

**THE ETHICS OF ACCEPTING A BRIBE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF OPINION IN THE USA,
CANADA AND MEXICO**

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ABSTRACT

This study compares the views on bribe taking of sample populations in the USA, Canada and Mexico. More than a dozen demographic variables are also examined to determine whether differences exist between or among subgroups. The survey found that most demographic variables showed significant differences in mean scores. Data used for the surveys came from the World Values surveys.

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, Canada, Mexico

JEL Codes: D01, D23, D6, D72, D73, E26, I1, I2, I3, J1, J12, J14, J16, K14, K42, O51, O54, O57

INTRODUCTION

One might think that bribery is always unethical. Studies by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2011) discourage the practice and a number of other studies have viewed bribery in negative terms (Bonucci & Moulette, 2007; Cuervo-Cazurra, 2006, 2008; Darrough, 2010; Moran, 1999; Pacini, Swingen & Rogers, 2002; Scharf, 2008).

However, a closer examination of the issue reveals that the question of whether bribery is ethical or unethical is not so clear-cut in some cases. For example, bribing a prison guard to release a political prisoner who is being held by a corrupt or evil regime might constitute an ethical act (Roy & Singer, 2006). From a utilitarian ethical perspective, bribery would be acceptable in cases where there are more winners than losers.

This paper reviews the ethical literature on bribery and reports the findings of a survey of opinion in the USA, Canada and Mexico.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Many articles and several books have been written about various aspects of bribery. This paper focuses on the ethical literature on the topic. When trying to determine whether bribery is ethical or unethical, a threshold question to ask is which set of ethical principles to apply. Ethicists have several options in their toolkit, and not all ethical systems arrive at the same result in any given situation.

Baron, Pettit and Slote (1997) identify and discuss three of the main ethical systems. Graham (2004) discusses eight ethical systems. Most ethical systems, when analyzed and closely compared, usually fall within the general categories of utilitarianism, rights theory, or virtue ethics, broadly defined.

Virtue ethics goes back to the time of Aristotle (2002), if not before. The main thrust of virtue ethics is that an act or policy is good if the result is human flourishing. Utilitarian ethics holds that an act or policy is ethical if the result is the greatest good for the greatest number, or if the winners exceed the losers, or if the result is what economists call a positive-sum game (Brandt, 1992; Frey, 1984; Goodin, 1995; McGee, 2012a; Wong & Beckman, 1992). These various utilitarian views are not quite the same, but they are similar. If a policy or act results in human flourishing, it could meet both the virtue ethics test and the utilitarian ethics test.

Within utilitarian ethics is a branch that holds that something that increases efficiency is ethical. Richard Posner (1983, 1998), the American jurist and co-founder of the Law & Economics movement, takes this position. This view has been criticized (McGee, 2012a), but it remains a mainstream utilitarian position.

Rights theory holds that an act is unethical if someone's rights are violated, regardless of whether the winners exceed the losers (Baron, Pettit & Slote, 1997; Brandt, 1992; McGee, 2012a, b & c). One of the main criticisms of utilitarian ethics is that rights are disregarded. Taking a rights approach overcomes this deficiency in utilitarian ethics.

Kantian ethics, named after Immanuel Kant (1952, 1983), focuses on duty. If someone has a duty and breaches that duty, any such act is considered to be unethical. The Kantian view may be applied to bribery in cases where the receiver of the bribe is an agent who has a duty to the principal to do what is in the best interest of the principal. An agent who acts against the best interest of the principal is acting unethically.

Most of the literature on ethical aspects of bribery does not cite philosophers or particular ethical theories, at least not directly. However, much of the literature has an underlying premise that either utilitarian ethics or principles of duty should be applied. Virtue ethics and rights theory also appear in some analyses,

although most studies on bribery are done by economists or lawyers, who tend to be utilitarians, at least most of the time.

Logue (2005) believes that bribery is always unethical because it violates absolute moral principles that cannot be compromised. He goes on to say that bribery is basically unfair and results in an inefficient allocation of resources, and frustrates the constructive role of government. Carson (1987) believes that accepting a bribe is always *prima facie* wrong because it violates duties, but makes some exceptions, such as in cases of conscripted soldiers, some prostitutes and others who are held as virtual slaves.

Johnsen (2009, 2010) applies cost-benefit analysis to determine whether paying a bribe results in a positive-sum game. Shaw (1988) points out that benefits and costs may not be easy to determine.

Some scholars assert that bribery may serve a useful function if a bribe acts to grease the wheels of commerce, which makes commerce work more efficiently. Such would be the case where a corrupt government or inefficient bureaucracy can be circumvented by paying someone to cut red tape or otherwise go around the rules. Some scholars take the position that, in general, bribery may be ethical in cases where it is a helping hand, but unethical when it is paid to a grabbing hand who offers nothing in return for the payment (Colombatto, 2003; Egger & Winner, 2005; Houston, 2007; Johnsen, 2009, 2010). Wong and Beckman (1992) developed a point system to determine whether the helping hand or grabbing hand predominates.

Several studies have examined bribery in connection with other forms of corruption, with a focus it has on foreign direct investment (FDI). Cuervo-Cazurra (2006, 2008) and Mauro (1995) found that bribery decreased FDI, whereas Egger and Winner (2005) found that bribery acts to stimulate FDI in cases where it acts as a helping hand. Weitzel and Berns (2006) found that host country corruption is negatively associated with premiums paid in cross-country mergers. Sanyal and Samanta (2010) found that bribery has a negative effect on economic growth.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study analyzes the opinions on bribe taking of sample populations in the USA, Canada and Mexico. Some demographic variables are also examined.

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 Results

Table 1 shows the statistics for all three countries. A comparison of mean scores shows that Canadians are slightly more opposed to bribery than are Americans and that Mexicans are far less opposed to bribery than are either of the other two countries. A

super majority in each country believed that accepting a bribe in the course of one's duties is never justifiable.

Table 1						
Overall Results						
	United States		Canada		Mexico	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Never justifiable 1	910	77.0%	1655	77.4%	973	64.5%
2	87	7.4%	215	10.1%	132	8.8%
3	44	3.7%	101	4.7%	80	5.3%
4	17	1.4%	47	2.2%	55	3.6%
5	75	6.3%	64	3.0%	72	4.8%
6	24	2.0%	17	0.8%	45	3.0%
7	6	0.5%	5	0.2%	29	1.9%
8	4	0.3%	13	0.6%	32	2.1%
9	2	0.2%	5	0.2%	13	0.9%
Always justifiable 10	13	1.1%	16	0.7%	77	5.1%
Total	1182	100%	2139	100%	1508	100%
Mean	1.7		1.6		2.4	
Standard Deviation	1.65		1.42		2.55	

Comparison of p-Values

Table 2 shows the various p value comparisons. Mexicans are significantly less opposed to bribery than are Americans or Canadians, at the 1 percent level. Canadians are somewhat more opposed to bribery than are the Americans, but the difference is significant only at the 10 percent level.

Table 2		
Comparison of p Values		
	Canada	Mexico
United States	0.0671	<0.001
Canada		<0.001

Gender

Table 3a shows the statistic by gender, overall. Males and females had the same mean score and an almost identical standard deviation, indicating that there is no difference between male and female opinion on the ethics of accepting a bribe, overall.

Table 3a RANKING BY GENDER (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Gender	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Male	1.9	1.92	2347
1	Female	1.9	1.95	2478
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES IN MEAN SCORES				
p value				
Male v. Female		1.0000		

This finding differs from those of several other studies. A study of attitudes toward accepting a bribe involving the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a) found that women were significantly more opposed to bribery than were men. A study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) reached a similar conclusion. A study of Egyptian views of bribery found that men were significantly more opposed to bribery than women (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Various tax evasion studies also found that opinions differed by gender. Although most studies found that women were more opposed to tax evasion (McGee, Alver & Alver, 2008, 2012; McGee & Cohn, 2008; McGee & Smith, 2007; McGee, 2012d), other studies found that differences in gender mean scores were

insignificant (McGee & Ardakani, 2009; McGee & George, 2008; McGee & Rossi, 2008; McGee, 2012d). A few tax evasion studies found men to be more opposed to tax evasion (McGee & Benk, 2011; McGee & Tusan, 2008; McGee, 2012d).

Other ethical studies have examined gender as a variable. Some studies found that women are more ethical than men (Beu et al., 2003; Glover et al., 2002; Hoffman, 1998; Ruegger & King, 1992), while other studies have found that men are more ethical than women (Barnett & Karson, 1987; Weeks et al., 1999). A third group of studies have found that men and women are equally ethical (Barnett & Karson, 1989; McCuddy & Peery, 1996; Roxas & Stoneback, 2004).

Table 3b ranks the mean scores by gender and country. Canadian males were most opposed to bribery, followed closely by Canadian and U.S. females. The two least opposed groups were Mexican males and females.

Table 3b RANKING BY COUNTRY & GENDER (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	Canada – Male	1.5
2	Canada – Female	1.6
2	United States – Female	1.6
4	United States – Male	1.9
5	Mexico – Male	2.4
6	Mexico – Female	2.5

Age

Table 4a ranks the extent of opposition to bribery by age group. The results indicate that the oldest age group is most opposed to bribery, while the youngest age group is least opposed, overall.

Table 4a RANKING BY AGE (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Age	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
1	50+	1.6	1.65	1776
2	30-49	1.9	1.92	1890
3	15-29	2.3	2.25	1150

The findings in this study are similar to those of a few other studies. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that older people were significantly more opposed to bribe taking than were younger age groups (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that people over 30 were significantly more opposed to bribe taking than were younger people (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). A study of Egyptian attitudes found that those in the oldest age group were somewhat more opposed to taking bribes, although the difference in mean scores was significant only at the 10 percent level (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c). Most tax evasion studies that examined the age demographic have found that older people are more opposed to tax evasion than younger people. The reason given in some of those studies was that older people have more respect for the law than do younger people (McGee, 2012d).

Table 4b shows that the significance between groups is significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 4b Age and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	342.740	2	171.370	46.830	<0.001
Within Groups	17,612.860	4,813	3.659		
Total	17,955.599	4,815			

Table 4c ranks the extent of opposition by age category and country. The groups most opposed to bribery were the oldest groups from the United States and Canada. The least opposed groups tended to be Mexicans of any age and the youngest group from the United States.

Table 4c RANKING BY COUNTRY & AGE (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	United States – 50+	1.4
1	Canada – 50+	1.4
3	Canada – 30-49	1.5
4	United States – 30-49	1.7
5	Canada – 15-29	2.1
6	United States – 15-29	2.4
6	Mexico – 30-49	2.4
6	Mexico – 50+	2.4
9	Mexico – 15-29	2.5

Ethnicity

Table 5a ranks the extent of opposition to bribery by ethnicity, overall. Blacks and whites were most opposed, followed by East Asians and Hispanics. Coloured were least opposed.

Table 5a RANKING BY ETHNICITY (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Ethnicity	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Black – Other/Black	1.6	1.88	59
1	White / Caucasian White	1.6	1.54	3019
3	Asian – East (Chinese, Japanese)	1.9	1.46	98
3	Spanish; Hispanic	1.9	1.66	145
5	Other	2.1	1.89	100
6	Black African	2.3	2.32	130
7	Coloured (Light)	2.4	2.48	741
8	Coloured (Dark)	2.7	2.72	408

Table 5b shows that the p value between groups is significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 5b Ethnicity and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	743.111	7	106.159	30.048	<0.001
Within Groups	16,576.468	4,692	3.533		
Total	17,319.579	4,699			

A few other studies have examined the ethnicity variable in connection with attitudes toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that white were most strongly opposed to bribe taking, followed by East Asians, Hispanics, half-breed black/whites and blacks (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that Caucasians were most opposed to bribe taking, followed by half breed black/whites, followed by black (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

Importance of Religion in Life

Table 6a ranks views on bribery based on the importance of religion in one's life. One might think that the more important religion is in life, the more opposition there would be to bribery, but such was not the case. The group most opposed to bribery was the group where religion was not at all important. The other three categories had identical mean scores.

Table 6a RANKING BY IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Importance	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Not at all important	1.7	1.79	479
2	Very important	1.9	2.04	2119
2	Rather Important	1.9	1.87	1254
2	Not very important	1.9	1.80	953

Table 6b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups was not significant, meaning that the importance of religion in life was not a significant variable.

Table 6b Importance of Religion in Life and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	17.250	3	5.750	1.550	0.199
Within Groups	17,811.924	4,801	3.710		
Total	17,829.174	4,804			

The findings in the present study differ from those found in a few other studies. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil,

Germany and China found that those at both ends of the spectrum had the most opposition to bribe taking, while those in the middle groups had less opposition (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that those who did not hold religion very important in life were slightly more opposed to bribe taking than those who held religion to be important. The difference was significant at the 10 percent level (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). The importance of religion in life was found not to be a significant variable in a study of Egyptian opinion (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Religion

Table 7a ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of religion. Muslims and Orthodox were most opposed to bribery, while Jehovah Witnesses and Evangelical Christians were least opposed.

Table 7a RANKING BY RELIGION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Religion	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Muslim	1.3	0.93	40
1	Orthodox	1.3	0.74	27
3	Protestant	1.4	1.11	718
4	Jew	1.5	1.32	28
4	Other	1.5	1.27	431
6	Roman Catholic	2.0	2.11	2141
7	Evangelical	2.1	2.42	85
8	Jehovah witnesses	2.2	2.74	22

Table 7b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups was significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 7b Religion and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	269.745	7	38.535	11.331	<0.001
Within Groups	11,849.067	3,484	3.401		
Total	12,118.813	3,491			

A few other studies have examined religion in connection with attitude toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that Protestants and Spiritistas were most strongly opposed to bribe taking, followed by Evangelicals, Muslims, Roman Catholics and Buddhists (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). Religion was found not to be a significant variable in studies of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) and Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 7c ranks opposition to bribery by religion and country. U.S. Muslims, Orthodox and Jews were most opposed to bribery, whereas Mexicans of most religious persuasions were least opposed.

Table 7c RANKING BY COUNTRY & RELIGION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	United States – Muslim	1.0
1	United States – Orthodox	1.0
3	United States - Jew	1.2
4	Canada – Muslim	1.3
4	Canada – Orthodox	1.3
4	Canada – Protestant	1.3
7	United States – Protestant	1.4
7	Canada – Other	1.4
9	United States – Roman Catholic	1.5
9	Mexico – Muslim	1.5
11	United States – Other	1.7
11	Canada – Roman Catholic	1.7
13	Canada – Jew	1.9
14	Mexico – Protestant	2.0
15	Mexico – Evangelical	2.1
16	Mexico – Jehovah witnesses	2.2
17	Mexico – Other	2.3
18	Mexico – Roman Catholic	2.4
19	Mexico – Jew	3.0

Religious Person

Table 8a ranks views on bribery on the basis of how religious a person one considers oneself to be. Average mean scores did not differ much. However, there seemed to be a slight relationship between the extent of religiosity and attitude toward bribery, where the more religious a person was, the stronger the opposition to bribery.

Table 8a RANKING BY RELIGIOUS PERSON (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Religious	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	A religious person	1.8	1.92	3379
2	Not a religious person	1.9	1.95	1171
3	A convinced atheist	2.0	2.04	223

Table 8b shows that the difference in mean score was not significant, meaning religiosity was not a significant variable.

Table 8b Religious Person and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	15.152	2	7.576	2.027	0.132
Within Groups	17,825.459	4,770	3.737		
Total	17,840.611	4,772			

A few other studies have examined religiosity in conjunction with views on bribe taking. Religiosity was found not to be a significant variable in a study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that the more religious a person was, the stronger resistance to bribe taking, although the

correlation was significant only at the 10 percent level (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). An Egyptian study found that religious people were significantly more opposed to bribery than were nonreligious people (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Marital Status

Table 9a ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of marital status. Divorced individuals were most opposed to bribery, followed closely by married and widowed individuals. Those who were never married or living together as married were least opposed.

Table 9a RANKING BY MARITAL STATUS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Status	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Divorced	1.7	1.79	313
2	Married	1.8	1.82	2546
2	Widowed	1.8	1.84	276
4	Separated	1.9	1.95	184
5	Living together as married	2.1	2.21	422
5	Single/Never married	2.1	2.09	1079

Table 9b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups was significant at the 1 percent level.

Table 9b Marital Status and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	100.367	5	20.073	5.422	<0.001
Within Groups	17,821.653	4,814	3.702		
Total	17,922.020	4,819			

Marital status was examined in a few other studies of bribery. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that those in the married and widowed categories had the strongest opposition to bribe taking, followed by separated, divorced, living together as married and single/never married individuals (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that widowed people were most strongly opposed to bribe taking, followed by married, separated, living together as married, divorced and single/never married individuals (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). Marital status was not a significant variable in a study of Egyptian attitudes (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 9c ranks the extent of opposition by marital status. The various U.S. and Canadian categories tended to be most opposed to bribery, whereas the various Mexican groups tended to be least opposed.

Table 9c RANKING BY COUNTRY & MARITAL STATUS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	United States – Widowed	1.4
1	Canada – Married	1.4
1	Canada – Widowed	1.4
4	Canada – Divorced	1.5
5	United States – Married	1.6
5	Canada – Separated	1.6
7	United States – Divorced	1.7
8	Canada – Living together as married	1.8
9	Canada – Single/Never married	1.9
10	United States – Single/Never married	2.1
11	United States – Separated	2.2
11	Mexico – Divorced	2.2
11	Mexico – Separated	2.2
14	Mexico – Married	2.4
14	Mexico – Single/Never married	2.4
16	Mexico – Living together as married	2.7
16	Mexico – Widowed	2.7

Highest Level of Education Attained

Table 10a ranks the extent of opposition to bribery on the basis of level of education. The trend tends to be that those with the highest level of education were most strongly opposed to bribery.

Table 10a RANKING BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Level	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	University with degree/Higher education - upper-level tertiary certificate	1.6	1.50	701
2	Some university without degree/Higher education - lower-level tertiary certificate	1.7	1.64	445
3	Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type/Secondary, intermediate vocational qualification	1.8	1.88	1041
3	Incomplete secondary: university- preparatory type/Secondary, intermediate general qualification	1.8	1.77	556
3	Complete secondary: university- preparatory type/Full secondary, maturity level certificate	1.8	1.78	848
6	Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type/(Compulsory) elementary education and basic vocational qualification	1.9	1.87	525
7	Completed (compulsory) elementary education	2.3	2.44	382
8	Inadequately completed elementary education	2.6	2.57	232

Table 10b shows that the p value between groups was significant at the 1 percent level, meaning that the differences were highly significant.

Table 10b
Level of Education and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe
ANOVA Analysis

	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	269.092	7	38.442	11.005	<0.001
Within Groups	16,493.782	4,722	3.493		
Total	16,762.874	4,729			

A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found the relationship between level of education and attitude toward bribe taking to be curvilinear, where the two groups most opposed to bribe taking were the most educated and least educated group (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that differences in education level were significant, but that there was no discernible trend (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). Educational level was not a significant factor in an Egyptian study (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Employment Status

Table 11a ranks the extent of opposition to bribery on the basis of employment status. Retired people tended to be most opposed to bribery, followed by full-time and part-time employees. Housewives and the unemployed were least opposed to bribery.

Table 11a RANKING BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Status	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Retired	1.4	1.31	713
2	Full time	1.8	1.82	1907
3	Part Time	1.9	1.94	348
4	Self employed	2.0	2.16	520
4	Students	2.0	1.93	175
6	Unemployed	2.1	2.06	318
7	Housewife	2.2	2.30	665
7	Other	2.2	2.31	176

Table 11b shows that the difference in mean score between groups was highly significant.

Table 11b Employment Status and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	287.251	7	41.036	11.159	<0.001
Within Groups	17,702.445	4,814	3.677		
Total	17,989.695	4,821			

A few other studies have examined the relationship between employment status and attitude toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that retired people 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, while students and the unemployed were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). An Egyptian study found that retired and fully-employed people were most opposed to bribe taking, while the unemployed and students were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Institution of Occupation

Table 12a ranks opposition to bribery on the basis of institution of occupation. Those who worked at public and private institutions were equally opposed to bribery. Those who worked for non-profit institutions were only slightly less opposed. Self-employed individuals were significantly least opposed.

Table 12a RANKING INSTITUTION OF OCCUPATION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Institution	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Public institution	1.8	1.77	597
1	Private business	1.8	1.86	1857
3	Private non-profit organization	1.9	1.86	167
4	Self-employed	2.9	2.86	88

Table 12b shows that the difference in mean score between groups was highly significant.

Table 12b Institution of Occupation and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	103.395	3	34.465	9.737	<0.001
Within Groups	9,574.145	2,705	3.539		
Total	9,677.539	2,708			

A few other studies have also examined this demographic variable. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that people who worked in the government sector were most opposed to bribe taking, followed by the self-employed, people who worked for private, non-profit organizations and those who worked for private firms (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). Institution of occupation was not a significant variable in a comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) or Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 12c ranks the various categories by institution of occupation and country. Those employed by Canadian public institutions were most opposed to bribery, followed closely by those at Canadian private, non-profit organizations. Those employed in Mexico were least opposed to bribery, regardless of institution of occupation.

Table 12c RANKING BY COUNTRY & INSTITUTION OF OCCUPATION (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	Canada – Public Institution	1.4
2	Canada – Private non-profit organization	1.5
3	United States – Public institution	1.7
3	United States – Private business	1.7
3	United States – Private non-profit organization	1.7
3	Canada – Private business	1.7
7	Mexico – Private non-profit organization	2.2
8	Mexico – Private business	2.3
9	Mexico – Public institution	2.4
10	Mexico – Self-employed	2.9

Social Class

Table 13a ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of social class. The upper middle class was most opposed to bribery; the upper class was least opposed.

This result is surprising. One might expect either a linear relationship or no relationship. Instead, the relationship appears to be curvilinear, with the two upper classes being either most or least opposed to bribery.

Table 13a RANKING BY SOCIAL CLASS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Class	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Upper middle class	1.5	1.39	969
2	Lower middle class	1.6	1.45	1061
2	Working class	1.6	1.52	985
2	Lower class	1.6	1.64	170
5	Upper class	3.2	2.95	33

Table 13b shows that the difference in mean score between groups was highly significant.

Table 13b Social Class and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	93.566	4	23.391	10.577	<0.001
Within Groups	7,105.379	3,213	2.211		
Total	7,198.944	3,217			

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 and upper class (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). The results were curvilinear for a comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia, with those in the middle class having a mean score that was between the working class and lower class (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). Social class was not a significant variable for a study of Egyptian opinion (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 13c ranks the various categories. The Canadian upper class and the American upper class were equally opposed to bribery. The U.S. upper class was least opposed to bribery. Mexico was not included because data were not available.

Table 13c RANKING BY COUNTRY & SOCIAL CLASS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	United States – Upper middle class	1.4
1	Canada – Upper class	1.4
3	Canada – Lower class	1.5
4	Canada – Upper middle class	1.6
4	Canada – Lower middle class	1.6
4	Canada – Working class	1.6
7	United States – Lower middle class	1.7
8	United States – Working class	1.8
8	United States – Lower class	1.8
10	United States – Upper class	5.6

Scale of Income

Table 14a ranks attitude on the basis of income. Those in the highest income category were most opposed to bribery, while those in the lowest income category were least opposed.

Table 14a RANKING BY SCALE OF INCOME (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Scale	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	High income	1.7	1.75	1045
2	Middle income	1.8	1.81	2067
3	Low income	2.1	2.28	1193

Table 14b shows that the difference in mean score between groups was highly significant.

Table 14b Scale of income and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	102.904	2	51.452	13.695	<0.001
Within Groups	16,162.165	4,302	3.757		
Total	6,265.070	4,304			

An Egyptian study found that those in the lower income category were more opposed to bribe taking than were those in the middle and upper income groups. However, the difference was significant only at the 10 percent level (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c). Income level was found not to be a significant variable in comparative studies of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a) and Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

Table 14c ranks the various categories. The U.S. and Canadian groups generally tended to be more opposed to bribery, although there was an exception in the case of the U.S. high income category.

Table 14c RANKING BY COUNTRY & SCALE OF INCOME (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	United States – Low income	1.5
1	Canada – Middle income	1.5
1	Canada – High income	1.5
4	United States – Middle income	1.7
4	Canada – Low income	1.7
6	Mexico – High income	1.9
7	Mexico – Middle income	2.4
8	United States – High income	2.6
9	Mexico – Low income	2.8

Size of Town

Table 15a ranks attitudes toward bribery based on the size of town. Mean scores did not differ much, with the exception of people who lived in towns with a population of 2,000-5,000, which was significantly less opposed to bribe taking.

Table 15a RANKING BY SIZE OF TOWN (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Size	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	5,000-10,000	1.7	1.73	241
2	50,000-100,000	1.8	1.87	390
2	100,000-500,000	1.8	1.82	1033
2	>500,000	1.8	1.87	1351
5	<2,000	1.9	2.05	630
5	10,000-20,000	1.9	1.79	333
5	20,000-50,000	1.9	1.78	347
8	2,000-5,000	2.3	2.42	394

Table 15b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 15b Size of Town and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	94.439	7	13.491	3.669	0.001
Within Groups	17,322.767	4,711	3.677		
Total	17,417.206	4,718			

A few other studies have examined town size as a variable. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that those in the three smallest sized towns had the strongest opposition to bribe taking. Those from larger towns seemed to have less opposition, although people who lived in towns between 10-20,000 population were most opposed to bribe taking (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 those who lived in large or medium sized towns, and people who lived in medium sized towns seemed 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 those who lived in small towns, although the relationship was not completely linear among the various town sizes (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Happiness

Table 16a ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of happiness. The mean scores do not differ much, with the exception of those who are not very happy.

Table 16a RANKING BY HAPPINESS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Happiness	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Quite happy	1.8	1.78	2227
1	Not at all happy	1.8	1.60	27
3	Very happy	1.9	2.01	2279
4	Not very happy	2.2	2.34	284

Table 16b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 16b Happiness and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	44.019	3	14.673	3.951	0.008
Within Groups	17,872.361	4,813	3.713		
Total	17,916.380	4,816			

A few other studies have examined happiness in conjunction with views toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that those who were very happy and quite happy were most opposed to bribe taking, while those who were not at all happy were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). Happiness was not a significant variable in a comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) and a study of Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c).

Table 16c ranks attitudes by country and extent of happiness. The Canadians and Americans tend to be most opposed to bribery, regardless of level of happiness, while the Mexicans tend to be least opposed.

Table 16c RANKING BY COUNTRY & HAPPINESS (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	Canada – Not at all happy	1.2
2	Canada – Not very happy	1.5
3	United States – Not very happy	1.6
3	Canada – Very happy	1.6
3	Canada – Quite happy	1.6
6	United States – Quite happy	1.7
7	United States – Very happy	1.8
8	United States – Not at all happy	2.0
9	Mexico – Very happy	2.3
10	Mexico – Quite happy	2.5
10	Mexico – Not all happy	2.5
12	Mexico – Not very happy	3.2

Health

Table 17a Ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of health. Those in very good or good health were most opposed, while those in fair health were least opposed.

Table 17a RANKING BY HEALTH (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Health	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Very good	1.8	1.81	1582
1	Good	1.8	1.83	2111
3	Poor	2.0	2.26	173
4	Fair	2.1	2.24	956

Table 17b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 17b Health and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	71.538	3	23.846	6.413	<0.001
Within Groups	17,916.008	4,818	3.719		
Total	17,987.546	4,821			

An Egyptian study (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c) and a comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that health was not a significant variable (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 17c ranks by country and health. Canadians tended to be most opposed to bribery regardless of health. Americans came next, followed by Mexicans.

Table 17c RANKING BY COUNTRY & HEALTH (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	Canada – Fair	1.5
1	Canada – Poor	1.5
3	Canada – Very good	1.6
3	Canada – Good	1.6
5	United States – Very good	1.7
5	United States – Good	1.7
5	United States – Fair	1.7
8	United States – Poor	2.1
9	Mexico – Very good	2.3
9	Mexico – Good	2.3
11	Mexico – Fair	2.7
11	Mexico – Poor	2.7

Confidence in the Police

Table 18a Ranks attitude toward bribery based on the degree of confidence in the police. A comparison of mean scores shows that opposition toward bribery dissipates as confidence in the police declines.

Table 18a RANKING BY CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Confidence	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	A great deal	1.6	1.73	845
2	Quite a lot	1.7	1.64	2224
3	Not very much	2.2	2.18	1140
4	None at all	2.3	2.49	585

Table 18b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 18b Confidence in the Police and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	358.090	3	119.363	32.599	<0.000
Within Groups	17,538.830	4,790	3.662		
Total	17,896.920	4,793			

This variable was examined in a few other studies. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that the two groups who had the most confidence in the police also had the strongest opposition to bribe taking (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a). A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that those who placed no confidence in the police were most

opposed to bribe taking, while those who placed quite a lot of confidence or a great deal of confidence in the police were least opposed to bribe taking (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

Confidence in the Justice System

Table 19a ranks attitude toward bribery on the basis of confidence in the justice system. Those who were most opposed to bribery tended to have the most confidence in the justice system, while those least opposed tended to have the least confidence in the justice system.

Table 19a RANKING BY CONFIDENCE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Confidence	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Quite a lot	1.7	1.64	2078
2	A great deal	1.9	1.99	540
3	Not very much	2.0	2.07	1546
4	None at all	2.2	2.32	592

Table 19b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 19b Confidence in the Justice System and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	150.398	3	50.133	13.596	<0.001
Within Groups	17,521.962	4,752	3.687		
Total	17,672.360	4,755			

A few other studies have examined confidence in the justice system in conjunction with attitude toward bribe taking. A comparative study of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China found that those with the most confidence in the justice system were more opposed to bribe taking than were those with no confidence at all (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a).

A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that opposition to bribe taking was higher for the groups who placed little or no confidence in the justice system, and lower for those who placed confidence in the system (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b).

Confidence in the government

Table 20a ranks attitudes toward bribery based on degree of confidence in the government. Interestingly, the relationship is not linear. The two middle groups showed the strongest opposition to bribery, while the two polar positions showed the least opposition.

Table 20a RANKING BY CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Confidence	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Quite a lot	1.8	1.79	1584
1	Not very much	1.8	1.82	2051
3	None at all	2.1	2.28	725
4	A great deal	2.2	2.43	315

Table 20b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 20b Confidence in the Government and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	90.411	3	30.137	8.053	<0.001
Within Groups	17,480.291	4,671	3.742		
Total	17,570.702	4,674			

A few other studies have examined confidence in government in connection with attitudes on bribe taking. Comparative studies of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a) and Argentina, Brazil and Colombia (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b) both found that confidence in government was not a significant variable.

Left-right political spectrum

Table 21a ranks attitude toward bribery with position of the left-right political spectrum. Those in the center tended to be somewhat more opposed to bribery than the other two groups. Those on the right tended to be least opposed to bribery.

Table 21a RANKING BY LEFT-RIGHT POLITICAL SPECTRUM (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)				
Rank	Spectrum	Mean	Std. Dev.	n
1	Center	1.8	1.76	2615
2	Left	1.9	1.91	595
3	Right	2.1	2.35	944

Table 21b shows that the difference in mean scores between groups is highly significant.

Table 21b Left-right Political Spectrum and Attitudes toward Accepting a Bribe ANOVA Analysis					
	Σ Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Fisher F-value	p value
Between Groups	62.638	2	31.319	8.403	<0.001
Within Groups	15,471.815	4,151	3.727		
Total	15,534.453	4,153			

A few other studies have examined position on the left-right political spectrum in conjunction with attitude toward bribe taking. A comparative study of Argentina, Brazil and Colombia found that centrists were most opposed to bribe taking, while leftists were least opposed (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b). Studies of the USA, Brazil, Germany and China (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a) and Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c) found that position on the political spectrum was not a significant variable.

Table 21 c ranks the categories by position and country. Canadians and Americans on the left tended to be most opposed to bribery, while Mexicans of all persuasions tended to be least opposed.

Table 21c RANKING BY COUNTRY & LEFT-RIGHT POLITICAL SPECTRUM (Accepting a bribe is: 1 = never justifiable; 10 = always justifiable)		
Rank		Mean
1	Canada – Left	1.4
2	United States – Left	1.5
3	United States – Right	1.6
3	Canada – Center	1.6
3	Canada – Right	1.6
6	United States – Center	1.8
7	Mexico – Center	2.3
8	Mexico – Left	2.5
9	Mexico – Right	2.6

Summary of Findings

Table 22 summarizes the findings.

Table 22 Summary of Findings
SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES Overall - Canadians are slightly more opposed to bribery than are Americans and that Mexicans are far less opposed to bribery than are either of the other two countries. A super majority in each country believed that accepting a bribe in the course of one's duties is never justifiable. Age - the oldest age group is most opposed to bribery, while the youngest age group is least opposed. Ethnicity - Blacks and whites were most opposed, followed by East Asians and Hispanics. Coloured were least opposed. Importance of religion in life - The group most opposed to bribery was the group where religion was not at all important. The other three categories had identical mean scores. Religion - Muslims and Orthodox were most opposed to bribery, while Jehovah Witnesses and Evangelical Christians were least opposed. Marital status - Divorced individuals were most opposed to bribery, followed closely by married and widowed individuals. Those who were never married or living together as married were least opposed. Education level - The trend tends to be that those with the highest level of education were most strongly opposed to bribery. Employment status - Retired people tended to be most opposed to bribery, followed by full-time and part-time employees. Housewives and the unemployed were least opposed to bribery. Institution of occupation - Those who worked at public and private institutions

were equally opposed to bribery. Those who worked for non-profit institutions were only slightly less opposed. Self-employed individuals were significantly least opposed.

Social class - The upper middle class was most opposed to bribery; the upper class was least opposed.

Income - Those in the highest income category were most opposed to bribery, while those in the lowest income category were least opposed.

Size of town - Mean scores did not differ much, with the exception of people who lived in towns with a population of 2,000-5,000, which was significantly less opposed to bribe taking.

Happiness – Those who were not very happy were significantly less opposed to bribe taking than were other groups.

Health - Those in very good or good health were most opposed, while those in fair health were least opposed.

Confidence in the police - Opposition toward bribery dissipates as confidence in the police declines.

Confidence in the justice system - Those who were most opposed to bribery tended to have the most confidence in the justice system, while those least opposed tended to have the least confidence in the justice system.

Confidence in the government - The two middle groups showed the strongest opposition to bribery, while the two polar positions showed the least opposition.

Left-right political spectrum - Those in the center tended to be somewhat more opposed to bribery than the other two groups. Those on the right tended to be least opposed to bribery.

NOT SIGNIFICANT VARIABLES

Gender
Religiosity

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The findings show that opposition to bribe taking is widespread, although the views are not uniform, either between countries or for certain demographic variables. Time and space do not permit a full examination of these differences, although one might suspect that cultural, historical, political, sociological, geographic, religious and philosophical differences all play a role. Additional research is needed to determine why different groups think differently on this issue.

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