

The ambiguity of a gift exchange: a possible radical interpretation

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Overview

- (I) Gift
 - (I) Bribery
 - (II) Similarities Gift & Bribes
 - (II) Culture of gift
 - (I) A Culture of gift (in traditional Java) versus
 - (II) A Culture of exchange (Java in transition)
 - (III) A Radical Interpretation of the gift =
A) Anthro-Philosophical Conclusion
 - (IV) Empirical Research =
B) Socio-Economic conclusion
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(I) GIFTS

Definition:

- Norm of Reciprocity – triad structure of obligations
- Asymmetrical vs Symmetrical gifts in Social Contract Theory

Characteristics:

- **Reciprocity**: an expression of social bonds
 - **Ambiguity** of a gift: sharing and superiority; agape – agon; freedom-obligation
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BRIBERY

Definition:

- Monopoly power + Discretion – Accountability – Free Speech – Democratic Values

Characteristics:

- Payment or promise of payment for a service
 - Contractual market exchange
 - Illegitimate and secret character
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Similarities between GIFTS & BRIBERY

- Trust
 - Reputation
 - Reciprocal obligations
 - Alliances
 - Non legal enforcement
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Differences between GIFTS & BRIBERY

- Gift = Not explicit Quid pro Quo
 - Gift has a time gap
 - Social Alliances seeking acknowledgement
 - Gift objects circulate
 - Gifts are not priced and addressed to “principal”
 - Gifts are given in a transparent and open manner for which people are socially accountable
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(II) Culture of Gift in Java

(traditional community)

Basics of Culture of Gift in Java

- Rukun ⇒ conflict avoidance ⇒ consensus
- Hormat ⇒ respect ⇒ hierarchy

Examples of Culture of Gift in Java

- Gotong-royong
 - Arisan
 - = "Social Capital"
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Culture of Exchange in Java

in this transition period

- Individuation and erosion of traditional social mores

As result of Urbanization and Industrialization

- Lack of efficient institutions
 - No proper law enforcement e.g.
 - Patronage – Favoritism (“Particularism”)- Nepotism
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(III) A Radical Interpretation

- Definition of a pure gift: giving without any expectation to get a return
 - The Impossibility of the gift: any economic notion of indebtedness, reciprocity, circulation undermines the gift and annuls it. Even the expectation to be thanked, or some gratefulness undermines a pure gift
 - Forgetting the gift (DERRIDA-MARION, CAPUTO), only traces can be found.
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(III) A Radical Interpretation

A. Anthro-Philosophical Conclusion:

1. Only in a subconscious attitude of compassion and giving, one can give without reciprocity
 2. Recognition of the ambiguity of the gift
 3. Consequences for social interaction?
 - How to think Reciprocity? An asymmetrical (moral) gift precedes a system of reciprocal social gifts
 - Hope for better to be-come
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(IV) National Survey of corruption

- 72% of Indonesian Population believes that corruption is a serious disease which should be eradicated
- Half of the population would pay on average whenever coerced, or insinuated in order to avoid harassment and speed up the process
- 62% believes it is normal to pay the lurah, 46% to pay the police and 22% to pay the judge
- 81% would accept presents-gifts from suppliers; 43% would accept money to vote for a particular political party

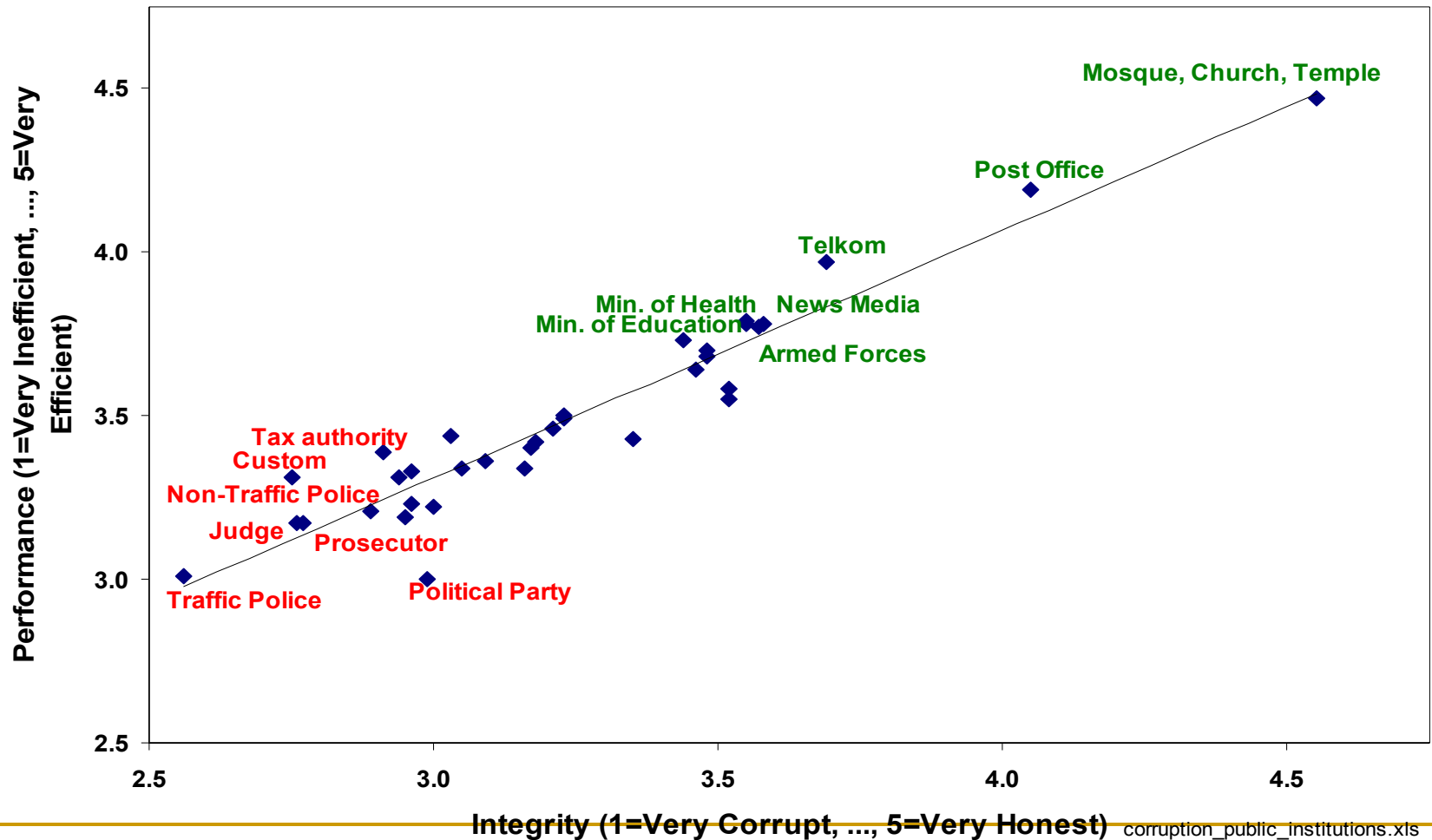
Lessons from the Survey

- Attitudes firmly against corruption
 - Behavior still ambivalent
 - Can distinguish socially acceptable vs unacceptable
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Factors Related to Lower Corruption in Public Institutions

Determinant	Statistical Significance	Rank
Quality Management Practices	Very Significant	1
Limited Discretion	Very Significant	2
Implementation of Rules	Significant	3
Presence of Written Rules	Not Significant	--
Disciplinary Actions	Not Significant	--
Public Official Income	Not Significant	--

Integrity and Performance



Controlling Corruption

Quality management practices in procurement, budget, and personnel processes backed up by strong anti-corruption organizational orientation, limited discretion, and the implementation of rules were found to be statistically significantly related to lower levels of corruption in public institutions

Responsible behavior in a culture of exchange?

- Empirical research indicates that the following factors could be important in the fight against corruption:
 - Proper and accountable management practices
 - Effective implementation and enforcement of rules
 - Less tolerance for discretion = more openness
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What are the rules of this new game?

B. Socio-economic Conclusion:

- Embracing the new paradigm of more a 'globalized' culture of exchange :
 - Good Leadership examples within networks
 - Corporate accountability + Rules of the game = Good Corporate (Social) Responsibility
 - External and Internal "legal" enforcement = upholding the law + moral responsibility
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