

## **GENDER ASPECTS OF CORRUPTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION OF UKRAINE**

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The main empirical findings were obtained from studies conducted in 2010-2012, including all-Ukrainian representative national surveys, in-depth interviews and focus groups in higher education. The full report and description of methodology can be found at [www.iahr.com.ua](http://www.iahr.com.ua)

### **SLIDES 2-6**

Higher education institutions are establishments that, in addition to being at the forefront of research in all areas of activity, train the future elite of a country. Any deviation in the functioning of these institutions from the highest standards of integrity can only have a far-reaching impact on the future of a society. We are concerned that one third of students admit the corruption as "acceptable way to solve their own problems."

It is difficult to imagine the extension of corruption in Ukrainian education on position of the European experience. It is necessary to present one figure only: according interviewed law enforcement officials - in a typical university of typical district center amount of money in corruption practices is about 2 million dollars a year, which is comparable with budget financing. Although the money valuation does not reflect the actual level of corruption. As a direct bribe (student- faculty relationship) is not dominant, personal connections (blat, protection, influence trading), including intangible benefits are often less risky and more common.

The analysis of corruption phenomena has too often proceeded on the assumption that men and women share the same experience of corruption. This assumption seems questionable. This study begins to examine the differences between male and female experiences of corruption, as well as the different perceptions that exist about how men and women engage in these processes. These findings have implications not only for the fight against corruption in higher education; they provide insight into the broader process of developing a national anti-corruption strategy and evidence of the importance of including women's voices in this process.

An important conclusion is that the situation in higher education cannot explain all format of relations between gender and corruption in society in general. Sectoral differences are too significant and the problem is to be explored in certain contexts that are although similar but are to be explored independently.

### **1. It is necessary to consider the complexity of the phenomenon of "corruption in higher education" (Slides 7-8)**

Corruption system at higher educational institutions has different levels of hierarchy structure (assistance, service, education, academic leadership)

Misbalance between men and women at the vertical of positions makes some corruption practices more male and some - more female

Corruption in education occurs in a context in which men dominate the senior-level positions of higher education institutions and women are over-represented in academic and general support staff roles. The levels occupied by different genders in the hierarchy of academic institutions shape their different experiences of corruption.

## ***2. For you to obtain common view of the corruption in higher education are Slides 9-10***

Subject of our research were the most popular models of corruption practices in the universities – from applying to graduating, post graduating to recruitments.

## ***3. Corruption experience – behavior***

Common view of the corruption experience you see on Slide 11 – STRATEGIES OF CORRUPTION BEHAVIOR. It goes about the corruption behavior in all levels of educations (not in higher education only). In the in-depth interviews conducted in the second stage of this research, respondents were also asked, in various ways, to share their perceptions about the differences in corrupt behavior of women and men. Such perspective sheds light both on what such differences are in practice and on the social expectations and assumptions that surround gender and corruption. In reviewing this, it is important to keep in mind that they are not an exact reflection of personal experiences, gender stereotypes, or secondary sources of information but a blend of all three.

Interestingly, women were less likely to believe that gender influences the extent to which people engage in corrupt behavior, for better or for worse. They were more likely to believe that both genders bribe equally as much; that neither gender is more likely to refuse to use bribes as a means to solve problems; that both genders use personal contacts for illicit gains equally as much; and that faculty do not favor a particular gender when marking exams.

There is no obvious explanation for this phenomenon. Indeed, it may be the result of various factors. The general effect of this finding, though, is to underscore two things: the limitations of conventional forms of studying corruption based on perceptions, at least when it comes to analyzing the comparative behavior of different genders; and that much remains unknown or misunderstood about women's perspectives and experiences of corruption.

The experiences of women and men are by no means uniform. Empirical findings indicate that women are more likely to use personal connections to obtain corrupt benefits. (16% of women who engaged in corruption in education used personal connections in the process, compared to only 10% of men.) Women are also more likely to provide services as a form of corruption payment (12% of women engaged in corruption in education provided services as a form of payment, compared to only 5% of men.). Moreover, female faculty members are more likely to be offered non-monetary forms of corruption payments, such as flowers, chocolates, or other gifts. According to focus groups, this is at least in part because female faculty are thought to appreciate a more elaborate process of currying favour or "courting."

On this basis and without overstating the extent of these differences, there is reason to believe that the female experience of corruption can be quite distant from the immediately reciprocal bribery transactions that are perceived to be the norm and that often garner the most attention from researchers.

If corrupt transactions with female faculty are more often characterized by the developing of positive personal relationships, as was suggested in the focus groups, the full scope of incentives for engaging in such behavior may be more complex than typically assumed. For instance, female faculty may be more motivated by sentiments of loyalty or other social obligations. From an anti-corruption standpoint, common prescriptions for fighting corruption premised on rational, utilitarian motives – like increasing salaries – would break down in this context.

These findings also suggest that women are more likely to engage in ongoing corrupt relations, rather than one-off corrupt exchanges. Such relations bring issues of reputation and trust into play, which also affect the motivations and conduct of participants. Further in-depth study is required in order to understand what women's use of "personal connections" and their provision of "services" as corruption payment means in practice and, indeed, the extent to which these two things are linked.

***4. Is success of negotiations on corruption service influenced by the gender of a client (Slide 12)?***

In negotiating a corruption exchange, in-depth interviews indicate that, when respondents are forced to differentiate between genders, it is perceived to be easier to come to an agreement with male faculty than with female. Dealing with male students is also believed to be more likely to result in agreement on a corruption deal than dealing with female students.

Men think that gender is important in negotiations on corruption service (almost 45 percent's). Women have an opposite opinion that gender doesn't influence the success of negotiations (60 percent's).

***5. In what situation it is easier to reach corruption agreement (Slide 13)?***

Both in male and female opinion it is easier to reach corruption agreement between men.

As you see on slide male corruption agreements are more possible and successful. Also man will reach such agreements both with men and women.

If women are initiators of corruption agreement, answers show that agreement making will be more complicated.

It is interesting that situation of agreement on corruption service between 2 women is not successful in both male and female answers.

***6. Whith whom you would rather find common language in order to solve problems in higher education (Slide 14)?***

To discern differences in attitude towards male or female *faculty*, respondents were asked which gender is easier to deal with when trying to resolve a problem in higher education. About 60% of respondents answered that gender is not important. Of those who believe gender matters, more tend to believe that dealing with a man would more likely lead to a "deal" being struck. As one participant explained, the perception is that "It is more difficult to predict a woman's behaviour. Mood is an important factor."

***7. Slide 15 – Corruption behavior: conclusions***

## **8. *Corruption payments (benefits) – corruption exchange'objects (Slides 16-18)***

The "objects" of corruption transactions in higher education include: good grades, passed exams, enrolment, qualification for term exams and exemption from attendance. Corruption payments for these include money, goods ("gifts") and favors.

According to the national survey, respondents engaged in corruption in education were most likely by far to pay with money. That said, of those who did provide services to education officials, significantly more of these tended to be women than men.

Women and men think that money is the most frequent type of corruption payment.

But Women also said that services they choose more often than men.

### **Sexual services as a form of corruption payment.**

The reactions of respondents both in interviews and in focus groups reveal that the use of sexual services as corruption payment is real but poorly understood. 42% of women and 34% of men claimed to know of cases where sexual services were used as corruption benefits. It is important to note that one in five respondents skipped this question altogether.

The subject is worthy of its own detailed examination. Asking about "sexual services" in the abstract can cause confusion, dismissiveness or guardedness. Additional measures are required in order to be able to examine sexualized forms of corruption, over and beyond those techniques normally employed in the study of corruption, to overcome the doubly taboo nature of this topic.

Studying how this form of corruption happens in practice and starting a dialogue on this issue would encourage greater openness; better understanding of this behavior; and increased recognition when it is happening, both among policy makers and the public at large.

## **9. *Motivation for participation in corruption***

On the next slides (20-21) you can see common view of motivation in corruption practices in higher education for men and women.

As another method of assessing motivation, male and female faculty were asked to select from various options what they consider to be the leading reasons for corruption in higher education, in general.

It was found that, of the options available, female faculty are more likely to believe that corruption is just a part of life in Ukraine and that salaries are unfairly low. Men are likely to believe that corruption is a part of life in Ukraine and that corruption is the result of ineffective measures to prevent it.

### **Slide 22 gives the main conclusions:**

- ☐ Female in their motivation in the majority of cases refer to situational factors of surrounding: "it's just such a system", "everybody does this", "if I don't take somebody will do it instead of me"

- ☐ Male are not influenced by surroundings. The major motivation is personal interest and possibility to satisfy using position.

#### ***10. Anticorruption potential (Slides 24-29 )***

Anticorruption potential of male and female was assessed by some factors:

Explanation reasons of corruption

Emotional attitude to the process of bribery

Frequency of verbalization of critical attitude to corruption

Frequency of refusals of bribe as a way for problem solving

Attitude to possibility of overcoming corruption

***Particular results are presented on next slides.***

#### ***11. In the research we paid our attention to subjective perception of corruption situations.***

Particular conclusions you can see on Slide 29:

Male when giving bribe more often feel gratitude (56% vs. 44%)

In twice more female giving bribe felt disgust (61%) and anger (64%) vs. 38% and 36% respectively

Negative attitude to corruption is expressed more often by female (in 8 times more in comparison to male)

Female more often refuse to participate in both active and passive bribery

Female are more optimistic about possibility to overcome corruption in comparison to male. 52% of female answered positively this question.

## ***CONCLUSIONS***

Corruption, in its many forms, is a social phenomenon – or more accurately multiple social phenomena – that occurs in the context of gender relations. Whether it is a case of bribery, extortion, misuse of personal connections, other illicit practices, or, as is often the case, some combination of these interactions are shaped by gendered norms and expectations. Attitudes that disadvantage women in other spheres hence also disadvantage them in the realm of corruption.

On top of these disadvantages is the simple fact that women are more likely to occupy lower levels of the bureaucracy. They are accordingly less likely to engage in corrupt activity from a position of power or be able to dictate the terms of engagement. More often, they will be relegated to the role of intermediary or facilitator in a corruption deal whose terms are more likely to be dictated by faculty or chosen by students.

There are a number of reasons why, other things being equal, women are less likely to be approached to participate in a corruption deal than men. Women are perceived as being more difficult to reach a corrupt deal with; more likely to turn down corruption offers (though this is

not, in fact, the case); more likely to voice outrage against corruption; and more likely to report corruption to the authorities (which, again, is not entirely the case).

Not surprisingly, then, fewer women report receiving requests for money, goods, or services in the education sector. In this way, female faculty may be excluded from opportunities to profit from corruption that are available to men, and female students may have fewer opportunities to cheat the system than their male peers.

***Women and women's groups form potentially powerful constituencies for change.***

From an anti-corruption perspective, the experience of the “losers” in a corrupt system is important because the groups disadvantaged by the current system can form natural constituencies for change.

**To be clear, women were not found to be less corrupt. Although there was a tendency to believe that women are less involved in corruption, the majority of respondents tended to believe that men and women are about equally as involved. The full extent to which women are actually involved in corruption, as compared to men, is simply unknown, especially in light of the findings from this report that women often tend to engage in different forms of corruption than men.**

What is noteworthy, however, are the signs that, although women may currently feel compelled to engage in corruption, they may be more willing to actively resist it given the proper incentives.

In particular, there were a number of indications that women are, if not resistant to corruption, at least reluctant in their complicity. Women were more likely to report feeling negative emotions about giving a bribe and to feel more optimistic about the possibility of fighting corruption in general. They were also considered far more likely to verbalize outrage against corruption and less likely to extort others for bribes. Women were also more likely to blame the prevalence of corruption in higher education on an absence of disapproval.

Interestingly enough, while fewer women than men had actually gone so far as to report corruption to the authorities, this seemed to be due to a real fear of reprisal. Those few women who *had* reported corruption were significantly more likely to have experienced negative consequences as a result than men. Greater protection for whistleblowers may therefore have greater success in promoting whistleblowing among women.

A national anti-corruption strategy should speak to the motivations and constraints that typify the female experience. This approach promises not only to be fruitful from the anti-corruption perspective; it also provides opportunities for real synergies with the struggle for gender equality. The fight against corruption in Ukraine is already seeking to become more community-driven and prevention-based, rather than reactive and state-enforced. The sustained success of this approach hinges on the inclusion and participation of women.