Research into judgments of scenario’s about corruption

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Panel Session: Understanding Corruption as a Crime Phenomenon

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PhD study: “values, norms and perceptions of corruption in Flanders. Study of corruption involving local police forces and municipal institutions.’ (2008 – 2014)

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Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: theoretical background & methodological recommendations

Part 3: blueprint of scenario based questionnaire
Part 1: Introduction

Kabinetsadviseur woont gratis in loft

ANTWERPEN
Tuur Ceuppens, kabinetsadviseur van schepen Ludo Van Campenhout (Open VLD), woont gratis in een van de grootste vastgoedontwikkelaars van Antwerpen. Ceuppens bouwde een bureauruimte om tot loft, en mag er in ruil gratis wonen. Rechtstreekse hitte: volgens de krant begint onderzoek naar corruptie van Ceuppens.

Joris van der Aa

Cevppers wil dat schepen van Stadsvestiging Ludo Van Campenhout ondernemen over de licentiebrief de zijn kabinetsmedewerker als deeltijd medewerker aan de schepen verantwoordelijk voor. "Ik neem onmiddellijk contact op met de kabinetsadviseur en geef hem de volgende instructies: controleer de licentiebrief en geef me een rapport op de eerste mogelijkheid."

INTEGRITIESBUREAU: Dit is zéér ernstig!

Armand Vandapel, voorzitter van de Integriteitsbureau, plaat voor een groot publiek onderzoek in de zaak Ceuppens: "Het kan absoluut niet dat ambtenaren of kabinetsmedewerkers gedurende het jaar gratis mogen wonen. Dit gaat over gigantische bedragen in nature die totaal niet in vergoeding staan ten officie of door het college. Er zijn er dertig tot 400.000 euro per jaar." Ceuppens verdedigde zich: "Ik betaal inderdaad een zekere hoeveelheid rente voor het gebruik van de woning, maar dat is helemaal niet voldoende om de kritiek te onderbieden."
Part 1: Introduction

Research question:
- Identify which elements are decisive in the judgment of scenario’s about corruption
- Are these judgments conditioned by socio-economic characteristics, gender, ...

Hypothesis: comparison of empirical data derived from samples out of different populations will help us to better understand the judgments of scenario’s about corruption
Research design

Phase 1
Analyses literature & Flemish journals

Phase 2
Survey: Flemish population, police municipalities, ...

Phase 3
Vignette study
Part 2: theoretical background
Theoretical background (1)

Research on corruption

General remark
- Political science approach
- Narrow approach: breaking the law
- Focus on defining corruption

Recommendation: focus on day-to-day scenario’s of corruption – not limited to the criminal law
Scenario Studies & corruption

   Behavioural and normative perspective in the context of analyzing corruption.

2. Peters & Welch (1978)
   - Scenario studies
   - 4 dimensions: public actor, favour, payoff & donor
   - Influence salient characteristics perception
   - Observe the influence of significant characteristics
- Evidence supports Peters & Welch’s hypothesis
- More and stronger characteristics = homogeneous perception
- Ambiguous situations = insiders lenient judgements

- Scenario’s judged corrupt: illegal activities, larger payoffs and more direct benefits…
- Context: public, private or something in between!
Recommendation: public corruption vs. private to private corruption

- Meta-analysis perception studies on corruption
- Corruption = social construction
- Corruption covers a wide range of phenomena:
  - Corruption = bribery (20%)
  - Corruption = no idea (15%)
  - Corruption = abuse of powers (2%)

Recommendation: Semantics and opinion studies? No use of questions “do you perceive ... corrupt?”

- Analysed 12 opinion studies on corruption
- Significant number used Peters & Welch’s design
- Only study of Jackson and Smith used empirical data/different samples

Recommendation: empirical data from samples out of different populations
Part 3: blueprint for scenario based questionnaire
Dimensions

**Dimension 1**: private vs. public role
- Public context more sensitive?
- Public role initiate vs. private role?

**Dimension 2**: undue advantage
- Nature of the conduct (routine task, breach of duties, breaking rules)
- Beneficiary: continuum from public interest to personal gain
Dimension 3: payoff

- Direct and immediate in relation to advantage
- Large/small payoff
- ...

Dimension 4: relation between giver and receiver
Format scenario’s
- Neutral formulation
- No words relating to corruption, bribe, fiddling...
- Keep it simple: modifier 1 salient characteristic at a time
- Observe bascule in the perception
Scenario: “Bart is an engineer and he is responsible for the production in an automobile plant. A supplier of airbags wants to increase his deliverance of airbags”.

- Do you consider it appropriate if the supplier of airbags reward Bart with a holiday trip after Bart optimized the production.
- Do you consider it appropriate if the supplier of airbags reward Bart with a holiday trip before Bart optimized the production.
- Do you consider it appropriate if the supplier of airbags reward Bart with a holiday trip after Bart organized errors in the production”.
- Do you consider it appropriate if the supplier of airbags reward Bart with a holiday trip before Bart organized errors in the production”.
Blueprint of scenario based questionnaire

Scenario: “Jean works as a cabinet counsellor and is responsible for the follow up of construction files for the city. Jean rents a luxurious loft from a building contractor doing major city programmes”.

- Do you consider this appropriate?
- Do you consider it appropriate if Jean sister would rent the loft at reduced tariff?
- Do you consider it appropriate if Jean would rent the loft at reduced tariff?
- Do you consider it appropriate if Jean would rent the loft for free?
Characteristics potentially corrupt act

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Payoff</th>
<th>Favour/gift</th>
<th>donor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation 1</strong></td>
<td>Private benefit from public act (++)</td>
<td>Ambiguous (+/-)</td>
<td>Unknown (-)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not direct (-)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Situation 2</strong></td>
<td>Private benefit from public act (++)</td>
<td>Third party (+/-)</td>
<td>Unknown (-)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not direct (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation 3</strong></td>
<td>Private benefit from public act (++)</td>
<td>Large (+)</td>
<td>Unknown (-)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not direct (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation 4</strong></td>
<td>Private benefit from public act (++)</td>
<td>Large (++)</td>
<td>Unknown (-)</td>
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Questions?

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