1.7	1.4
S.D.	1.24	1.07	1.69	1.33
W5 (2006)				
n	591	4	106	481
Mean	1.8	1.0	1.3	1.7
S.D.	1.67	0.00	0.88	1.76

Table 5b shows the p values for comparisons between the 1st and 5th Wave. The differences are significant at the 1 percent level in the categories of *full-time* and *other*. The difference for *self-employed* is significant only at the 11 percent level.

Table 5b
Employment Status Differences
p values – Employment Status

W1 (1982)	Full time	Part time	Self employed	Other
W5 (2006)				
Full time	<0.001			
Part time		0.4582		
Self employed			0.1038	
Other				<0.001

Table 5c shows the p values for Wave 1. The only difference that is significant is that between the *full-time* and *other* categories, and that difference is significant only at the 10 percent level. In other words, all groups held opinions regarding bribery that were basically the same in 1982.

Table 5c
Employment Status Differences
p values – Employment Status for W1

	Part time	Self employed	Other
Full time	0.2479	0.4299	0.0852
Part time		0.2136	1.0000
Self employed			0.2709

Table 5d shows the p values for Wave 5. In 2006, *self-employed* individuals were significantly more opposed to bribery than were the *full-time* and *other* groups. In all other comparisons, the various other groups were equally opposed to bribery.

Table 5d
Employment Status Differences
p values – Employment Status for W5

	Part time	Self employed	Other
Full time	0.3396	0.0028	0.3419
Part time		0.4987	0.4272
Self employed			0.0232

Social class

Data for social class were not available for Wave 1, so this variable was not examined. A study of bribery attitudes in eight Western European countries found that the higher the economic class, the less justifiable it was to accept a bribe (Torgler & Valev, 2010). A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that the upper middle class was most opposed to bribe taking, followed by the lower middle class, the working class, the lower class and the upper class (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). The results were curvilinear for a comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). In that study, those in the middle class had mean scores that were between the working class and the lower class. Social class was not a significant variable in a study of Egyptian attitudes (McGee, 2012c).

Size of Town

Data for size of town were not available for Wave 1, so this variable was not examined. Prior bribery studies that examined town size showed mixed results. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that the three smallest size towns had the strongest opposition to bribe taking, whereas those from larger towns seemed to be less opposed, although people who lived in towns of between 10-20,000 population were most opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a).

A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that, in general, those who lived in small towns tended to be more opposed to bribe taking than people who lived in medium or large size towns, and that those who lived in medium size towns tended to be least opposed to bribe taking (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). An Egyptian study found that those who lived in large cities were more opposed to bribe taking than were those from small towns (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c). Mocan (2008) found that those who live in large cities have an increased risk of bribery.

Happiness

A few studies have examined the relationship between the extent of happiness and attitude toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and the USA found that those who were very happy and quite happy were most opposed to bribe taking, while those who were not at all happy had the least opposition (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). Happiness was not a significant variable in a study of Argentina, Brazil and

Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). An Egyptian study found that those who were least happy were slightly more opposed to bribe taking than were those in the other categories, although the difference was not significant (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).
Table 6a shows the data for happiness for 1982 and 2006. In 1982, the *not happy at all* group was most opposed to bribery; the other groups were equally opposed. In 2006, the *not very happy* group was most opposed; the *not at all happy* group was least opposed. The relationship among groups was not linear.

A comparison of mean scores for the various groups for 1982 and 2006 found that opposition to bribery declined over time.

Table 6a
Happiness Statistics for W1 & W5

	Very happy	Quite happy	Not very happy	Not at all happy
W1 (1982)				
n	712	1353	163	23
Mean	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3
S.D.	1.32	1.27	1.29	1.14
W5 (2006)				
n	408	689	79	5
Mean	1.8	1.7	1.6	2.0
S.D.	1.86	1.57	1.10	1.86

Table 6b shows the p value comparisons between waves. The changes in view over time were significant for the very happy and quite happy groups.

Table 6b
Happiness Differences
p values – Happiness

W1 (1982)	Very happy	Quite happy	Not very happy	Not at all happy
W5 (2006)				
Very happy	0.0017			
Quite happy		0.0020		
Not very happy			0.5560	
Not at all happy				0.2910

Table 6c compares p values for 1982. None of the differences were significant, meaning that all groups had basically the same view regarding bribery.

Table 6c
Happiness Differences
p values – Happiness for W1

	Quite happy	Not very happy	Not at all happy
Very happy	1.0000	1.0000	0.4736
Quite happy		1.0000	0.4537
Not very happy			0.4839

Table 6d compares p values for 2006. None of the differences were significant, meaning that all groups had basically the same view regarding bribery.

Table 6d
Happiness Differences
p values – Happiness for W5

	Quite happy	Not very happy	Not at all happy
Very happy	0.3425	0.3568	0.8118
Quite happy		0.5825	0.6713
Not very happy			0.4574

Health

A few prior studies have examined the relationship between health and attitude toward bribery. Health was not a significant variable in an Egyptian study (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c) and in a comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that healthier people were less averse to bribe taking than were unhealthy people (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

Table 7a shows the data for Waves 1 and 5. For Wave 1, those in poor health were most opposed to bribery, while those in the other three groups were all equally opposed to bribery. For Wave 5, those in poor health were least opposed to bribery, while those in the other three groups were equally opposed.

A comparison of mean scores between waves found that opposition to bribery declined for all categories.

Table 7a
Health Statistics for W1 & W5

	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
W1 (1982)				
n	856	872	402	137
Mean	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4
S.D.	1.28	1.22	1.35	1.46
W5 (2006)				
n	345	620	170	46
Mean	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.1
S.D.	1.60	1.64	1.55	2.34

Table 7b shows the p value comparisons for 1982 and 2006. Those in very good, good and poor health all became significantly less opposed to bribery over time, if significance is defined as 1 or 5 percent, while those in the fair health category became significantly less opposed to bribery only if significance is defined at the 13 percent level.

Table 7b
Health Differences
p values – Health

W1 (1982)	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
W5 (2006)				
Very good	0.0233			
Good		0.0070		
Fair			0.1228	
Poor				0.0185

Table 7c shows the p value comparisons between groups for Wave 1. None of the comparisons were significant, meaning that all health groups had basically the same view of bribery in 1982.

Table 7c
Health Differences
p values – Health for W1

	Good	Fair	Poor
Very good	1.0000	1.0000	0.4061
Good		1.0000	0.3866
Fair			0.4646

Table 7d shows the p value comparisons between groups for Wave 5. None of the comparisons were significant, meaning that all health groups had basically the same view of bribery in 2006.

Table 7d
Health Differences
p values – Happiness for W5

	Good	Fair	Poor
Very good	1.0000	1.0000	0.1361
Good		1.0000	0.1239
Fair			0.1711

Religion

A few studies have examined religion as a demographic variable in conjunction with ethical issues. On the question of tax evasion, it appears that Muslims were at times more opposed to tax evasion than were Christians, and that Protestants were at times more opposed to tax evasion than were Roman Catholics (McGee, 2012d). Premeaux and Mondy (1993) found that religion was not a significant factor in an ethical survey of U.S. managers.

Some studies on bribery also examined religion. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that those most opposed to bribe taking were Protestants and Spiritistas, followed by Evangelicals, Muslims, Roman Catholics and Buddhists (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). Religion was not a significant variable for a comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) or Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

The only two religious groups in the present sample that had a sufficiently large sample size for comparison purposes were Roman Catholic and Protestant. Table 8a shows the statistics for Waves 1 and 5. For both waves, Protestants were somewhat more opposed to bribery. The mean for the Protestant group remained the same for 1982 and 2006, which the Catholic group mean declined slightly, meaning that Catholic opposition to bribery increased somewhat between 1982 and 2006.

Table 8a
Religion Statistics for W1 & W5

		n	Mean	S.D.
Protestant (P)	W1 (1982)	1312	1.4	1.10
Roman Catholic (RC)	W1 (1982)	700	1.6	1.36
Protestant (P)	W5 (2006)	388	1.4	1.27
Roman Catholic (RC)	W5 (2006)	251	1.5	1.21

Table 8b shows the p values between groups and waves. Protestants were significantly more opposed to bribery in 1982, but by 2006 the two groups had more or less equal opposition to bribery.

Table 8b
Religion Differences
p values – Religion

	RC-W1	P-W5	RC-W5
P-W1	<0.001	1.0000	0.1948
RC-W1		0.0177	0.3047
P-W5			0.3233

Ethnicity

Data for ethnicity were not available for Wave 1, so this variable was not examined. However, a few bribery studies did examine ethnicity as a variable. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that whites were most strongly opposed to bribe taking, followed by East Asians, Hispanics, half-breed black/white and blacks (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that Caucasians were most opposed to bribery, followed by half breed black/white and black (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Table 9 summarizes the results of the present study.

Table 9
Summary of Findings

Overall – Opposition to bribery has declined over time.
Gender - Male and female mean scores were identical in 1982; by 2006, both genders became less averse to bribery, but the male sample became less averse than the female sample. Males became significantly less averse to bribery between 1982 and 2006. Males were also significantly less averse to bribery than were females in 2006.
Age - For both waves, the trend is for opposition to bribery to increase with age. Opposition to bribery declined over time for the two youngest age groups. Attitude did not change for the 50+ group.
Marital Status - For all three categories – single, married and divorced – opposition to bribery decreased between 1982 and 2006. For both waves, married individuals were more opposed to bribery than were the other two groups and single individuals were least opposed.
Employment Status - in 1982, part-time workers and those in the "Other" category, which includes retired, housewives, students and other, were most opposed to bribery, while self-employed individuals were least opposed. In 2006, the group most opposed to bribery was the part-time group. However, this finding must be heavily discounted, since the sample size for the part-time group was only 4. The group least opposed to bribery in 2006 was the full-time employee group. A comparison of the 1982 and 2006 data finds that the *full-time* and *other* categories became less opposed to bribery over time, while the *self-employed* group became more opposed.
Happiness - In 1982, the *not happy at all* group was most opposed to bribery; the other groups were equally opposed. In 2006, the *not very happy* group was most opposed; the *not at all happy* group was least opposed. The relationship among groups was not linear. A comparison of mean scores for the various groups for 1982 and 2006 found that opposition to bribery declined over time.
Health – In 1982, those in poor health were most opposed to bribery, while those

in the other three groups were all equally opposed to bribery. In 2006, those in poor health were least opposed to bribery, while those in the other three groups were equally opposed. A comparison of mean scores between waves found that opposition to bribery declined for all categories.

Religion - For both waves, Protestants were somewhat more opposed to bribery. The mean for the Protestant group remained the same for 1982 and 2006, which the Catholic group mean declined slightly, meaning that Catholic opposition to bribery increased somewhat between 1982 and 2006.

The findings show that certain demographic variables are significant and that opposition to bribery has changed over time. Further studies might illuminate the reasons for these differences.

Several other aspects of this topic could benefit from further research. Studies could be made that focus on various kinds of bribery, since not all bribery is created equal. Studies could be made of other countries using the same methodology. Other variables could be examined. Comparative studies could be made. It is likely that the results found in developed countries will be different from those found in developing or transition economies. Culture plays a part, so cultural variables could be examined to determine the effect they have on attitudes toward bribery.

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