

The Impact of Gender on Corruption

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ABSTRACT. Scholarship about the relationship between gender and perceptions of corruption has increased and consolidated, especially in recent years. Yet, there have been few comprehensive assessments of what research has learned about the influence of gender on perception of corruption. The material gathered in this paper provides a rich and diverse context for understanding the nexus of gender and corruption, the role of good governance both for gender equality and fighting corruption, and the relationship between the level of corruption and women's participation. This paper discusses the major trends in scholarship about gender differences in corruption, gender-sensitive anticorruption strategies, and gender differentials in tolerance for corruption.

Keywords: gender equality; perception of corruption; good governance

1. Introduction

This paper is grounded in the considerable body of scholarship examining bureaucracy and the masculine rationality that it embodies, changes in leader roles and organizational practices, the gendered assumptions underlying rationality, and masculine rationality as the hallmark of organizational discourse. The paper generates insights about the role of transformational and transactional leadership in males and females, the masculinization of rationality, the female gender role's demand for supportive behaviors, and the treatment of gender representation in the discourse of management and organization theory.

2. Gender and Corruption

Alolo notes that corruption involves mutually satisfying relations between the parties involved. Opportunities and networks of corruption are critical for both male and female likelihoods of engaging in corruption. Gender informs male and female attitudes towards corruption (both men and women support corrupt behaviors). Understanding gendered motivations will be key to reducing corrupt behavior in the public sector. "Feminized traits, such as sympathy and compassion, underpin female officials' justifications for corruption, while masculinized traits, such as objectiveness and thirst for money, underline most of male officials' justifications for supporting corruption."¹ Due Billing looks at the gendered meanings connected to bureaucracies: bureaucracies do not have to be gendered. The gender division of labor can be connected to cultural meanings in a particular bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is a particular form of organization with a specialized division of labor (it is government by formalized impersonal rules). Liberal feminism has a bureaucratic case for equality, whereas radical feminism has a case against bureaucracy. Bureaucracies may have some features which promote gender equity, and may benefit professional women more than low-level male bureaucrats (they are characterized by formal rationality).²

Chandler states that women have slowly emerged in top executive positions: women bring to the exercise of leadership *an arsenal of strengths*. Women in top corporate positions have redefined the rules of business and leadership (the increase of female leaders has produced new approaches to the exercise of leadership). "Although women have moved into more managerial positions, they still have not emerged into the top executive leadership positions nor do they earn salaries commensurate with those of men for the same jobs."³ Weimann tests the stereotype of male communicative dominance in the context of dealing with bureaucracy, examining the responses of male and female officials of various bureaucratic organizations to different persuasive appeals activated by male and female clients. The sex of the client and the official significantly affects the outcome only when the type of appeal is taken into account.⁴ Dolan examines women's contributions to policy making in the federal Senior Executive Service (SES). Women's life experiences differ in meaningful ways from those of men. Dolan tests the conditions under which SES women are likely to press for women's interests. Women executives adopt female friendly attitudes when they work in an agency or department with an office devoted to women's issues and when higher percentages of elite women are positioned within the organization's leadership ranks.⁵

Cornwall and Goetz claim that *affirmative action measures to increase the numbers of women participating as public representatives in political institutions have returned a growing number of women to public office,*

women representatives must balance obligations to follow the party line with their commitment to their constituents, quotas acknowledge that women do not constitute a politically distinct group with interests limited to gender-related concerns, whereas traditional and new democratic spaces have similarities in failing to redress gender injustice and inequality.

From the above it becomes clear that political parties have rarely promoted women as candidates for office without being formally obliged to do so, parties the world over appear hostile to women's engagement in decision-making, and women's movements are the most promising candidates to further the project of "engendering democracy." Cornwall and Goetz put it that large numbers of women in public office may perform an important role-modeling effect⁶ (the numbers of women in politics increase in many parts of the world), and there is no shortage of women's activity in civil society⁷ and community activism. "Political participation matters a great deal for women. It does so not only because of the potential gains of successful protest, mobilization around collective interests, advocacy or engagement in policy processes. It also offers women a form of political apprenticeship that enables them to recognize and articulate interests, build alliances, broker differences and learn modes of cooperation and consensus-building to advance common projects."⁸

3. Gender and Organizational Realities

Ross-Smith and Kornberger note that gender is enacted in organizational discourse and embedded in managerial practices: the concept of rationality that is elaborated in western society and enacted in organizational discourse⁹ and which informs practices is masculine (rationality keeps on gendering organizational discourses and practices). The concept of rationality is gendered in its core assumptions. The dominant masculine rationality informs and genders organizational realities. Ross-Smith and Kornberger demonstrate that rationality was from its philosophical beginnings linked to masculinity and that this masculine rationality still shapes organizational discourse¹⁰ and managerial practices: *gender works at shaping organizational rationality as the link between masculinity and rationality that ensures and sustains gender inequalities on all levels*. The organization is replete with an instrumentalism that is representative of a masculine ethic. Narratives that make assumptions about gender are a vital component of and a potential trigger for organizational change.

The above argument shows that gendered practices structure organizational life to the extent that they are present but not noticed. In its attempts to provide a way of integrating different social sectors and levels, systems theory reveals a distinctive bias against women. Ross-Smith and Kornberger

contend that, according to Weber, the increasing bureaucratization of the modern world and the triumph of instrumental rationality are inevitable (conflict between formal and substantive rationality are inevitable). Scientific management is the embodiment of instrumental rationality. Those particular ends or absolute values associated with the achievement of substantive rationality decline as modernization occurs. "Weber's notion of rationality can be read as a commentary on the construction of a particular kind of masculinity based on the exclusion of the personal, the sexual and the feminine from any definition of rationality."¹¹

4. Gender and Politics

Luthar investigates the impact of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on the perception of how well male and female managers perform¹² as well as the leadership ability attributions made to them: democratic managers are perceived to be much higher performers, and superior leaders when compared to autocratic managers. The autocratic female managers were perceived to be higher performers than autocratic male managers. Male subjects tended to evaluate other male managers higher while female subjects were partial to female managers in their evaluations, whereas the female subjects gave female autocratic managers substantially higher evaluations in terms of both performance and leadership ability.¹³

Sanbonmatsu focuses on how women's political representation is related to the role of parties as representative institutions: *the role and status of women within the party may shape the party's responsiveness to women's interests, the party's representation of gender issues may depend on the advancement of women within the party, women's descriptive and substantive representation may be inversely related to the strength of party organizations, whereas working within the parties is an inevitable part of furthering democracy for women.* Sanbonmatsu holds that the representation of women in American politics necessitates representation by parties, women's representation is related to the role of parties as representative institutions, and the political representation of women need not conflict with party goals (women's descriptive representation can strengthen the party). Sanbonmatsu reasons that party leaders may fear that women legislators will behave as the substantive representatives of women: gender is a potential threat to party discipline at the level of mass politics,¹⁴ gender gaps occur in party identification and voting behavior, and the lack of alignment between gender and party and the status of women as a majority group provide women with opportunities for leverage in the party system.¹⁵

5. Conclusions

Scholarly research reveals strong correlations between the increase in female leaders, conflict between gender and party, gender role internalization and female leadership style, and difference between male and female leadership styles. The findings of this paper have implications for the mechanism that motivates party responsiveness to women's organizations, the influence of gender role internalization on leadership in female organizations, gender variation in leadership style, and the gendered nature of organizational theory and practice. This paper seeks to fill a gap in the current literature by examining different aspects of women's political participation and representation, gender representation in bureaucratic leadership, the expression of a gendered masculinity for management, and the entrenchment of an intrinsic masculinity associated with the notion of rationality.

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