

Money and Time in Access to Public Services:

How Do Citizens Evaluate Different Forms of Bureaucratic Corruption?

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State administration in the Global South is plagued by petty corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency, which constitute a significant barrier to equitable and timely access to public services. Such corruption and inefficiency have been attributed to politicized bureaucratic structures, weak meritocratic recruitment, and complex regulations, among other root causes. While several studies have examined the causes and consequences of the ills of public administration in the developing world, they have largely overlooked how citizens perceive corruption in their daily interactions with street-level bureaucrats. We thus have a limited understanding of which individual considerations and contextual factors explain individual preferences for (or rejections of) corrupt behavior by bureaucrats in service delivery positions.¹

While citizens cannot hold corrupt bureaucratic agents accountable at the ballot box, capturing their attitudes toward bureaucratic corruption is important because they can influence the type of anti-corruption policies governments promote, such as civic education or administrative reforms. Some scholars suggest that bureaucratic corruption can become normalized when citizens are socialized into paying bribes to “grease the wheels” of an inefficient bureaucracy.² Individuals might also become desensitized to petty corruption if they believe the practice is widespread—i.e., that “everyone does it.”³ If corruption is so normalized in a society that citizens do not think it is reprehensible at a normative level, a massive civic education campaign is necessary to reduce the level of petty corruption.⁴ However, citizens might perceive bureaucratic corruption as ethically reprehensible but still prefer to deal with a bureaucrat who accepts bribes to speed up their access to services. If that were the case, fighting bureaucratic corruption would require administrative reforms that increase the availability of (and the speed of access to) critical government services. A costly civic education campaign would be ineffective

at reducing petty corruption without addressing the factors that create a strategic preference for bribe-taking bureaucrats. Our study allows us to weigh in on this important question.

In this article, we investigate bureaucratic corruption from the citizens' point of view, including the circumstances under which bureaucratic corruption is accepted and which forms of bureaucratic corruption are more likely to be tolerated. We argue that citizens may tolerate some types of corrupt bureaucratic behavior if they perceive it to be functional. However, a strategic preference for dealing with a corrupt bureaucrat does not imply that individuals approve of bureaucrats who request bribes to do their jobs efficiently. This misalignment between normative evaluations and strategic decisions emanates not from a universal preference for favoritism and arbitrariness, but from a dissatisfaction with bureaucratic inefficiency in a context of low-quality governance. Therefore, we expect that citizens disapprove of all forms of bureaucratic corruption in principle but tolerate a certain type of corruption (what Ang labels "speed money," discussed in more detail below) to overcome the obstacles of inefficient government.⁵

We examine these hypotheses by studying citizen evaluations of public sector employees in Paraguay. A significant proportion of Paraguayans report paying bribes to street-level officials in service delivery positions, with a bribery rate similar to that of other Global South countries (Global Corruption Barometer 2017).⁶ Despite the adoption of civil service reforms in the 2000s, the Paraguayan public administration is still characterized by inefficient policy implementation and inadequate provision of public goods and services.⁷ Paraguay is thus an excellent case to study whether citizens evaluate corruption as functional to low-quality bureaucracies.

We designed an original conjoint experiment and embedded it in an online sample of 3,107 adult Paraguayans between July and August 2021. To analyze preference heterogeneities, we use a priming experiment and heterogenous treatment effects on a matched sample. The empirical analyses lead to three main findings. First, citizens reject promotions for bureaucrats who engage in "petty theft" and "speed money" corruption, which suggests a strong normative condemnation of all forms of bureaucratic corruption. Second, citizens exhibit a slight preference for "speed money" corruption bureaucrats but reject "petty theft" corruption bureaucrats when seeking assistance for a government service, which suggests they engage in strategic calculations when evaluating speed corruption. Third, the tolerance of "speed money" corruption does not depend on perceptions of bureaucratic inefficiency. Rather, the preference for bureaucrats who take bribes to provide timely access to government services is greater among wealthier and more educated respondents.

This article makes three contributions to the comparative literature on corruption. First, it distinguishes between normative and strategic attitudes toward corruption among the mass public. Research on bureaucracies in the developing world sometimes conflates the two types of attitudes, assuming that the prevalence of bribery among frontline service delivery workers implies that citizens seeking access to such services consider corruption to be an acceptable behavior of public servants. We show that while citizens

sometimes opt to deal with a bribe-taking bureaucrat for a government transaction, they might still disapprove of all forms of corruption in principle.

In a second contribution, this article provides experimental evidence of the effects of different forms of corruption that complements prior scholarship which argues that voters sometimes exchange corruption for tangible economic benefits.⁸ This literature is limited to the study of grand corruption involving politicians and candidates running for office; it has overlooked unelected public officials who engage in petty corruption. Yet such petty corruption deserves scholarly attention, as most citizen engagement with the government occurs through day-to-day interactions with public servants.⁹ We fill this gap in the literature by showing that public evaluations of bribery are permeated by the need to overcome the barriers to government services.

Third, this study advances a broader literature that examines the disproportionate effects of corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency on the poor and less educated in the Global South.¹⁰ Drawing on the insight that bribery inflicts more harm on citizens with low socioeconomic status (SES) than the wealthy and powerful, we show that low-SES citizens are also less likely to tolerate corruption in the bureaucracy than the more socioeconomically advantaged. The misalignment between normative and strategic preferences for speed corruption is more evident among individuals who can afford to pay bribes.

Theory: Citizens' Evaluations of Bureaucratic Corruption

Effective public administrations require bureaucratic agencies that recruit based on merit instead of discretionary appointments and foster the equal application of the law rather than favoritism and arbitrariness. Bureaucracies in the developing world depart from this bureaucratic ideal in multiple ways. Their organizational structure is plagued by regulatory overcomplexity and limited interbranch coordination, making them slow and inefficient.¹¹ Public sector jobs also tend to be disproportionately directed to political supporters.¹² Furthermore, the lack of professionalization in the bureaucracy leads to different forms of corruption among public servants, including embezzlement of public funds and demands for bribes to provide services.¹³ These forms of petty corruption can divert essential resources away from public goods and services, and hence directly influence the quality of life for many citizens.

In this article, we subscribe to the classic definition of corruption offered by Nye, which states that “corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains.”¹⁴ In his work on political corruption, Scott argues that large modern bureaucracies in developing countries provide public goods and services that represent valuable commodities to many citizens.¹⁵ Given limited state resources, regulatory complexity, and the lack of a professional bureaucracy, the problem is that demand for government services far outstrips their limited supply. Corruption is therefore an

integral part of the operation of bureaucracies in the developing world, as citizens use their wealth and connections to try to gain access and influence bureaucratic decisions. In Scott's words, corruption in the public sector is expected to flourish "when the formal political system [...] is unable to cope with the scale or the nature of the demands being made on it."¹⁶

This article investigates citizens' attitudes toward bureaucratic corruption by focusing on two different attitudinal outcomes: normative preferences and strategic preferences. The focus on normative preferences allows us to analyze citizens' value judgments regarding the abuse of bureaucratic positions for private gain. The analysis of strategic preferences allows us to assess whether citizens prefer to deal with a corrupt public official in contexts of low bureaucratic efficiency. Examining both attitudes in the same study helps us understand whether strategic and normative preferences move in tandem, or whether a normative condemnation of corruption might be accompanied by tolerance of corruption in practice.¹⁷

Normative evaluations and strategic preferences involve different processes. Norms are value judgments about the socially appropriate course of action or behavior. When people judge behavior, they compare it to a socially defined normative standard.¹⁸ Preferences, by contrast, refer to individual likes and dislikes and are a matter of personal choice about what a person will do in a particular context.¹⁹ Conceptually and empirically, it is helpful to separate norms from preferences. Sometimes they will be aligned, for example if individuals think corruption should be strongly condemned and prefer to deal with honest bureaucrats in their interactions with the government. However, people could also hold norms and preferences that are not aligned. For instance, they could prefer to deal with bribe-taking bureaucrats even if they strongly condemn corruption as an inappropriate behavior of public servants.

The previous literature on patronage and petty corruption in the developing world often fails to distinguish between strategic decisions to pay bribes and value judgments about corrupt bureaucrats. Since ordinary people willingly enter into patronage systems and pay bribes, it is assumed that they find petty corruption acceptable.²⁰ In his classic essay on corruption, Scott states that the average citizen in the developing world "cares a good deal less whether the actions of the [...] bureaucrat conform to standards of due process than whether the outcomes benefit him or not."²¹ This neutral (or even positive) normative evaluation of bribe-accepting public servants is sometimes ascribed to socialization in contexts of high corruption and state inefficiency.²² We are skeptical of the view that citizens find corruption acceptable (or are completely indifferent towards it). There is evidence that citizens in the developing world hold a strong social norm against corruption in principle.²³ Using evidence from regional survey barometers around the world, Rose and Peiffer show that four in five people regard it as unacceptable for a public official to request a bribe.²⁴ Therefore, while people might pay bribes to speed up a government transaction, they likely disapprove of bureaucrats who request bribes.

In the political domain, the literature has revealed a tension between an almost universal rejection of corruption in principle and tolerance for corrupt politicians in practice. For example, a recent study of political corruption in Brazil demonstrates that there

is a divergence between strong anti-corruption norms and continuing electoral support for corrupt mayors who deliver policy benefits.²⁵ In the same vein, it is reasonable to expect that citizens in developing countries may normatively reject all forms of bureaucratic corruption, but strategically tolerate corruption practices that facilitate access to essential services.²⁶

Petty corruption has immediate material consequences for ordinary citizens, since paying a bribe (or failing to do so) can mean essential public services will be granted, denied, or delayed. As Letki et al. explain, petty corruption “yields direct returns such as access to goods and services.”²⁷ Therefore, a focus on frontline bureaucrats is crucial as the effective provision of public services depends on the employees who ultimately deliver these services, which range from health care and education to identity cards and marriage certificates.

To study whether (and when) there is a misalignment between normative evaluations and strategic preferences regarding bureaucratic corruption, we build on Ang’s typology of corruption, which distinguishes between two types of corruption in the bureaucracy: “petty theft” and “speed money.”²⁸ “Petty theft” refers to self-regarding forms of corruption in which public officials act alone to appropriate public funds or divert their use, including “acts of stealing, misuse of public funds, or extortion among street-level bureaucrats.”²⁹ “Speed money” is two-way or transactional corrupt acts that citizens and firms can assume will generate a short-term benefit. This type of corruption involves “petty bribes that businesses or citizens pay to bureaucrats to get around hurdles or speed things up.”³⁰

We contend that a misalignment between normative and strategic attitudes is particularly evident in “speed money” corruption. Public officials engage in this form of corruption when they ask for bribes to speed up access to a service or obtain a document. Where the bureaucracy is inefficient, citizens might tolerate (or even prefer) dealing with bureaucrats who engage in “speed money” corruption. In contexts with high levels of corruption, petty corruption “will be perceived as functional and effective, and thus largely acceptable.”³¹

Experiencing long delays due to bureaucratic inefficiency can represent important costs for citizens who are forced to miss work and forfeit income while they wait their turn in the halls of government agencies.³² When faced with administrative hurdles and long delays, ordinary people in the developing world often draw on money, patronage networks, and status to try to speed up access to essential services.³³ This implies that people living in ineffective states might prefer to deal with a bureaucrat who accepts bribes to facilitate access to services, rather than with a more honest public servant.

We argue that citizens seeking access to government services will strategically accept “speed money” corruption, but normatively and strategically disapprove of “petty theft” corruption. We expect citizens to always evaluate “petty theft” very negatively: it is a clear violation of public trust and brings no benefit to citizens who rely on the public sector to conduct government transactions. On the contrary, stealing public funds has negative welfare consequences because it depletes resources that are necessary to deliver public goods and services. Citizens should therefore strongly disapprove of “petty theft” in the

bureaucracy from a normative standpoint. They should also prefer to avoid dealing with a public official who embezzles funds because this behavior signals that the bureaucrat is untrustworthy and unlikely to be motivated by public service. In sum, normative and strategic preferences move in tandem when citizens evaluate “petty theft” in the bureaucracy.

This discussion yields the following pre-registered hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Citizens in the developing world will reject both “petty theft” corruption and “speed money” corruption when they are asked about their normative evaluations.

Hypothesis 2: Citizens in the developing world will reject “petty theft” corruption but accept “speed money” corruption when they are asked about their strategic preferences.

The disconnect between the normative condemnation of speed-money corruption and the strategic acceptance of this practice might seem puzzling at first. Theories of cognitive dissonance suggest we should see congruence between people’s belief systems and their actions because individuals want to minimize the cognitive discomfort that results from internal inconsistency.³⁴ However, we believe that in contexts where aligning beliefs with behavior can be costly (e.g., authoritarian regimes) or inefficient (e.g., dysfunctional bureaucracies), citizens can often separate abstract values (corruption is bad) from strategic actions (bribes are necessary to access a service). Known in cognitive psychology as mental partitioning, this strategy can help individuals organize information, manage complexity, avoid cognitive dissonance, and adapt to different contexts.³⁵ For instance, in his study of public opinion in the Soviet Union, Shlapentokh reveals a disjunction between the belief systems of socialist workers (e.g., contempt for the free market) and the survival strategies they adopted in their everyday lives (e.g., participation in the black market to access essential goods).³⁶ These inconsistencies are ascribed by Shlapentokh to the disconnect between the “pragmatic” and the “theoretical” (or “mythological”) layers of the individual mind.

In a similar vein, our main argument is that in contexts of bureaucratic inefficiency, people are more likely to pragmatically accept “speed money” corruption in their daily interactions with the bureaucracy, even if they reject this practice from a normative standpoint. An important implication of this argument is that bureaucratic sclerosis leads citizens to accept dealing with bribe-taking public servants because it shapes their perceptions of how long and tedious it can be to access public services through formal channels. However, it is important to keep in mind that bureaucratic hurdles are not experienced in the same way by all citizens in developing countries. Depending on the frequency, recency, and types of encounters with bureaucratic agencies, citizens should have different perceptions of bureaucratic inefficiency, which will moderate their attitudes toward bureaucratic corruption.

The theoretical expectation regarding normative evaluations is that citizens will reject both types of corruption regardless of their perceptions of bureaucratic inefficiency. As we argued above, this across-the-board rejection is predicated on the well-known fact that citizens hold a strong social norm against all types of corruption in principle.

We have different expectations regarding strategic preferences. On the one hand, citizens who perceive bureaucratic inefficiency to be greater should be more likely to express a strategic preference for “speed money” corrupt officials in order to obtain government documents in a timelier manner. On the other hand, citizens’ strategic rejection of bureaucrats who engage in petty theft should not be influenced by perceptions of bureaucratic inefficiency.

Hypothesis 3: Perceptions of higher levels of bureaucratic inefficiency will not affect citizens’ acceptance of “speed money” or “petty theft” corruption when they are asked about their normative evaluations.

Hypothesis 4: Perceptions of higher levels of bureaucratic inefficiency will lead to greater acceptance of “speed money” but not of “petty theft” corruption when citizens are asked about their *strategic* preferences.

Research Design

The Case of Paraguay Paraguay is an ideal setting in which to explore public assessments of corrupt bureaucratic behavior for three main reasons. First, corruption is sufficiently widespread to make our treatments credible. Paraguay has one of the highest levels of corruption victimization in Latin America (AmericasBarometer 2018/19) and has bribery rates similar to those in other Global South countries.³⁷ Paraguay is ranked 128th among 180 countries in the 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, scoring 30 on a 0–100 scale where 100 signifies the least corruption. This score places Paraguay near the Global South average of 31, indicating that its corruption level is typical for the Global South, not an outlier. Second, corruption in Paraguay does not only involve elected officials; it also includes appointed public sector employees, especially street-level officials in service delivery positions, who are the focus of our conjoint experiment. Paraguayans report high corruption victimization in their dealings with local government employees, the judicial system, and the agency in charge of producing identity cards and passports.³⁸ Bribery is also widespread in the public health and public education systems. In other words, it is common for Paraguayan citizens to pay bribes to process documents or receive a public service. In fact, for a typical employee to receive a bribe to accelerate a government transaction is “the way of doing things in the public sector.”³⁹

Third, bureaucratic performance is perceived to be inefficient, slow, and politicized in Paraguay despite the adoption of civil service reforms. While the presidency of Fernando Lugo (2008–2012) marked the end of sixty-one years of government by the Colorado Party and advanced the professionalization of the bureaucracy, reforms of the public administration have been limited.⁴⁰ During the Lugo administration, competitive appointments of public officials were mostly focused on technical rather than service or managerial positions and involved only a minority of vacancies and institutions.⁴¹

Thus, some still characterize Paraguay as a neopatrimonial state in which the majority of appointments, promotions, and salaries are decided based on political loyalties.⁴² As a result, the weak Paraguayan public administration suffers from inefficient policy-making and implementation as well as the inadequate provision of essential public services. The 2019 Worldwide Governance Indicators data demonstrate the low quality of public administration. Paraguay received a score of -0.55 on the “government effectiveness” indicator that ranges from -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong) governance performance, one of the lowest scores in South America (the average for the region is -0.18).⁴³

Survey Design To examine how citizens evaluate corrupt bureaucratic behavior, we conducted a preregistered conjoint experiment in Paraguay in July–August 2021 (see Appendix K for details). The experiment was embedded in an original online survey implemented by Offerwise, a professional market research firm with ample experience in Latin America. They recruited the respondents (3,107) from their proprietary list of Paraguayan panelists through email invitations (see Appendix A for more details about the sample design). To generate a sample that looks like the Paraguayan population, we adopted quotas for age, gender, and education. In Appendix B, we compare the distribution of the demographic variables in our sample to those of population-level variables for which comparable data are available. As is often the case with online surveys, our sample is slightly younger and more educated than the national population. In Appendix I, we use representative matching to correct imbalances in the sample, and this correction does not affect the main conclusions of the study.⁴⁴

Conjoint Experiment We use a choice-based conjoint design to study the factors that shape tolerance or rejection of corruption in the public sector. This design allows us to study the multidimensional preferences underlying a citizen’s choice while reducing social desirability bias. Prior research has used conjoint analyses to assess citizens’ preferences about candidates, migrants, and public officials.⁴⁵ Choice-based designs help reduce social desirability bias since respondents evaluate profiles with multiple attributes, which makes it harder for respondents to guess the subject of the researchers’ investigations—and thus less likely that they will refrain from endorsing a controversial (or socially undesirable) trait.⁴⁶ This last point is particularly relevant since survey experiments usually overestimate people’s punishment for corruption due to social desirability bias.⁴⁷ Conjoint experiments have also been shown to have high external validity when comparing their results to behavioral benchmarks,⁴⁸ and these designs have been used in both developed and developing countries.⁴⁹

The participants in our conjoint experiment were asked to evaluate different pairs of public employees who randomly varied in their corruption record. We focus on two plausible corrupt practices: speed and theft corruption.⁵⁰ For the first treatment (*speed*), the public official has received bribes to speed up the processing of documents, or they have not. For the second treatment (*theft*), the public official has diverted public funds

Table 1 List of Public Officials’ Attributes

Attributes	Values
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes to speed up the processing of documents. Has received bribes to speed up the processing of documents.
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds to his/her bank account. Has diverted public funds to his/her bank account.
Gender	Man Woman
Party ID	Partido Colorado Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico No party affiliation
Age	30 years old 40 years old 50 years old
Education	Primary education Secondary education College education

to their bank account, or they have not. We also include other relevant characteristics to generate profiles that resemble real public officials, but we do not have theoretical expectations for their effects. These are bureaucrats’ age (thirty, forty, or fifty years old),⁵¹ gender (man or woman), education (primary, secondary, or college), and party affiliation (Colorado Party, Liberal Party, or no party affiliation). Table 1 provides the full list of attributes used to generate the set of hypothetical public employees. The order of attributes was fully randomized in every public employee profile. Since survey participants evaluated five pairs of bureaucrats, we cluster the standard errors at the respondent level.

To measure normative evaluations, we asked respondents to select which public officials should be promoted to a higher position in the Civil Registry. In this hypothetical situation, we expect survey participants to base their choices on the criteria of an ideal bureaucrat, someone deserving of a promotion or whose behavior is normatively acceptable. We know that workplace promotions serve as encouragement to workers who merit better employment conditions, such as increases to wages and benefits or a higher rank within an organization. In a bureaucracy, this means advancement to a higher-level job and possibly more responsibility. Responses to this question will thus capture normative assessments of the hypothetical public official’s behavior and performance.

To measure strategic preferences, we put respondents in a hypothetical scenario in which they need a certificate promptly and must select which official can help them. Therefore, the choice of a public official directly translates into positive or negative returns for the respondent, who is a potential service user (e.g., obtaining the needed documentation in time or not). This question also captures the strategic dimension of seeking a personal benefit since we ask respondents to think about who will help them (personally) rather than who will be faster (on average). If, for instance, survey respondents are more likely to select a bribe-taking public official, that decision implies a

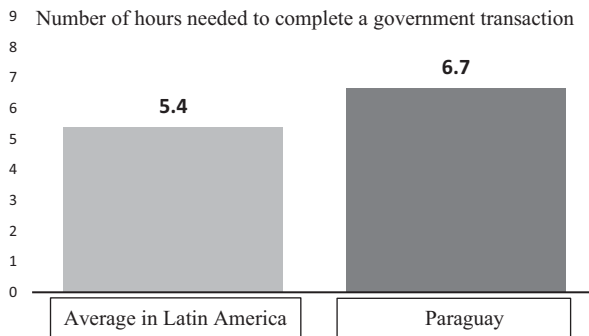
willingness to pay a bribe to obtain a certificate on time (otherwise the preference for a bribe-taking public official is meaningless). It is therefore a quintessentially strategic decision rather than a simple perception of which bureaucrat processes documents more rapidly.

To connect our design to the hypotheses, we expect survey respondents to reject bureaucrats who engage in “petty theft” when asked about their normative and strategic preferences. Meanwhile, we expect survey participants to reject “petty theft” but to prefer “speed money” corruption when asked about their strategic preferences.

To analyze the conjoint experiment, we provide the marginal means (MM)—the percentage of times that survey participants chose profiles containing that attribute level, averaged across all other attribute levels.⁵² Therefore, the MM of each attribute level can be interpreted as the probability of preferring a public official with that characteristic. An MM equal to 0.5 represents indifference (50% probability of being chosen in a pair comparison). Values above 0.5 indicate favorability, and those below 0.5 denote unfavorability for the given attribute level.⁵³ In Appendix E, we report the results when estimating the average marginal component effect (AMCE), which represents the average difference in the probability of being preferred between two different attribute values.⁵⁴ We provide the MMs because they do not require preferences to be expressed against a baseline such as the AMCE. However, the results are consistent across both parameters of interest (i.e., MM and AMCE).

Perceptions of Inefficiency We use a pre-registered survey experiment to prime survey respondents to think about the inefficiency of the bureaucracy in Paraguay. Just before the conjoint experiment was introduced, participants in the treatment group were randomly primed with the following sentence and figure (Figure 1): “According to multiple international reports, the Paraguayan bureaucracy has been characterized as slow

Figure 1 Priming Experiment



Source: Inter-American Development Bank.

and inefficient, occupying one of the last places in the region.” The control group was not exposed to any prime.

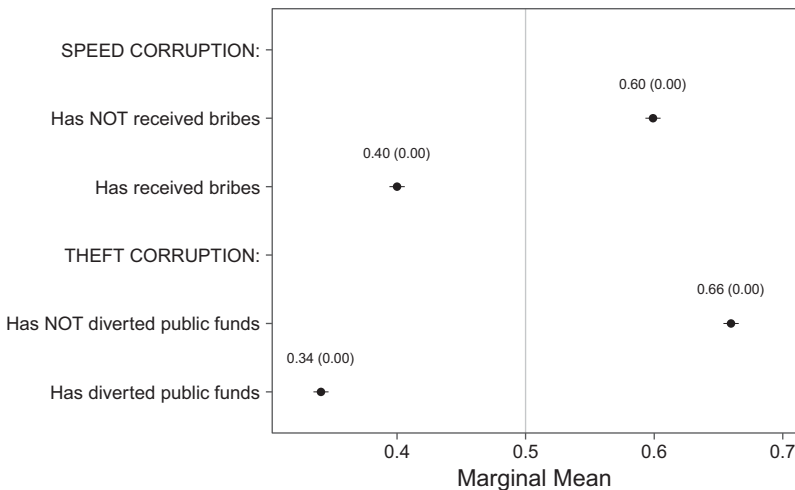
We also used a direct question to capture perceptions of inefficiency before the priming and conjoint experiment as a robustness check. Due to space constraints, we present this additional pre-registered analysis in the Appendix (see Appendix C).

Results Conjoint Experiment

Figure 2 displays the effect of speed and theft corruption on the normative outcome: preference for promotion (Hypothesis 1). The dots indicate the probability of being preferred, and the lines denote 95% confidence intervals. We provide the point estimates and the standard errors in parentheses for the attributes of interest (speed and theft corruption). Appendix D reports the results of the other attributes.

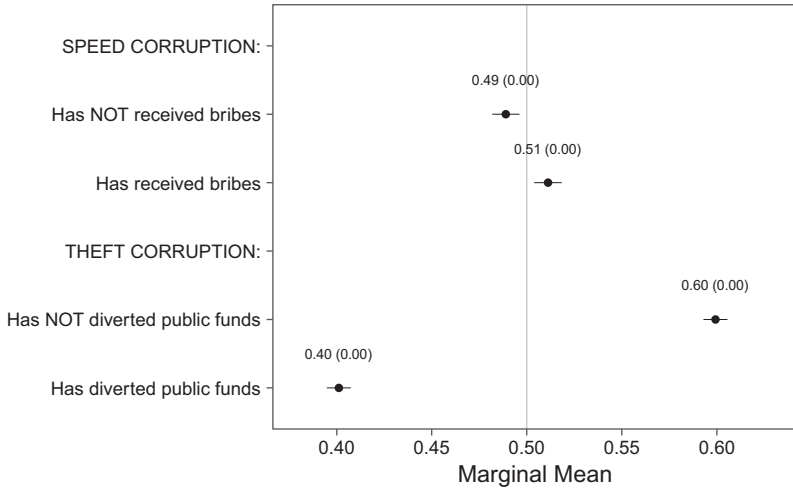
When selecting bureaucrats for promotion (normative outcome), the results demonstrate that bureaucrats who do not receive bribes have a probability of 0.6 of being preferred; those who do accept bribes have a probability of 0.4. Additionally, bureaucrats who have not diverted funds have a probability of 0.66 of being preferred, and those who have done so have a probability of 0.34. These findings confirm Hypothesis 1—that citizens in the developing world reject both “petty theft” corruption and “speed money” corruption when asked about their normative preferences. The point estimates for speed and theft corruption are the largest; preferences for college-educated public officials come next with a 0.54 probability (see Appendix D).

Figure 2 Probability of Being Preferred (Normative Outcome: Promotion)



Full results are reported in Appendix D.

Figure 3 Probability of Being Preferred (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)



Full results are reported in Appendix D.

Figure 3 plots the effect of speed and theft corruption on the strategic outcome: preference for assistance in government transactions (Hypothesis 2).

When selecting bureaucrats for assistance (strategic outcome), the results show that bureaucrats who do not accept bribes have a probability of 0.49 of being preferred; those who do accept bribes have a probability of 0.51.⁵⁵ Bureaucrats who have not diverted public funds have a probability of 0.60 of being preferred, and those who have done so have a probability of 0.40. These findings confirm Hypothesis 2 since Paraguayans do not just tolerate, but are slightly more likely to select, a bureaucrat involved in “speed money” corruption when asked about their strategic preferences. However, they punish officials involved in petty theft in a way that is very consistent with what we observed in the evaluation of normative outcomes.

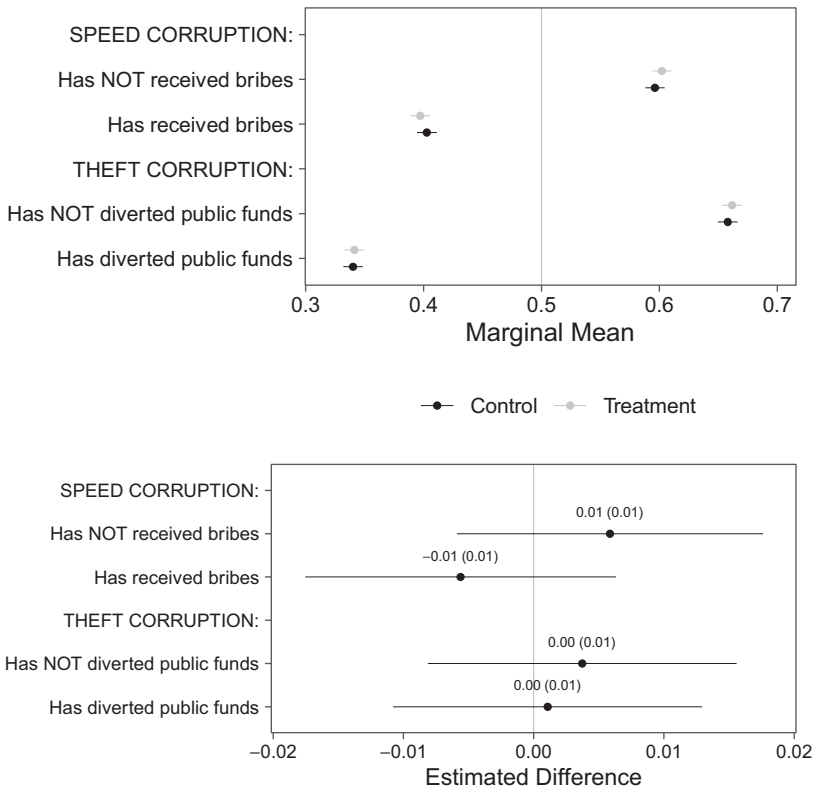
Since the probability of preferring a bribe-taking bureaucrat increases substantially from 0.40 when considering the normative outcome to 0.51 when considering the strategic outcome, the effect sizes of selecting a bribe-taking bureaucrat depend on the point of comparison. They are substantive and significant when comparing normative and strategic outcomes and small (but significant) when comparing bribe and non-bribe takers within the strategic outcome. The point estimates for theft corruption are the largest, and those for speed corruption are the same as preferring women and larger than selecting thirty year olds, forty year olds, and officials with a secondary education. In Appendix F, we provide diagnostics for the conjoint experiment. In Appendix G, we correct for the multiple comparisons problem, a common concern when evaluating multiple hypotheses.

Perceptions of Inefficiency

To measure how perceptions of inefficiency can affect the outcomes, we use the priming experiment described earlier. Figure 4 provides the conditional marginal means for the normative outcome for the treatment and control groups at the top and the difference between the groups at the bottom. Figure 5 does the same for the strategic outcome.

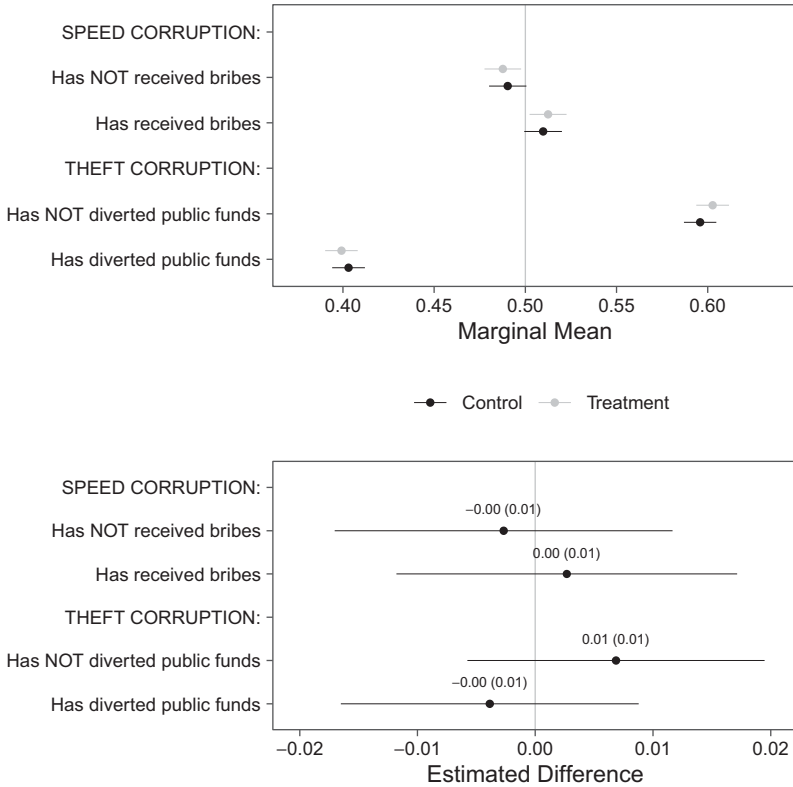
The results show that there is no distinction in favorability between speed and theft corruption when comparing the control and treatment groups or when using both outcomes (i.e., normative and strategic). None of the estimated differences is distinguishable from zero.⁵⁶

Figure 4 Conditional Marginal Means for Priming Experiment (Normative Outcome: Promotion)



Full results are reported in Appendix D.

Figure 5 Conditional Marginal Means for Priming Experiment (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)



Full results are reported in Appendix D.

These findings provide support for Hypothesis 3 but not Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 3 posited that the normative rejection of both types of corruption would be independent of perceptions of (in)efficiency. The evidence is consistent with this expectation; petty corruption is always rejected at the normative level, even by respondents who perceive the bureaucracy as inefficient. Hypothesis 4, by contrast, posited that the strategic acceptance of “speed money” corruption (not “petty theft” corruption) would be stronger among those who perceive the public administration to be slow and inefficient. We do not find evidence that respondents who perceive the bureaucracy as more inefficient (or those who are primed to think about bureaucratic inefficiency) have a stronger preference for speed corruption when seeking timely government assistance. That is, the strategic acceptance of a bribe-taking bureaucrat does not depend on perceptions of inefficiency.

Exploring Alternative Mechanisms

The results of our conjoint experiment provide partial support for our hypotheses. They confirm our theoretical intuition that citizens in a developing country prefer to deal with bribe-taking bureaucrats when conducting a government transaction (while rejecting all forms of corruption from a normative standpoint). However, we do not have enough evidence to confirm that tolerance of “speed money” corruption is higher among citizens who perceive the bureaucracy as more inefficient.

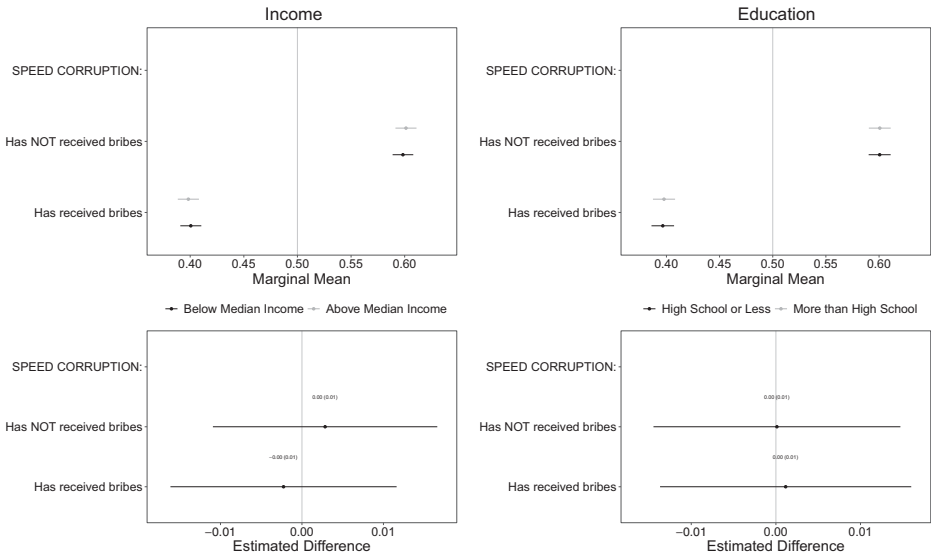
To identify which factors might drive tolerance of (or a preference for) “speed money” corruption in the Global South, we return to our experimental results and conduct a few additional analyses to assess whether individuals with a higher SES are more likely to express a strategic preference for bribe-taking bureaucrats. Simply put, we compare how respondents with more and less education and income evaluate public officials.⁵⁷

These analyses were not pre-registered and are therefore more exploratory in nature. However, these additional analyses are informed by previous studies on bureaucratic corruption in the developing world. In particular, the ethnographic literature on bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption demonstrates that individuals experience this phenomenon differently depending on their socioeconomic status. In a nutshell, slow and corrupt bureaucracies disproportionately affect the poor.⁵⁸ When bureaucracies are slow and inefficient, time-starved citizens use their money, influence, and connections to try to circumvent lines and speed up access to government services.⁵⁹ Poor people lack those resources and are generally unable to pay bribes during government transactions.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, officers demand bribes more frequently from the poor, as they are seen as more vulnerable and less likely to report corruption.⁶¹ This leads to a diminished form of citizenship for poor citizens, who face long administrative delays that are not experienced by wealthier or better-connected citizens.⁶²

It is therefore mostly poor people who wait in line; wealthier citizens can pay bribes to access government services and obtain preferential treatment.⁶³ This might lead to a bifurcation in attitudes toward “speed money” corruption. On the one hand, citizens with sufficient financial means might appreciate and take advantage of the opportunity to pay bribes to speed up their access to public services. On the other hand, poorer people do not accept “speed money” corruption because they cannot afford to pay bribes. If this exploratory hypothesis is correct, we should observe that high-SES citizens in the developing world are more likely to accept “speed money” corruption than their less wealthy and less educated counterparts.

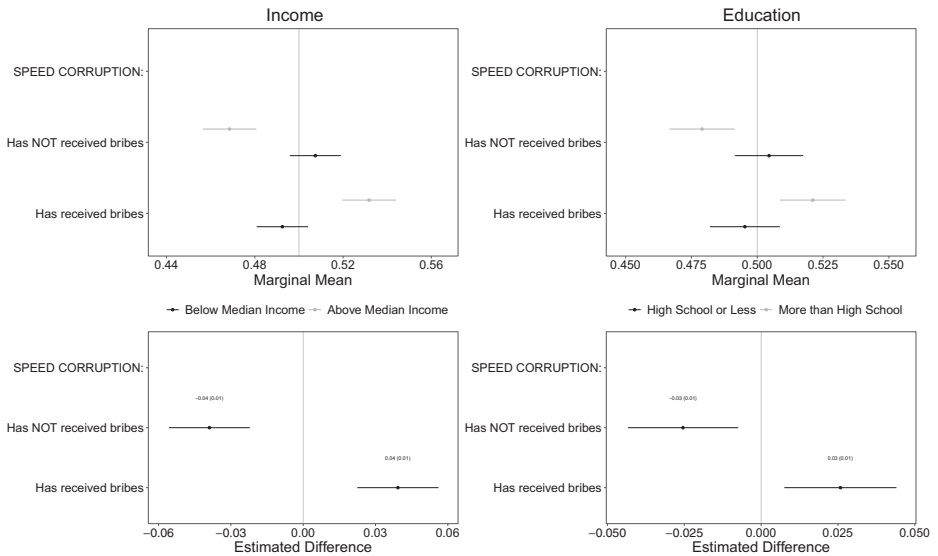
In this analysis we focus on the attribute of interest: speed corruption. Figures 6 and 7 display the results for the normative and strategic outcomes, respectively. Each is divided into two main columns: the first column reports the results for heterogenous effects based on income (1: above median income, 0: below median income), and the second column presents the results for heterogenous effects based on education (1: more than high school, 0: high school or less). The top row provides the conditional marginal means for each subgroup, and the bottom row shows the differential effects.

Figure 6 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Income and Education (Normative Outcome: Promotion)



Full results are reported in Appendix J.

Figure 7 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Income and Education (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)



Full results are reported in Appendix J.

We find that respondents with a higher income and a higher level of education are more likely to prefer bureaucrats who engage in speed corruption than respondents with a lower income and a lower level of education; the difference between these groups is significant. Therefore, these results show that SES is a significant factor associated with greater favorability toward speed corruption. High-SES respondents who can afford to pay bribes to overcome the barriers to accessing public services are more accepting of bribe-taking public servants when asked about their strategic preferences. By contrast, low-SES respondents do not report greater acceptance of bribe-taking bureaucrats and appear to be indifferent between officials who accept bribes and those who do not.

To sum up, our results show that people can have conflicting views about what makes a good public official. Our analysis shows that respondents with above-median income are more likely to say that bribe-taking is wrong but view speed money corruption as okay. While Figure 6 shows that above-median-income respondents reward non-bribe-taking public officials, Figure 7 shows that they prefer bribe-taking officials when necessary.

Conclusion

Past research on citizens' evaluations of corruption in the developing world has focused overwhelmingly on political corruption. Political scientists have extensively analyzed the circumstances under which citizens hold corrupt politicians accountable. This article focuses instead on citizens' perceptions of corruption in the bureaucracy. While "grand corruption" might be far removed from individuals' daily lives, citizens of many developing countries directly experience "petty corruption" in the public sector. It is therefore important to understand how citizens evaluate these forms of corruption that plague service delivery in bureaucratic agencies in the developing world.

We argue that there is an important—but often overlooked—distinction between citizens' normative evaluations and strategic preferences for corruption in the bureaucracy. While citizens always perceive petty corruption as inappropriate and undesirable, they sometimes strategically accept forms of corruption that can speed up access to government transactions. The results of our conjoint survey experiment in Paraguay support our theoretical expectations.

An important caveat is in order. We argue that individuals who seek to speed up government transactions may perceive "speed money" corruption as effective. However, we do not maintain that petty corruption and the widespread use of bribes improve efficiency at the systemic level by "greasing the wheels" of a rigid bureaucracy.⁶⁴ On the contrary, previous studies have shown that bureaucrats can deliberately cause administrative delays to attract more bribes. In other words, corrupt officials might create 'red tape' to encourage bribery.⁶⁵ More generally, it has been demonstrated that corruption reduces bureaucratic efficiency.⁶⁶ However, citizens in the developing world who want to conduct a government transaction or access a public service have to deal with the deficient public sectors that exist in their countries. In these contexts, time-starved

individuals might prefer to deal with bureaucrats who can be bribed in order to avoid greater delays, even when the systemic costs are unmistakable.

Some readers might be more sanguine than we are about the normative implications of “speed money” corruption. After all, there are plenty of legal ways for citizens in wealthy democracies with well-functioning bureaucracies to have access to faster/premium services (e.g., expedited processing of documents) by paying more. These legal surcharges and upcharges in interactions with the bureaucracy are relatively well tolerated. Citizens in countries where these legal pathways to preferential treatment are not available might perceive bribes as the functional equivalent and accept them as a fact of life. Scott makes a very similar point when he argues that governments that provide legal ways for wealth to influence government decisions “often simply institutionalize a transaction between wealth and power that occurs illegally under a more restrictive set of rules.”⁶⁷ We are skeptical about this line of reasoning for several reasons. First, bribes are very different from legal fees for expedited services in that they generate a lot of uncertainty and unpredictability in citizens’ encounters with street-level bureaucrats. This might lead to negative interactions with the government even for those who can afford to pay a bribe. Second, the legal fees paid for premium services increase government revenues and can be used to improve the quality of public service delivery for all citizens. By contrast, the illegal bribes paid to speed up access to government services in the Global South allow public servants to line up their pockets with no positive externality for the population at large. Third, our empirical results clearly suggest that citizens in Paraguay see all forms of petty corruption as morally reprehensible; even though they might on occasion accept to pay bribes to speed up access to services in a sclerotic bureaucracy. In sum, we think that providing legal and transparent ways for faster access to government services is not the equivalent of (and would be much preferable to) a “black-market bureaucracy” that relies on bribes for preferential treatment.⁶⁸

One of the most surprising findings of our article is that the strategic acceptance of “speed-money” corruption does not depend on perceptions of inefficiency. What should we make of these results? We believe it would be premature to conclude that bureaucratic inefficiency and acceptance of bribe-taking public servants are entirely unrelated. Our conjoint experiment was conducted in a context of high bureaucratic inefficiency. Our priming experiment was designed to make the issue of bureaucratic inefficiency more salient for treated individuals, but the priming treatment might not be very effective if respondents in the control group also had recent negative experiences with a rigid and slow bureaucracy. It might well be the case that our design is not ideally suited to test the link between (perceived) bureaucratic inefficiency and evaluations of bureaucratic corruption because the de facto inefficiency in Paraguay shapes the perceptions of the entire sample. We therefore think that the evidence presented in this article is not yet conclusive, and more research is necessary to assess the link between bureaucratic inefficiency and attitudes towards corruption using alternative research designs. For instance, scholars could conduct an experiment similar to ours in high- and low-bureaucratic efficiency contexts simultaneously to assess whether there is less tolerance for bribe-taking public servants in contexts where the bureaucracy is more efficient. Another possibility

would be to assess whether an efficiency shock in a particular context in the developing world (e.g., a bureaucratic reform that rapidly increases bureaucratic capacity and speed) leads to changes in attitudes towards bureaucratic corruption. We invite other scholars to join us in this effort to investigate this important question.

Our results have critical policy implications. International organizations and foreign aid agencies based in wealthy countries often focus their energy and resources on building a constituency for the rule of law and the fight against corruption in countries in the Global South.⁶⁹ An assumption underlying these efforts is that citizens in developing countries have internalized corruption in public administration to such an extent that they do not see it as morally reprehensible. A large civic education campaign is therefore perceived as necessary to enlighten citizens about the ills of government and bureaucratic corruption. To paraphrase V. O. Key's famous assertion about voters, our results show that citizens in the Global South "are not fools."⁷⁰ Bureaucratic corruption in all its manifestations elicits a strong normative condemnation. This suggests that most citizens are aware that bureaucratic corruption is reprehensible and should be combatted. Citizens tolerate "speed money" corruption and are willing to pay bribes when they have the means to do so, especially in the Global South where bureaucracies are inefficient and government transactions take a long time.

Hence, solely relying on anti-corruption civic education campaigns aimed at increasing awareness of corruption may prove insufficient to effectively control corruption. Governments (and international organizations) that want to fight petty corruption in the developing world should consider directing their resources towards comprehensive administrative reforms. These reforms should prioritize expediting access to government services, minimizing human discretion, and enhancing transparency throughout governmental procedures.⁷¹ Government transactions should be made as fast and frictionless as possible to eliminate one of the key reasons that citizens tolerate (or even prefer) "speed money" corruption. For instance, bureaucratic efficiency could be enhanced by increasing the use of technology in public administration and offering more services online.⁷²

Our findings also have implications for our understanding of democratic citizenship in highly unequal contexts in the Global South. The link between economic inequality and uneven political influence is well understood. In settings where inequality is high, low-SES individuals tend to participate less in politics, which generates unequal political influence as elected officials pay more heed to those who are politically engaged.⁷³ This leads to a diminished form of citizenship for those who lack economic resources. Our results suggest that this pattern is compounded by their unequal ability to navigate corrupt and inefficient bureaucracies. In the developing world, individuals who are well connected and relatively wealthy can circumvent cumbersome bureaucracies by paying bribes to street-level bureaucrats to speed up government transactions. By contrast, poor people are "patients of the state" who must endure long waits in bureaucratic offices.⁷⁴ Their lack of political influence in turn makes it less likely that politicians will respond to (often muted) demands for administrative efficiency. In sum, our research suggests that economic inequality, political inequality, and inequality in access to government services are inextricably linked.

NOTES

Authors are listed in alphabetical order. We thank Daniel Biggers, Virginia Oliveros, Nara Pavão, Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro, and seminar participants at the University of Gothenburg, UC Riverside, REPAL, and APSA for valuable comments and suggestions. All procedures were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of the University of Kansas (STUDY00147407), the University of California, Riverside (HS-21-107), and Purdue University (IRB-2021-879). The design was registered at Evidence in Governance and Politics. This project was funded by a grant provided by the National Council of Science and Technology of Paraguay (CONACYT). All errors are our own.

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APPENDIX

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Appendix A: Sample Design

Offerwise fielded the survey experiment between July 13 and August 29, 2021. It emailed 6,556 invitations to Paraguayans aged 18 and over; 4,042 responded to the invitation and 3,107 successfully completed the survey. Offerwise's proprietary consumer panel in Paraguay is built and maintained using social media and TV ads. The e-mail invitations detailed how long the survey would take and how many points respondents would earn from completing the survey; these points can be converted into local currency. After giving their consent, respondents were directed to the online survey, and they responded to demographic and public opinion questions before participating in our conjoint experiment. This study did not use deception, and the identities of all participants were kept anonymous. All procedures were reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Boards of the authors' respective institutions.

Appendix B: Survey Sample Representativeness

Table A1 shows the comparison of the sample and population distributions of available data on age, gender, and education. We evaluate the representativeness of our sample against two population benchmarks: the nationally representative in-person sample of the 2018 Paraguayan Household Survey (2018 Encuesta Permanente de Hogares) and the nationally representative survey of the 2021 AmericasBarometer conducted via telephone (2021 Latin American Public Opinion Project). While the gender makeup of our sample is similar to that of the national population, our respondents are slightly younger

Table A1 Comparison of Sample and Population Distributions of Age, Sex, and Education

Demographic	Subgroup	EPH	LAPOP	Sample
Age	18–24 years	0.20	0.22	0.39
	25–34 years	0.23	0.24	0.36
	35–44 years	0.21	0.19	0.16
	45–54 years	0.15	0.15	0.06
	55 years and over	0.21	0.19	0.02
Sex	Female	0.50	0.50	0.50
	Male	0.50	0.50	0.50
Education	None	0.01	0.03	0.00
	Primary	0.41	0.31	0.06
	Secondary	0.33	0.46	0.48
	Post-secondary or more	0.25	0.20	0.46

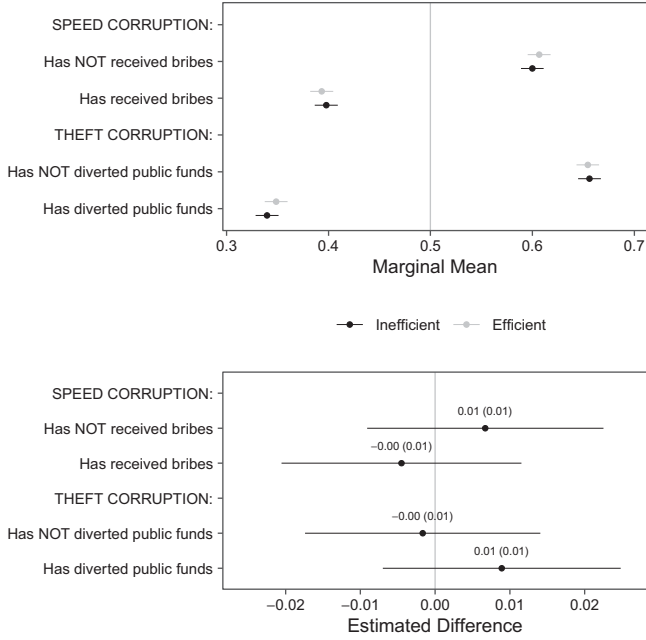
than those in the 2018 EPH and 2021 LAPOP. Our sample differs most from the national population with respect to education: it overrepresents respondents with a secondary education or more, and underrepresents those with only a primary education.

Appendix C: Perception of Inefficiency (Direct Question)

Design We used a pre-registered direct question to capture perceptions of inefficiency before the priming and conjoint experiment as a robustness check to the priming experiment presented in the paper. However, exploring heterogeneous treatment effects based on observed covariates presents challenges. Since the covariate used in the interaction (i.e., perceptions of inefficiency) was not randomized, we cannot make causal claims because this characteristic could indicate pretreatment differences among subjects rather than the reason why they exhibit different responses to the treatment (Gerber and Green 2012). When we compare the group of respondents with efficient and inefficient perceptions, we found imbalances between both groups in terms of their age, gender, and education. To mitigate the consequences of this problem, we use cardinality matching to generate a group of respondents with efficiency and inefficiency perceptions with a similar distribution of gender, age, and education (Zubizarreta, Paredes, and Rosenbaum 2014; Visconti and Zubizarreta 2018).¹ This matching procedure decreases the (observed) differences between these two groups, making them as comparable as possible (Stuart 2010; Rosenbaum 2010). After this statistical adjustment, we know that any heterogeneous effect we observe cannot be explained by differences in age, gender, or education (see Appendix H for details). We acknowledge that matching is not an identification strategy (Sekhon 2009), and that hidden biases can still be present after addressing overt biases (Rosenbaum, 2010).

Results

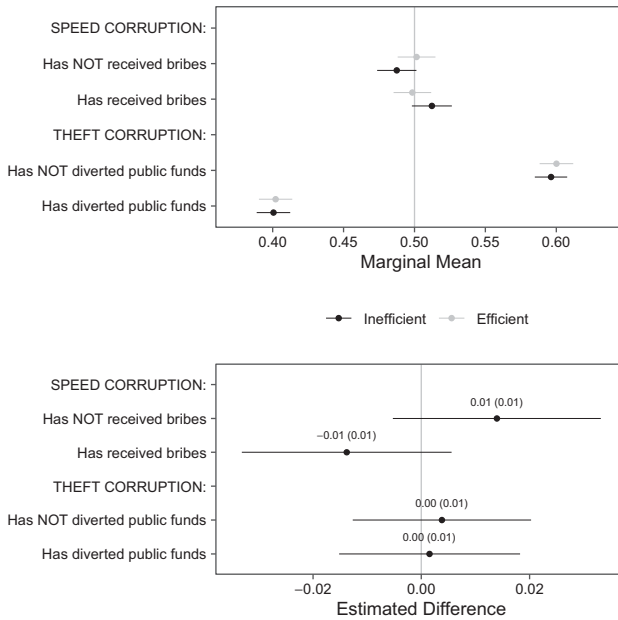
Figure A1 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Normative Outcome: Promotion). Full results are reported in Appendix D.



NOTE

1. We use matching to address an unanticipated problem; therefore, this is a deviation from the pre-analysis plan. See Appendix K for more details.

Figure A2 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Strategic Outcome: Assistance). Full results are reported in Appendix D.



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Appendix D: Marginal Means Results

Tables A2 and A3 report the main results from the paper when using MMs in table format by including estimates, standard errors, and 95% confidence intervals for all the attribute levels included in the conjoint analysis.

Table A2 Probability of Being Preferred (Normative Outcome: Promotion)

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	[0.39-0.41]
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	[0.59-0.61]
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.34	0.00	[0.33-0.35]
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.00	[0.65-0.67]
Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	[0.51-0.52]
Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	[0.48-0.49]
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.54	0.00	[0.53-0.55]
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	0.47	0.00	[0.46-0.48]
Partisanship	Colorado Party	0.48	0.00	[0.47-0.49]
Age	50 years old	0.49	0.00	[0.48-0.50]
Age	40 years old	0.50	0.00	[0.49-0.51]
Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	[0.50-0.52]
Education	Primary education	0.45	0.00	[0.44-0.46]
Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.00	[0.49-0.51]
Education	College education	0.55	0.00	[0.54-0.56]

Note: 31,070 observations. Expansion of results reported in Figure 2.

Table A3 Probability of Being Preferred (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.51	0.00	[0.51,0.52]
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.49	0.00	[0.48,0.50]
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.00	[0.39,0.41]
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.00	[0.59,0.61]
Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	[0.51,0.52]
Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	[0.48,0.49]
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.00	[0.52,0.53]
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	0.48	0.00	[0.47,0.49]
Partisanship	Colorado Party	0.49	0.00	[0.48,0.50]
Age	50 years old	0.49	0.00	[0.48,0.50]
Age	40 years old	0.51	0.00	[0.50,0.52]
Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	[0.50,0.51]
Education	Primary education	0.46	0.00	[0.45,0.47]
Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.00	[0.49,0.51]
Education	College education	0.54	0.00	[0.53,0.55]

Note: 31,070 observations. Expansion of results reported in Figure 3.

Table A4 Conditional Marginal Means for Priming Experiment (Normative Outcome: Promotion).

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Control	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	(0.39, 0.41)
Control	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.60)
Control	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.34	0.00	(0.33, 0.35)
Control	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.00	(0.65, 0.67)
Control	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	(0.51, 0.52)
Control	Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.54)
Control	Partisanship	Liberal/Radical/Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
Control	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Control	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Control	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Control	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.00	(0.44, 0.46)
Control	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Control	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
Treatment	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	(0.39, 0.41)
Treatment	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.61)
Treatment	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.34	0.00	(0.33, 0.35)
Treatment	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.00	(0.65, 0.67)
Treatment	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
Treatment	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Treatment	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.55	0.01	(0.53, 0.56)
Treatment	Partisanship	Liberal/Radical/Auténtico party	0.46	0.01	(0.45, 0.48)
Treatment	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Treatment	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)

(Continued)

Table A4 (Continued)

Treatment	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Treatment	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Treatment	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.00	(0.44, 0.46)
Treatment	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Treatment	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
Treatment - Control	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	-0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Gender	Woman	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Gender	Man	-0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Age	50 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Age	40 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Age	30 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Education	Primary education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Education	Secondary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Education	College education	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)

Note: 31,070 observations (Control: 15430 and Treatment: 15640). Expansion of results reported in Figure 4.

Table A5 Conditional Marginal Means for Priming Experiment (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Control	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Control	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.00	(0.39, 0.41)
Control	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.60)
Control	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Control	Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Control	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
Control	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Control	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Control	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.51)
Control	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.00	(0.44, 0.46)
Control	Education	Secondary education	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Control	Education	College education	0.54	0.01	(0.53, 0.55)
Treatment	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Treatment	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Treatment	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.00	(0.39, 0.41)
Treatment	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.61)
Treatment	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Treatment	Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Treatment	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Treatment	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.48)
Treatment	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.00	(0.49, 0.50)
Treatment	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)

(Continued)

Table A5 (Continued)

Treatment	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	0.49, 0.52)
Treatment	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Treatment	Education	Primary education	0.47	0.00	(0.46, 0.48)
Treatment	Education	Secondary education	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Treatment	Education	College education	0.54	0.01	(0.53, 0.55)
Treatment - Control	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Gender	Woman	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Gender	Man	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Age	50 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Age	40 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Treatment - Control	Age	30 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Treatment - Control	Education	Primary education	0.02	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Treatment - Control	Education	Secondary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Treatment - Control	Education	College education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)

Note: 31,070 observations (Control: 15430 and Treatment: 15640). Expansion of results reported in Figure 5.

Table A6 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Normative Outcome: Promotion)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Inefficient	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
Inefficient	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
Inefficient	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.34	0.01	(0.33, 0.35)
Inefficient	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.01	(0.64, 0.67)
Inefficient	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Inefficient	Gender	Man	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
Inefficient	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.55	0.01	(0.53, 0.56)
Inefficient	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
Inefficient	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.48)
Inefficient	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
Inefficient	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Inefficient	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Inefficient	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.01	(0.44, 0.46)
Inefficient	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)
Inefficient	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.57)
Efficient	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.39	0.01	(0.38, 0.40)
Efficient	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.61	0.01	(0.60, 0.62)
Efficient	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.35	0.01	(0.34, 0.36)
Efficient	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.65	0.01	(0.64, 0.67)
Efficient	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Efficient	Gender	Man	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
Efficient	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.54	0.01	(0.53, 0.55)
Efficient	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.46	0.01	(0.44, 0.48)
Efficient	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)

(Continued)

Table A6 (Continued)

Efficient	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Efficient	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)
Efficient	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Efficient	Education	Primary education	0.44	0.01	(0.43, 0.45)
Efficient	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Efficient	Education	College education	0.56	0.01	(0.55, 0.57)
Eff - Ineff	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Gender	Woman	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Gender	Man	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	No party affiliation	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	-0.02	0.01	(-0.04, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.02	0.01	(0.00, 0.04)
Eff - Ineff	Age	50 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Age	40 years old	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Age	30 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Education	Primary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Education	Secondary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Eff - Ineff	Education	College education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)

Note: 17,452 observations (Matched Efficiency: 8,726 and Matched Inefficiency: 8,726). Expansion of results reported in Figure A1.

Table A7 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Inefficient	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.53)
Inefficient	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.49	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
Inefficient	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
Inefficient	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.01	(0.58, 0.61)
Inefficient	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Inefficient	Gender	Man	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Inefficient	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.53	0.01	(0.51, 0.54)
Inefficient	Partisanship	Liberal/Radical/Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.50)
Inefficient	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
Inefficient	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Inefficient	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.53)
Inefficient	Age	30 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Inefficient	Education	Primary education	0.47	0.01	(0.45, 0.48)
Inefficient	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)
Inefficient	Education	College education	0.54	0.01	(0.52, 0.55)
Efficient	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Efficient	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Efficient	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
Efficient	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
Efficient	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Efficient	Gender	Man	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
Efficient	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.54)
Efficient	Partisanship	Liberal/Radical/Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.45, 0.49)
Efficient	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Efficient	Age	50 years old	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
Efficient	Age	40 years old	0.52	0.01	(0.50, 0.54)

(Continued)

Table A7 (Continued)

Efficient	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Efficient	Education	Primary education	0.46	0.01	(0.44, 0.47)
Efficient	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Efficient	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.53, 0.56)
Eff - Ineff	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)
Eff - Ineff	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Gender	Woman	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Eff - Ineff	Gender	Man	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	-0.01	0.01	(-0.04, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)
Eff - Ineff	Age	50 years old	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Age	40 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Eff - Ineff	Age	30 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Education	Primary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Eff - Ineff	Education	Secondary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.03, 0.02)
Eff - Ineff	Education	College education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)

Note: 17,452 observations (Matched Efficiency: 8,726 and Matched Inefficiency: 8,726). Expansion of results reported in Figure A2.

Appendix E: AMCE Results

Tables A8 and A9 report the results when using the AMCE in table format by including estimates, standard errors, and 95% confidence intervals for all the attribute levels included in the conjoint analysis.

Table A8 Probability of Being Preferred (Normative Outcome: Promotion), Average Marginal Component Effect

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	NA	NA
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.20	0.01	[0.18, 0.21]
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.00	NA	NA
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.32	0.01	[0.31, 0.33]
Gender	Woman	0.00	NA	NA
Gender	Man	-0.04	0.01	[-0.05, -0.02]
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.00	NA	NA
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	-0.06	0.01	[-0.08, -0.05]
Partisanship	Colorado Party	-0.06	0.01	[-0.07, -0.05]
Age	50 years old	0.00	NA	NA
Age	40 years old	0.01	0.01	[-0.00, 0.02]
Age	30 years old	0.02	0.01	[0.01, 0.03]
Education	Primary education	0.00	NA	NA
Education	Secondary education	0.06	0.01	[0.05, 0.07]
Education	College education	0.10	0.01	[0.09, 0.12]

Note: 31,070 observations.

Table A9 Probability of Being Preferred (Strategic Outcome: Assistance), Average Marginal Component Effect

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	NA	NA
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	-0.02	0.01	[-0.04, -0.01]
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.00	NA	NA
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.20	0.01	[0.19, 0.21]
Gender	Woman	0.00	NA	NA
Gender	Man	-0.03	0.01	[-0.04, -0.02]
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.00	NA	NA
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	-0.05	0.01	[-0.06, -0.03]
Partisanship	Colorado Party	-0.03	0.01	[-0.05, -0.02]
Age	50 years old	0.00	NA	NA
Age	40 years old	0.02	0.01	[0.00, 0.03]
Age	30 years old	0.02	0.01	[0.00, 0.03]
Education	Primary education	0.00	NA	NA
Education	Secondary education	0.04	0.01	[0.03, 0.06]
Education	College education	0.08	0.01	[0.07, 0.09]

Note: 31,070 observations.

Appendix F: Conjoint Diagnostics

In this section we provide the diagnostics for the conjoint experiment. To give us more flexibility when implementing this analysis, we do not use the Cregg package. Instead, we directly implement a linear regression with clustered standard errors at the responded level. Since we use the AMCE for these analyses, benchmark attributes are not reported. Table A10 checks the randomization of attributes by regressing respondents' age on the public official's attributes. As expected, we find no evidence that any of the randomized attributes explain the survey respondents' age.

Table A10 Balance Test (Age)

	Outcome
	Age
Speed Corruption: Has received bribes	-0.113 (0.106)
Theft Corruption: Has diverted public funds	0.026 (0.104)
Gender: Woman	0.088 (0.110)
Partisanship: Radical Autentico Party	-0.013 (0.155)
Partisanship: Colorado Party	-0.018 (0.126)
Age: 40 years old	-0.212 (0.158)
Age: 50 years old	-0.115 (0.130)
Education: Secondary education	-0.029 (0.161)
Education: College education	0.051 (0.127)

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

31,070 observations.

Table A11 provides the results when including an interaction for the pair analyzed (of a total of five pairs per respondent). We only report the results for the interaction and the attributes of interest. The interaction captures the differential effects of the randomized attributes on being chosen when comparing the first pair (which we use as the benchmark) to the four other pairs. As expected, there is no systematic distinction for the attributes of interest. In other words, being in the first or fifth pair is not important for survey respondents when stating their preferences about public officials.

Table A11 Pair Order Effects

Speed Corruption: Has received bribes* Pair 2	-0.001 (0.016)
Speed Corruption: Has received bribes* Pair 3	-0.013 (0.016)
Speed Corruption: Has received bribes* Pair 4	0.001 (0.016)
Speed Corruption: Has received bribes* Pair 5	0.028 (0.016)
Theft Corruption: Has diverted public funds* Pair 2	0.004 (0.015)
Theft Corruption: Has diverted public funds* Pair 3	-0.002 (0.016)
Theft Corruption: Has diverted public funds* Pair 4	0.005 (0.016)
Theft Corruption: Has diverted public funds* Pair 5	-0.031 (0.017)

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

31,070 observations.

Table A12 provides the results when including an interaction for the order of the public official in the pair of candidates evaluated in the conjoint analysis. We only report the results for the interaction and the attributes of interest. The interaction captures the differential effects of the randomized attributes on being chosen when comparing the first and second profiles within a pair. As expected, there is no systematic distinction for the attributes of interest (first profile used as a benchmark). In other words, being in the first or second profile is not important for survey respondents when stating their preferences about public officials.

Table A12 Profile Order Effects

Speed Corruption: Has NOT received bribes* Public Official 2	-0.015 (0.011)
Theft Corruption: Has NOT diverted public funds* Public Official 2	0.018 (0.010)

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

31,070 observations.

Appendix G: Multiple Comparisons

Multiple comparison problems are common in conjoint experiments when numerous hypotheses are tested. For example, when using an AMCE for the normative and strategic outcomes, the p-values for both speed and money corruption are smaller than $2 * 10^{-16}$. No multiple comparison corrections would make these p-values nonsignificant (e.g., Bonferroni, Holm, or Benjamini-Hochberg) even in the strictest scenario, in which we considered each conjoint attribute to be a hypothesis regardless of whether it was pre-registered. As a result, our findings are robust to adjusting for a multiple comparison problem.

Appendix H: Cardinality Matching

We use the matching for efficiency perceptions to explain the procedure, but it is the same regardless of the variable used in the process. Before matching, we have 19,300 units in the control group and 8,980 in the treated group. After matching, we have 8,726 units in each group. We use cardinality matching since it allows us to find covariate balance by design rather than after multiple iterations. Additionally, the matched sample can be constrained to look similar to the unmatched or entire sample, which improves the external validity of the analysis. Table A13 shows that people with perceptions of efficiency (i.e., treated group), perceptions of inefficiency (i.e., control group), and the entire sample have similar distributions of observed characteristics (i.e., education, female, age, and income).

Table A13 Covariate Balance after Matching

Covariate	Mean entire sample	Mean treated group	Mean control group
Education	0.44	0.43	0.43
Female	0.52	0.53	0.53
Age	29.47	29.24	29.24
Income	0.48	0.48	0.50

Note: Before matching: 19,300 observations. After matching: 17,452 (8,726 in each group).

Appendix I: Representative Matching

As reported above, our sample is different from nationally representative samples in Paraguay, particularly regarding the educational characteristics of the respondents. To address this concern, when using matching to evaluate the differences between people with efficient and inefficient perceptions, we use the 2018 nationally representative household survey conducted in Paraguay as a template. Therefore, the matched

sample will look similar to a nationally representative sample on some key observed characteristics.

As reported in Table A14, 25% of respondents have more than high school instruction, 50% are female, and the average age is 28 when using a nationally representative sample. After matching with these constraints, the efficient and inefficient groups look like each other but also look similar to the nationally representative sample. After matching, we have 7,103 units in each group.

Table A14 Covariate Balance after Representative Matching

Covariate	Mean representative sample	Mean treated group	Mean control group
Education (More than high school)	0.25	0.26	0.26
Female	0.50	0.51	0.51
Age	28	29	29

Note: Before matching: 19,300 observations. After matching: 14,206 (7,103 in each group).

Figures A3 and A4 replicate the analysis from Figures A1 and A2 using a matched sample that looks similar to a nationally representative sample regarding education, gender, and age. The findings are not conditional on the sample used for the analysis: perceptions of inefficiency are not important to understanding preferences for theft or speed corruption.

Figure A3 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Normative Outcome: Promotion), Sample Matching

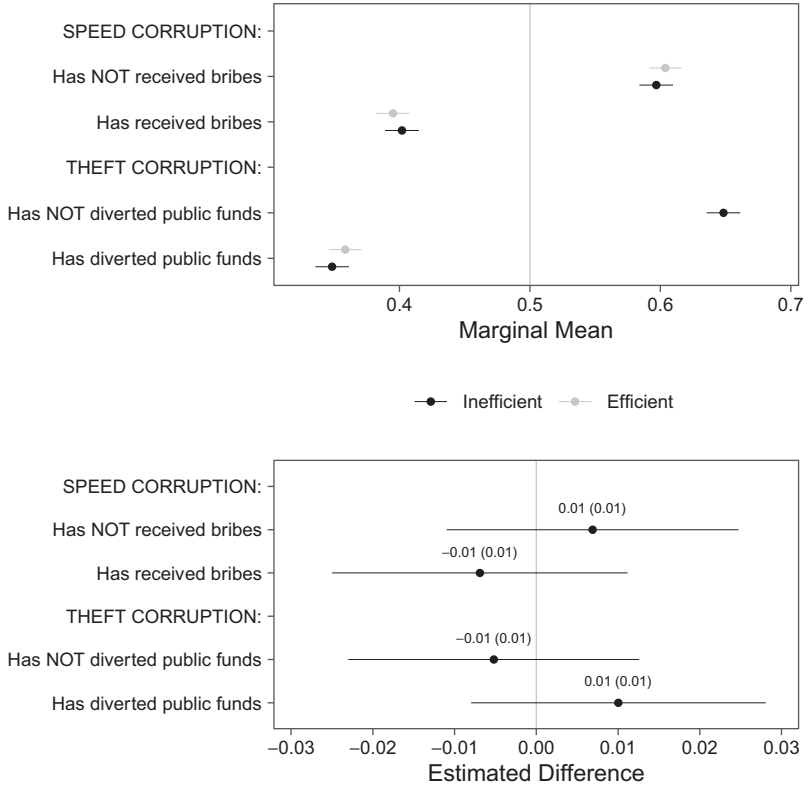
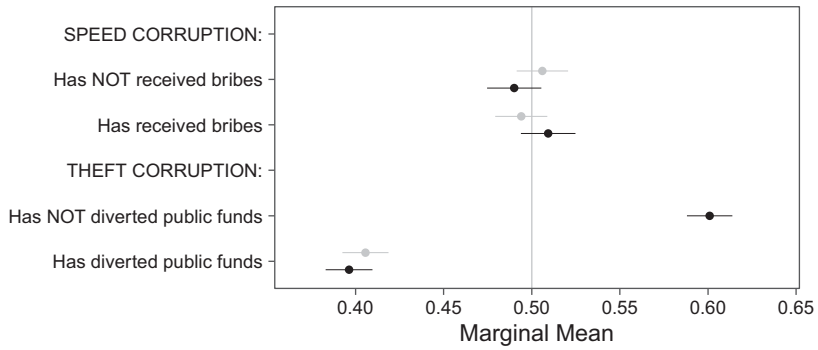
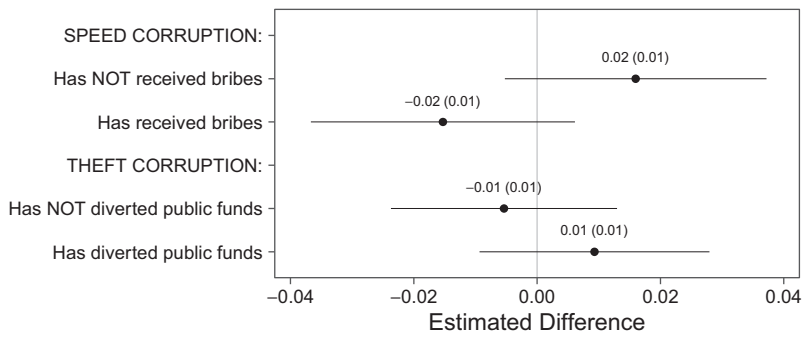


Figure A4 Conditional Marginal Means for Perceptions of Efficiency (Strategic Outcome: Assistance), Sample Matching



● Inefficient ● Efficient



Appendix J: Marginal Means for Income and Education

Table A15 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Income (Normative Outcome: Promotion)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Below Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	(0.39, 0.41)
Below Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.61)
Below Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.36	0.01	(0.35, 0.37)
Below Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.63	0.00	(0.62, 0.64)
Below Median Income	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
Below Median Income	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.54)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.45, 0.48)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Below Median Income	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
Below Median Income	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Below Median Income	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Below Median Income	Education	Primary education	0.44	0.01	(0.43, 0.45)
Below Median Income	Education	Secondary education	0.52	0.01	(0.50, 0.53)
Below Median Income	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
Above Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
Above Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
Above Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.31	0.00	(0.30, 0.32)
Above Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.69	0.00	(0.68, 0.70)
Above Median Income	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
Above Median Income	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.45, 0.49)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.48)

(Continued)

Table A15 (Continued)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Above Median Income	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Above Median Income	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Above Median Income	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Above Median Income	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.01	(0.43, 0.46)
Above Median Income	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Above Median Income	Education	College education	0.56	0.01	(0.55, 0.57)
Above - Below	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Above - Below	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	-0.05	0.01	(-0.07, -0.04)
Above - Below	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.05	0.01	(0.04, 0.07)
Above - Below	Gender	Woman	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Above - Below	Gender	Man	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Above - Below	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.02	0.01	(0.00, 0.04)
Above - Below	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Above - Below	Partisanship	Colorado party	-0.02	0.01	(-0.04, 0.00)
Above - Below	Age	50 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Age	40 years old	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Above - Below	Age	30 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Education	Primary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Education	Secondary education	-0.02	0.01	(-0.04, 0.00)
Above - Below	Education	College education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)

Note: 22,708 observations (Matched Below Median Income: 11,354 and Matched Above Median Income: 11,354). Expansion of results reported in Figure 6.

Table A16 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Income (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Below Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Below Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Below Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.41	0.01	(0.40, 0.42)
Below Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.59	0.01	(0.58, 0.60)
Below Median Income	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
Below Median Income	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.50)
Below Median Income	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Below Median Income	Age	50 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Below Median Income	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Below Median Income	Age	30 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
Below Median Income	Education	Primary education	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.48)
Below Median Income	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Below Median Income	Education	College education	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.54)
Above Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.54)
Above Median Income	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.48)
Above Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.01	(0.38, 0.41)
Above Median Income	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.61	0.01	(0.59, 0.62)
Above Median Income	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	(0.50, 0.52)
Above Median Income	Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.50)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.53	0.01	(0.51, 0.54)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
Above Median Income	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)

(Continued)

24 **Table A16** (Continued)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
Above Median Income	Age	50 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
Above Median Income	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
Above Median Income	Age	30 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
Above Median Income	Education	Primary education	0.46	0.01	(0.45, 0.47)
Above Median Income	Education	Secondary education	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
Above Median Income	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
Above - Below	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.04	0.01	(0.02, 0.06)
Above - Below	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	-0.04	0.01	(-0.06, -0.02)
Above - Below	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Above - Below	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.02	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Above - Below	Gender	Woman	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Above - Below	Gender	Man	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.00	0.01	(-0.03, 0.02)
Above - Below	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Above - Below	Age	50 years old	-0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Above - Below	Age	40 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Above - Below	Age	30 years old	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Above - Below	Education	Primary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Above - Below	Education	Secondary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Above - Below	Education	College education	0.02	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)

Note: 22,708 observations (Matched Below Median Income: 11,354 and Matched Above Median Income: 11,354). Expansion of results reported in Figure 7.

Table A17 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Education (Normative Outcome: Promotion)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
High School or Less	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
High School or Less	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
High School or Less	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.36	0.01	(0.35, 0.37)
High School or Less	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.64	0.01	(0.63, 0.65)
High School or Less	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
High School or Less	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
High School or Less	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.54	0.01	(0.52, 0.55)
High School or Less	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.50)
High School or Less	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
High School or Less	Age	50 years old	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
High School or Less	Age	40 years old	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
High School or Less	Age	30 years old	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
High School or Less	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.01	(0.44, 0.46)
High School or Less	Education	Secondary education	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
High School or Less	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
More than High School	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
More than High School	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
More than High School	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.33	0.01	(0.32, 0.34)
More than High School	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.67	0.01	(0.66, 0.69)
More than High School	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
More than High School	Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
More than High School	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.56)
More than High School	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.45	0.01	(0.44, 0.47)
More than High School	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
More than High School	Age	50 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
More than High School	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)

(Continued)

26 **Table A17** (Continued)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
More than High School	Age	30 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
More than High School	Education	Primary education	0.45	0.01	(0.44, 0.46)
More than High School	Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)
More than High School	Education	College education	0.55	0.01	(0.54, 0.57)
Less - More	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Less - More	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Less - More	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	-0.03	0.01	(-0.05, 0.02)
Less - More	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.04	0.01	(0.02, 0.05)
Less - More	Gender	Woman	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Less - More	Gender	Man	0.00	0.01	(-0.01, 0.01)
Less - More	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Less - More	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	-0.03	0.01	(-0.05, 0.00)
Less - More	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Less - More	Age	50 years old	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Less - More	Age	40 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Less - More	Age	30 years old	-0.02	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Less - More	Education	Primary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Less - More	Education	Secondary education	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Less - More	Education	College education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)

Note: 19,838 observations (Matched High School or Less: 9,919 and Matched More than High School: 9,919). Expansion of results reported in Figure 6.

Table A18 Conditional Marginal Means and Estimated Differences for Education (Strategic Outcome: Assistance)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
High School or Less	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
High School or Less	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)
High School or Less	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.41	0.01	(0.40, 0.42)
High School or Less	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.59	0.01	(0.58, 0.60)
High School or Less	Gender	Woman	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
High School or Less	Gender	Man	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
High School or Less	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.55)
High School or Less	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.48	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
High School or Less	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
High School or Less	Age	50 years old	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.50)
High School or Less	Age	40 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.52)
High School or Less	Age	30 years old	0.52	0.01	(0.50, 0.53)
High School or Less	Education	Primary education	0.46	0.01	(0.45, 0.48)
High School or Less	Education	Secondary education	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.53)
High School or Less	Education	College education	0.53	0.01	(0.52, 0.55)
More than High School	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.53)
More than High School	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.48	0.01	(0.47, 0.49)
More than High School	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.40	0.01	(0.39, 0.41)
More than High School	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.60	0.01	(0.59, 0.61)
More than High School	Gender	Woman	0.51	0.01	(0.50, 0.52)
More than High School	Gender	Man	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.50)
More than High School	Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.52	0.01	(0.51, 0.54)
More than High School	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.47	0.01	(0.46, 0.49)
More than High School	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
More than High School	Age	50 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
More than High School	Age	40 years old	0.51	0.01	(0.49, 0.52)

(Continued)

Table A18 (Continued)

Result	Feature	Level	Estimate	Std.error	95% CI
More than High School	Age	30 years old	0.50	0.01	(0.49, 0.51)
More than High School	Education	Primary education	0.46	0.01	(0.45, 0.47)
More than High School	Education	Secondary education	0.49	0.01	(0.48, 0.51)
More than High School	Education	College education	0.54	0.01	(0.53, 0.56)
Less -More	Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.03	0.01	(0.01, 0.04)
Less -More	Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	-0.03	0.01	(-0.04, -0.01)
Less -More	Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	-0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Less -More	Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.02)
Less -More	Gender	Woman	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Less -More	Gender	Man	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.02)
Less -More	Partisanship	No party affiliation	-0.01	0.01	(-0.03, 0.01)
Less -More	Partisanship	Liberal Radical Auténtico party	0.00	0.01	(-0.03, 0.02)
Less -More	Partisanship	Colorado party	0.01	0.01	(0.00, 0.03)
Less -More	Age	50 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)
Less -More	Age	40 years old	0.01	0.01	(-0.02, 0.03)
Less -More	Age	30 years old	-0.02	0.01	(-0.03, 0.00)
Less -More	Education	Primary education	0.00	0.01	(-0.02, 0.01)
Less -More	Education	Secondary education	-0.02	0.01	(-0.04, 0.01)
Less -More	Education	College education	0.01	0.01	(-0.01, 0.03)

Note: 19,838 observations (Matched High School or Less: 9,919 and Matched More than High School: 9,919). Expansion of results reported in Figure 7.

Appendix K: Pre-analysis Plan

Summary of the Pre-analysis Plan The pre-analysis plan (PAP) was registered with Evidence in Governance and Politics on July 13, 2021 before the data collection concluded on August 29, 2021. An anonymized version of the pre-analysis plan can be found at the end of this appendix and also here:

<https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=doi:10.7910/DVN/GNSYLN>.

- We preregistered the structure of the conjoint experiment (attributes and levels).
- We preregistered the outcome questions (normative and strategic).
- We preregistered the analysis of the conjoint experiment.
- Equation 1: We regress the outcome on the public officials' attributes, and cluster standard errors at the respondent level.
- Equation 2: We regress the outcome on the public officials' attributes, the priming experiment, and the interaction between the priming experiment and the attributes, and cluster standard errors at the respondent level.
- Equation 3: We regress the outcome on the public officials' attributes, perceptions of efficiency, and the interaction between perceptions of efficiency and the attributes, and cluster standard errors at the respondent level.

Deviations from the Pre-analysis Plan We pre-registered four outcomes to capture citizens' normative and strategic evaluations of bureaucrats. In the manuscript, we report the results from two of the four preregistered outcomes—a strategic and a normative outcome. The other two outcomes are reported in this section of the appendix.

Some issues with one of the outcomes became evident after pre-registration. While we pre-specified the question “Which of these public officials do you prefer to see when you visit the Civil Registry?” as a strategic outcome, we think respondents answered it with an ideal bureaucrat in mind. Responses based on a socially defined standard of a bureaucrat cannot be interpreted as a measure of strategic preferences. Moreover, this question elicits an opinion based on the *overall quality* of the bureaucrat rather than the personal benefit the respondent could accrue from interacting with this official (e.g., obtaining a certificate in less time). Since this question does not adequately capture the personal benefit, we opted to relegate it to the Appendix. For the sake of symmetry, we also chose to report the normative outcome “Which of these public officials should represent Paraguay in an international conference of public officials?” in the Appendix. These results corroborate our findings for the normative outcome. This change does not significantly affect the paper's conclusions. The analyses using these two other outcomes can be found at the end of this section.

Other minor amendments are:

- We split Hypothesis 1 from the PAP into two hypotheses in the manuscript (Hypotheses 1 and 2) to better connect them with the theory.
- The quantity of interest used in the paper was the marginal means (MMs) (Leeper et al. 2020). The PAP does not discuss MMs. In Appendix E, we also provide the results when using the Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCE), which is the traditional estimand used in conjoint analyses (Hainmueller et al. 2013). The results are not conditional on the quantity of interest used for the analysis.
- We use matching to generate groups of survey participants with different perceptions of inefficiency but similar observed characteristics. We explain the reasons behind this decision in the main text.
- The analysis of preferences by income and education was not pre-registered, which is why that discussion is more tentative and less conclusive than the other analyses in the paper.

Table A19 Probability of Being Preferred (Outcome: International Conference)

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	(0.40, 0.41)
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.60)
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.35	0.00	(0.34, 0.35)
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.00	(0.65, 0.66)
Gender	Woman	0.51	0.00	(0.51, 0.52)
Gender	Man	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.49)
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.54	0.00	(0.53, 0.55)
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	0.46	0.00	(0.45, 0.47)
Partisanship	Colorado Party	0.48	0.00	(0.48, 0.49)
Age	50 years old	0.50	0.00	(0.49, 0.50)
Age	40 years old	0.50	0.00	(0.49, 0.51)
Age	30 years old	0.50	0.00	(0.50, 0.51)
Education	Primary education	0.42	0.00	(0.42, 0.43)
Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.00	(0.49, 0.51)
Education	College education	0.58	0.00	(0.58, 0.59)

Note: 31,070 observations.

Table A20 Probability of Being Preferred (Outcome: Visit Civil Registry)

Feature	Level	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI
Speed Corruption	Has received bribes	0.40	0.00	(0.40, 0.41)
Speed Corruption	Has NOT received bribes	0.60	0.00	(0.59, 0.60)
Theft Corruption	Has diverted public funds	0.34	0.00	(0.34, 0.35)
Theft Corruption	Has NOT diverted public funds	0.66	0.00	(0.65, 0.66)
Gender	Woman	0.52	0.00	(0.51, 0.53)
Gender	Man	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Partisanship	No party affiliation	0.54	0.00	(0.53, 0.55)
Partisanship	Radical Auténtico Party	0.47	0.00	(0.46, 0.48)
Partisanship	Colorado Party	0.48	0.00	(0.47, 0.49)
Age	50 years old	0.49	0.00	(0.48, 0.49)
Age	40 years old	0.50	0.00	(0.49, 0.51)
Age	30 years old	0.51	0.00	(0.51, 0.52)
Education	Primary education	0.45	0.00	(0.45, 0.46)
Education	Secondary education	0.50	0.00	(0.49, 0.51)
Education	College education	0.55	0.00	(0.54, 0.56)

Note: 31,070 observations.