



Bribery in the bureaucracy: Evidence from a list experiment among civil servants in Nepal

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Abstract

Empirical studies on bureaucratic corruption typically rely on perception indices or supply-side reports from citizens and firms, leaving the behavior of public officials underexplored. Because bribery is illicit and socially stigmatized, directly measuring its prevalence is complicated by severe social desirability bias. To overcome this measurement challenge, this study applies a list experiment to a sample of 1,634 civil servants across central government institutions in Nepal to provide rare, micro-level evidence on the demand side of bribery. The results indicate that informal payments are prevalent, with approximately 26.4 percent of respondents estimated to have received bribes while delivering public services. Furthermore, multivariate analysis reveals that bureaucratic hierarchy is the primary driver of corruption risk. High-ranking officials with greater administrative authority are significantly more likely to engage in bribery, whereas gender and occupational specialization exhibit no systematic association with corrupt behavior once position is controlled for. These findings suggest that corruption is shaped more by institutional architecture and discretionary power than by individual demographic traits, underscoring the need for anti-corruption reforms that target concentrated administrative authority.

Keywords:

Bribery
Bureaucracy
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1. Introduction

Corruption remains a persistent obstacle to effective governance and economic development, particularly in developing and transition economies (Mauro, 1995; Olken & Pande, 2012). By distorting administrative decisions and diverting public resources, it undermines public service delivery, weakens institutional performance, and erodes trust in government (Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016; Svensson, 2005). Among its

various forms, bribery involving public officials is especially harmful because it enables bureaucrats to exploit administrative discretion for private gain in exchange for access to services, approvals, or favorable treatment (Svensson, 2005). Such practices increase transaction costs, reduce procedural efficiency, and can make access to public services more unequal, particularly in frontline administrative settings (Falisse & Leszczynska, 2022; Olken & Pande, 2012).

A large body of research has examined the determinants and consequences of corruption in public administration. In the standard principal-agent framework, corruption arises when public officials possess discretionary authority while accountability and monitoring remain weak (Klitgaard, 1988; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993). Under such conditions, bureaucrats may exploit informational asymmetries and institutional inefficiencies to extract rents from citizens or firms seeking government services. Empirical studies further show that corruption is shaped by bureaucratic incentives, institutional quality, and the organization of administrative authority, while more recent work examines how anti-corruption interventions affect bribery and service delivery outcomes (Falisse & Leszczynska, 2022; Olken & Pande, 2012; Svensson, 2005).

Despite this extensive literature, bribery within public administration remains difficult to measure. Because bribery is illegal and highly sensitive, both public officials and service users have strong incentives to conceal their involvement, making direct self-reports vulnerable to social desirability bias and strategic misreporting (Olken & Pande, 2012; Svensson, 2005). Alternative approaches, including perception-based indicators, administrative audits, and detection-based measures, are informative but incomplete. Perception indices capture beliefs rather than actual behavior, while administrative records identify only detected cases and may therefore understate the true prevalence of corruption. As a result, reliable micro-level evidence on bribery remains limited, especially when the population of interest is public officials themselves.

This limitation is particularly important because much of the empirical literature focuses on the supply side of bribery, especially the behavior of citizens or firms that offer informal payments to public officials. By contrast, the demand side of corruption, namely the behavior of bureaucrats who solicit or accept bribes, has received considerably less systematic empirical attention. This imbalance reflects not only the illegality and sensitivity of bribery, but also the practical and institutional difficulty of asking public officials directly about misconduct within their own organizations. Yet understanding bureaucrats' behavior is essential for identifying how corruption is generated and sustained within administrative systems.

To address this measurement problem, recent methodological advances have introduced indirect survey techniques designed to elicit more truthful responses to sensitive questions. One prominent approach is the list experiment, or item count technique, which allows respondents to report sensitive behavior without directly revealing whether a particular statement applies to them (Blair & Imai, 2012; Imai, 2011). By comparing the average number of applicable statements reported by respondents in control and treatment groups, researchers can estimate the prevalence of a sensitive behavior while preserving individual anonymity. Because the method reduces the risk of direct disclosure, it helps mitigate social desirability bias and underreporting. Recent studies have increasingly applied list experiments and other indirect methods to examine sensitive and illicit behaviors, including corruption-related practices (Detkova, Tkachenko, & Yakovlev, 2021).

This study contributes to the literature by providing micro-level evidence on bribery among civil servants through a large-scale survey experiment conducted in Nepal. Nepal offers a useful setting for examining bureaucratic corruption because concerns about transparency and accountability in public administration have intensified alongside broader institutional and administrative reforms. Although corruption is prominent in policy debates and diagnostic reports, systematic evidence on bribery among bureaucrats themselves remains limited. In collaboration with the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) and government administrative institutions, this study implemented a survey experiment with civil servants across central government organizations.

The survey was conducted between November 2020 and April 2021 and includes 1,634 civil servants from 41 central government institutions. Respondents were randomly assigned to either a control group or a treatment group. Both groups received identical lists of non-sensitive statements, while the treatment group received one additional sensitive item asking whether the respondent had accepted an informal payment from private individuals or firms while delivering public services. Comparing the mean number of statements reported across the two groups allows us to estimate the prevalence of bribery without requiring direct disclosure by individual respondents.

This study makes three contributions. First, it provides rare direct evidence on bribery among bureaucrats themselves, rather than focusing primarily on citizens or firms that offer bribes. Although a substantial literature examines the supply side of corruption, far less is known about the demand side because reliable data on public officials' own behavior is difficult to obtain. Second, the study contributes methodologically by applying a list experiment to measure corruption-related behavior among public officials in an actual bureaucratic setting. This approach is especially valuable in the context of bribery, where direct questioning is likely to generate underreporting. Third, the paper provides new evidence on heterogeneity within the bureaucracy by examining whether bribery varies systematically by bureaucratic rank, gender, and service group. In particular, the findings suggest that high-ranking officials are more likely to receive bribes

than lower-ranked officials, highlighting the role of administrative authority and discretionary power in facilitating rent extraction.

More broadly, this study contributes to the limited empirical literature on corruption in South Asian bureaucracies. Although corruption in Nepal is widely recognized in policy discussions, systematic micro-level evidence on the actual behavior of civil servants remains scarce. By providing more credible estimates of bribery within the Nepali bureaucracy, this study offers policy-relevant insights into how anti-corruption reforms may be better targeted in developing administrative systems.

2. Bureaucracy and Corruption in Nepal

Understanding the institutional environment in which public officials operate is essential for interpreting corruption behavior within the bureaucracy. Nepal provides an informative context for examining bureaucratic corruption because the country has experienced significant political and administrative transformations over the past decades while continuing to face governance challenges related to transparency and accountability.

2.1. Structure of the Nepali Bureaucracy

Nepal's public administration system is organized under a formal civil service structure that operates across ministries, departments, and constitutional bodies of the federal government. Civil servants play a central role in managing administrative procedures, delivering public services, and regulating interactions between the state and private actors. According to official administrative records, Nepal's civil service consists of over 85,000 employees distributed across various tiers of government and federal agencies ([Government of Nepal, 2020](#)). As the primary implementers of government policy, these officials possess significant discretionary authority over the daily administration of the state.

The civil service in Nepal is structured hierarchically, with officials categorized into several ranks and service groups. One fundamental distinction within the bureaucracy is between gazetted and non-gazetted officials. Gazetted officers typically occupy higher-ranking administrative positions and are responsible for supervising processes and making decisions within government agencies. In contrast, non-gazetted officials mainly perform operational and clerical tasks under the supervision of higher-ranking officers. Because gazetted officers exercise greater discretion in approving licenses, allocating public resources, and supervising bureaucratic procedures, classic theoretical frameworks suggest their positions may provide greater structural opportunities for engaging in corrupt activities ([Klitgaard, 1988](#); [Shleifer & Vishny, 1993](#)).

Another important organizational feature of the Nepali civil service is the division into service groups, which reflect the functional specialization of government officials. Civil servants are assigned to different administrative services depending on their professional responsibilities. These include general administration positions responsible for routine government operations as well as specialized administrative roles such as procurement management, taxation, auditing, and information technology. Officials working in specialized administrative sectors may interact more frequently with private firms and contractors, particularly in areas such as procurement and taxation where bureaucratic discretion can influence financial decisions. Such institutional arrangements may create varying opportunities for corruption across administrative roles ([Svensson, 2003](#); [Tanzi & Davoodi, 1998](#)).

In addition to these structural features, the bureaucratic system in Nepal has historically been characterized by limited administrative capacity and complex regulatory procedures. Core administrative processes, such as issuing licenses, granting permits, registering land, and managing procurement, often require multiple layers of approval across various government agencies. These procedural complexities increase the discretionary power of bureaucrats and create opportunities for rent-seeking behavior in interactions between public officials and service users ([World Bank, 2018](#)).

2.2. Corruption Challenges in Nepal

Corruption has long been recognized as a significant governance challenge in Nepal. International assessments and policy reports frequently identify corruption as a major obstacle to institutional effectiveness and public trust. For example, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index continues to reflect persistent concerns about corruption in Nepal's public sector. Previous research and policy reports suggest that corruption in Nepal is especially likely to arise in sectors involving frequent interaction between public officials and private actors, including procurement, licensing, customs administration, and land management ([Transparency International, 2024](#); [World Bank, 2018](#)).

In such sectors, bureaucrats possess discretionary authority to approve or delay administrative decisions, creating distinct incentives for the exchange of informal payments. Administrative delays and complex regulatory procedures further encourage citizens and firms to offer "speed money" to expedite bureaucratic processes. While classic theories suggest that such procedural complexity and weak monitoring mechanisms inevitably facilitate bribery ([Shleifer & Vishny, 1993](#); [Svensson, 2005](#)) more recent empirical studies demonstrate that the relationship between bureaucratic discretion and corruption depends heavily on administrative capacity ([Bosio, Djankov, Glaeser, & Shleifer, 2022](#)). Specifically, in low-capacity environments with complex administrative rules, allowing bureaucrats excessive discretion over service delivery and

procurement drastically increases the risk of favoritism and rent-seeking (Bosio et al., 2022; Decarolis, Fisman, Pinotti, & Vannutelli, 2025).

Despite widespread concern about corruption in the public sector, empirical evidence on the actual prevalence of bribery among civil servants in Nepal remains limited. Much of the existing evidence relies on perception-based indicators, case reports, or corruption investigations. While these sources provide useful insights into general patterns of corruption, they do not necessarily capture the true extent of corrupt behavior among public officials. Because corruption is illegal and heavily stigmatized, bureaucrats have strong incentives to conceal their involvement in bribery when surveyed directly. This inherent vulnerability to social desirability bias makes it notoriously difficult to obtain reliable micro-level data on the true prevalence of rent-seeking within the civil service (Olken & Pande, 2012).

2.3. Anti-Corruption Institutions and Reforms

To address corruption challenges, Nepal has established several institutional mechanisms aimed at strengthening accountability and transparency within public administration. The most prominent anti-corruption body is the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), a constitutional agency responsible for investigating corruption cases involving public officials. The CIAA has the authority to investigate complaints of abuse of authority, conduct inquiries into corruption-related allegations, and initiate legal proceedings against public officials found to be involved in corrupt activities (Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority, 2020). In addition to the CIAA, other institutions contribute to oversight and accountability within the public sector. The Office of the Auditor General monitors public financial management and audits government expenditures, while parliamentary oversight committees review government operations and administrative practices. In recent years, the government has initiated several structural reforms aimed at improving transparency and reducing corruption risks. These include the expansion of digital governance systems, efforts to streamline administrative procedures, and initiatives to strengthen internal monitoring mechanisms across public agencies.

Despite these institutional efforts, effectively preventing and detecting corruption within the bureaucracy remains a challenge. Limited administrative capacity, complex regulatory procedures, and insufficient internal monitoring frequently undermine the efficacy of formal anti-corruption measures. Moreover, because corruption inherently involves hidden, collusive transactions between bureaucrats and private actors, measuring the true extent of bribery remains difficult even when robust oversight institutions exist (Olken & Pande, 2012). These institutional characteristics make Nepal an important setting for studying bureaucratic corruption using innovative empirical methods. In particular, the difficulty of directly observing corruption highlights the crucial need for survey techniques that can capture sensitive behaviors while protecting respondents' anonymity. The list experiment approach used in this study provides a powerful methodological tool for addressing this challenge, allowing civil servants to report their involvement in sensitive activities without directly revealing their individual responses.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Corruption in Public Administration

A large literature examines the causes and consequences of corruption in public administration. In standard theoretical accounts, corruption arises when public officials exercise discretionary authority under weak monitoring and accountability, allowing them to use public office for private gain (Klitgaard, 1988; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993). Empirical studies likewise show that corruption is shaped by bureaucratic incentives, institutional quality, and the organization of administrative authority (Olken & Pande, 2012; Svensson, 2005). Within this broader literature, bribery is especially important because it represents a direct misuse of public office in interactions with citizens and firms seeking services, approvals, or regulatory relief.

Much of the existing evidence, however, focuses on the institutional conditions that enable corruption rather than on the behavior of bureaucrats themselves. Prior research has documented how weak oversight, concentrated discretion, and ineffective accountability mechanisms create opportunities for rent extraction, while other studies examine how anti-corruption reforms affect service delivery and administrative performance. Although this work has generated important insights, it provides relatively limited direct evidence on which public officials are more likely to engage in bribery and why. In particular, less is known about heterogeneity within the bureaucracy itself, including whether bribery varies systematically by gender, bureaucratic rank, or occupational role.

3.2. The Measurement Problem and Limited Evidence on Bureaucrats

One reason for this gap is that bribery is inherently difficult to measure. Because it is illegal and socially stigmatized, participants in corrupt exchanges have strong incentives to conceal their behavior. Direct survey questions are therefore especially vulnerable to social desirability bias, strategic misreporting, and nonresponse. Administrative records and audit-based measures also have important limitations, as they capture only detected or reported cases rather than the true prevalence of corruption. Perception-based indicators, in turn, provide useful information about beliefs and reputations but do not directly measure corrupt conduct (Olken & Pande, 2012; Svensson, 2005).

These measurement problems are particularly severe when the population of interest is public officials rather than citizens or firms. Much of the empirical literature on bribery examines the supply side of corruption, especially the behavior of households, firms, or service users who pay bribes. Such studies have generated valuable evidence on bribery incidence, sectoral vulnerability, and the effects of anti-corruption interventions. By contrast, the demand side of corruption, namely the behavior of bureaucrats who solicit or accept bribes, has received much less systematic empirical attention. This imbalance reflects not only the illegality of corruption, but also the practical and institutional difficulty of asking public officials directly about misconduct within their own organizations.

3.3. Indirect Elicitation

To address underreporting in direct surveys, researchers have increasingly adopted indirect elicitation methods designed for sensitive topics. One prominent approach is the list experiment, or item count technique, in which respondents report only the number of statements that apply to them rather than indicating which specific statements are true. By randomly assigning respondents to control and treatment lists that differ only by the inclusion of a sensitive item, researchers can estimate the prevalence of sensitive behavior while protecting individual anonymity (Blair & Imai, 2012; Imai, 2011). This design reduces the incentive to misreport and has been applied to a range of politically and socially sensitive behaviors, including vote buying, discrimination, and corruption-related practices (Detkova et al., 2021; Malesky, Gueorguiev, & Jensen, 2015).

Despite these methodological advances, relatively few studies have used indirect elicitation to examine bribery among bureaucrats themselves. Most corruption research still relies on direct surveys of bribery payers, perception-based indicators, or administrative detection data. As a result, the literature offers limited micro-level evidence on bribery within the bureaucracy and on how corruption may vary across types of public officials. This gap is important because bureaucrats are not merely passive counterparts in corrupt exchanges; they are central actors whose authority, organizational position, and occupational roles shape both the opportunity and the incentive to extract rents.

This study contributes to that literature by applying a list experiment to civil servants in Nepal. By surveying bureaucrats directly while preserving anonymity, it provides rare evidence on bribery among public officials in an actual administrative setting. More specifically, the study extends the empirical literature in two ways. First, it shifts attention from the supply side of bribery to the demand side within public administration. Second, it examines whether bribery varies systematically across civil servants according to gender, bureaucratic position, and service group. In doing so, the paper links methodological innovation in measuring sensitive behavior to a substantive question about how corruption is distributed within the state.

4. Hypotheses

Corruption in public administration arises from the interaction between bureaucratic discretion, monitoring constraints, and opportunities for rent extraction. In the standard principal-agent framework, public officials act as agents who implement policies and deliver services on behalf of principals such as the state or citizens. Because bureaucrats often possess private information and exercise discretionary authority, their actions are not fully observable. When oversight is weak and the expected gains from misconduct are sufficiently high, public officials may exploit their position for private benefit, including through bribery (Klitgaard, 1988; Olken & Pande, 2012; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993).

This framework suggests that corruption is not randomly distributed across civil servants. Rather, the likelihood of engaging in bribery should vary systematically with characteristics that shape three underlying conditions: access to discretionary authority, exposure to transactions in which rents can be extracted, and integration into informal networks that facilitate illicit exchange. Building on this logic, we focus on three attributes of civil servants that may be associated with bribery behavior: gender, bureaucratic position, and service group. Gender may capture differences in access to informal bureaucratic networks and in the social and organizational constraints surrounding corrupt conduct. Bureaucratic position reflects variation in decision-making authority and effective monitoring. Service group captures differences in occupational tasks and the extent of interaction with private agents who may offer bribes. Together, these factors provide a useful basis for deriving observable expectations about heterogeneity in bribery behavior among public officials.

4.1. Gender and Corruption Behavior

A prominent line of research examines whether men and women differ systematically in their propensity to engage in corruption. Early cross-country studies report that greater female participation in government is associated with lower perceived corruption (Dollar, Fisman, & Gatti, 2001; Swamy, Knack, Lee, & Azfar, 2001). These findings were often interpreted as indicating that women are less likely to engage in corrupt behavior because they are more risk averse or hold stronger ethical preferences.

Subsequent research, however, casts doubt on essentialist interpretations of gender differences in corruption. More recent studies argue that any observed gender gap may reflect structural and organizational conditions rather than intrinsic differences in morality. Women are often underrepresented in positions of authority (Jha & Sarangi, 2018) and may have less access to the informal networks through which corrupt

transactions are coordinated and protected (Bjarnegård, 2013; Sundström & Wängnerud, 2016). In this view, corruption depends not only on individual willingness but also on opportunities for collusion, reciprocal protection, and information sharing within bureaucratic networks. Supporting this argument, Yu, Wu, Chiu, and Chen (2024) show, using court judgments on corrupt civil servants, that women appear less involved in corruption not primarily because they are less willing to take risks, but because they are more likely to be excluded from corruption-supporting networks. Other studies likewise emphasize that the relationship between gender and corruption is conditional on institutional settings and prevailing social norms (Bauhr & Charron, 2021; Esarey & Schwindt-Bayer, 2018).

In the context of bureaucratic bribery, these arguments imply that male civil servants may be more likely to engage in corrupt exchanges because they face fewer structural barriers to participation in informal bureaucratic networks and may encounter fewer social or organizational constraints on such behavior. To the extent that bribery requires coordination, trust, and repeated interaction, unequal access to these networks may generate systematic gender differences in corruption behavior. Accordingly, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1 (Gender): Male civil servants are more likely to engage in bribery than female civil servants.

4.2. Bureaucratic Position and Corruption Opportunities

Bureaucratic rank is also likely to shape corruption behavior because authority is unevenly distributed within public organizations. Officials in higher positions generally exercise greater discretion over administrative decisions, including the approval of permits, procurement processes, regulatory enforcement, and resource allocation. These decisions often create rents for private actors, thereby generating incentives to offer bribes in exchange for favorable treatment. From a principal-agent perspective, higher-ranking officials may therefore be especially attractive targets for bribery because they control decisions with higher stakes and broader consequences.

The literature has long emphasized the role of discretion in facilitating corruption. Ades and Di Tella (1999) argue that corruption increases when officials enjoy greater control over economic decisions, while Kaufmann and Siegelbaum (1997) highlight how administrative monopolies and regulatory discretion create opportunities for rent extraction. More recent work similarly suggests that corruption risks are concentrated in positions combining high authority with limited effective oversight (Decarolis et al., 2025; Nieto-Morales, Peeters, & Lotta, 2024). Higher-ranking officials may not only possess greater authority, but may also be less directly monitored in day-to-day decision-making, which further increases the scope for misconduct. In contrast, lower-level bureaucrats are not immune from corruption. Frontline officials may engage in petty bribery in routine service delivery when they interact directly with citizens and control access to administrative procedures (Olken & Pande, 2012). Nonetheless, higher-ranking officials typically command broader discretionary power and influence over decisions that generate larger rents.¹ On balance, the expected returns to bribery should be greater among civil servants occupying higher bureaucratic positions. Based on these arguments, we propose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2 (Position): Civil servants occupying higher bureaucratic positions are more likely to engage in bribery than those in lower positions.

4.3. Service Group and Exposure to Bribery Opportunities

Corruption opportunities may also differ across occupational roles within the civil service. Public agencies assign officials to service groups with distinct responsibilities, and these responsibilities shape both the frequency and the nature of interactions with private agents. Some officials work mainly on internal administrative coordination, whereas others operate in functions that regularly involve approving, inspecting, auditing, regulating, or contracting with firms and citizens. Because bribery typically requires interaction between a public official and an outside actor seeking favorable treatment, occupational roles involving frequent external contact are likely to face greater corruption risk.

This logic is especially relevant in specialized administrative sectors such as procurement, taxation, customs, licensing, and auditing. In such sectors, public officials often make decisions with direct financial implications for private actors. These settings combine three conditions conducive to bribery: discretionary authority, repeated interaction with outside parties, and potentially large private gains from administrative favoritism. Past studies have identified procurement and regulatory enforcement as especially vulnerable to corruption (Olken & Pande, 2012; Svensson, 2003). By contrast, officials in more general administrative roles may face fewer such opportunities if their tasks are concentrated in internal procedures or routine coordination with limited distributive stakes.

At the same time, general administrative service should not be treated as corruption-free. Even routine administrative functions may involve the issuance of certificates, approvals, or other procedural decisions that allow scope for rent extraction (Nieto-Morales et al., 2024). The relevant question is therefore not whether

¹ One limitation of this study is that we did not account for the fact that corruption or bribery is heterogeneous. Many studies, such as Ruhl (2011) emphasize the distinction between high-level (grand) corruption committed by senior officials and lower-level (petty) corruption committed by lower-ranked civil servants.

bribery exists only in specialized sectors, but whether exposure to bribery opportunities is systematically greater there. Given their more frequent contact with private agents and their greater involvement in high-stakes discretionary decisions, civil servants in specialized administrative sectors should face stronger incentives and more opportunities to engage in bribery.

Hypothesis 3 (Service group): Civil servants working in specialized administrative sectors are more likely to engage in bribery than those working in general administrative sectors.

5. Experimental Design and Data

Measuring bribery among public officials is empirically challenging because it involves illegal and highly sensitive behavior. Direct questioning may therefore induce underreporting, as respondents may provide socially desirable rather than truthful answers. To mitigate this problem, this study employs a list experiment, or item count technique, which allows respondents to report sensitive behavior without direct disclosure (Blair & Imai, 2012; Imai, 2011).

5.1. List Experiment Design

The list experiment is designed to reduce social desirability bias by asking respondents to report only the number of statements that apply to them, rather than identifying which specific statements are true. In this study, respondents were randomly assigned to either a control group or a treatment group. The control group received a list of four non-sensitive statements related to work experiences in the civil service. These items were selected to reflect common professional experiences that are not directly related to corruption. At the same time, the items were chosen to avoid excessive concentration at the minimum or maximum count values. The four statements presented to the control group were:

- I feel that the use of information and communication technology helps speed up public service delivery.
- I have experienced power harassment from my supervisor or senior officers during my service period.
- I had an opportunity to work in my preferred section or office during my career.
- I have been abroad at least once for an official assignment in the past five years.

The treatment group received the same four statements with one additional sensitive item.

- I have received an additional informal payment from private individuals or firms while providing public services.

Rather than indicating which statements were true, respondents were asked to report how many of the listed statements applied to them. Because respondents reported only the total number of applicable statements, the design reduces the ability to infer individual responses to the sensitive item and thereby helps protect respondent anonymity. Under the standard assumptions of the list experiment, the prevalence of bribery can be estimated by comparing the average number of statements reported by the treatment and control groups. Specifically, if $\bar{Y}_T$ denotes the average number of statements reported in the treatment group and $\bar{Y}_C$ denotes the average number reported in the control group, then the difference $\bar{Y}_T - \bar{Y}_C$ provides an estimate of the prevalence of the sensitive behavior.

5.2. Survey Implementation

The survey experiment was conducted among civil servants working in central government offices in Nepal. The study was implemented in collaboration with the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA), Nepal's national anti-corruption agency, and the Department of Civil Personnel Records under the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration. This collaboration enabled the research team to access an official list of civil servants employed in central government institutions.²

The target population consisted of civil servants working in 41 central government offices located in Kathmandu, including the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, ministries, constitutional bodies, commissions, and other central government agencies. Although the total number of civil servants nationwide was approximately 90,000, the study focused on about 28,000 civil servants working in these central government offices.³ Using administrative contact information provided by the Department of Civil Personnel Records, invitations to participate in the survey were distributed electronically to approximately 15,000 civil servants. The survey was administered online using the Qualtrics platform between November 2020 and April 2021.

In total, 1,634 civil servants completed the survey, yielding a response rate of approximately 11 percent. Of these respondents, 820 were assigned to the control group and 814 to the treatment group. Random assignment is intended to make the two groups comparable, on average, in both observable and unobservable

² The questionnaires were first drafted and finalized in English, and later the final version was carefully translated into the Nepali Language, the native and national language of Nepal, for respondent's easy understanding and convenience.

³ These 41 central government offices include the Office of the Prime Minister and Ministerial Council and 21 Ministries, 19 other apex institutions and offices of Union government of Nepal (3 constitutional bodies, Office of the President and Vice-President, Parliament Secretariat, 8 commissions, and 5 courts) located in Kathmandu valley.

characteristics. In addition to the list experiment question, the survey collected information on respondents' demographic and professional characteristics, including gender, bureaucratic position, service group, age, education, work experience, and family background.

One potential concern is whether the sample is representative of the target population of civil servants. To assess this, we compared the sample with the target population of 28,183 civil servants along three observable dimensions: gender, bureaucratic position, and service group (Table 1). The share of women is 23.1 percent in the sample and 22.0 percent in the target population. The share of gazetted officers is 32.5 percent in the sample and 28.5 percent in the target population. The share of civil servants in the general administration group is 63.8 percent in the sample and 63.4 percent in the target population. These comparisons suggest that the sample broadly resembles the target population along these key characteristics. At the same time, because population information is limited to a small number of variables and the response rate is modest, these comparisons should not be interpreted as establishing full representativeness. The results should therefore be read with appropriate caution regarding external validity.

Table 1. Target population and sample.

Description	Targeted Population	Sample
Total number of civil servants	89,851	-
Targeted population and Sample	28,183	1,634
Gender ratio	21.95%	23.13%
Gazetted officers to non-gazetted officials	28.54%	32.50%
Service group composition (General administration vs others)	63.40%	63.75%

The validity of the list experiment relies on several standard assumptions. First, the randomization assumption requires that respondents be randomly assigned to the control and treatment groups. If this condition holds, differences in the number of reported statements can be attributed to the inclusion of the sensitive item. Table 2 presents balance tests based on probit estimation and indicates that key respondent characteristics, including gender, bureaucratic position, and service group, are evenly distributed across the two groups (see Table A1 in the appendix for the corresponding results from the model with additional controls).

Table 2. Probit model test of balance in randomization.

Variable	Coef.	S.E.
Gender	0.070	0.074
Position	-0.076	0.067
Service	0.014	0.065
Constant	-0.005	0.060
Log-likelihood	-1131.380	
No of obs.	1634	

Note: The dependent variable is the indicator of whether the respondent was assigned to the treatment group.

Second, the list experiment requires the absence of design effects. This assumption implies that the inclusion of the sensitive item should not alter respondents' answers to the non-sensitive items. If the sensitive item changes how respondents interpret or evaluate the control statements, the estimated prevalence of bribery may be biased. To assess this possibility, we apply the Blair and Imai (2012) test for design effects. The Bonferroni-corrected p-value is 0.201, so we fail to reject the null hypothesis of no design effect.

Third, the method assumes that ceiling and floor effects are limited. Ceiling effects arise when respondents report that all statements apply to them, while floor effects arise when respondents report that none apply. If extreme responses are too frequent, anonymity may be weakened because the response to the sensitive item becomes easier to infer. Figure 1 presents the distribution of reported counts in the control and treatment groups. Extreme responses are relatively uncommon in both groups, suggesting that ceiling and floor effects are unlikely to be a major concern in this experiment.

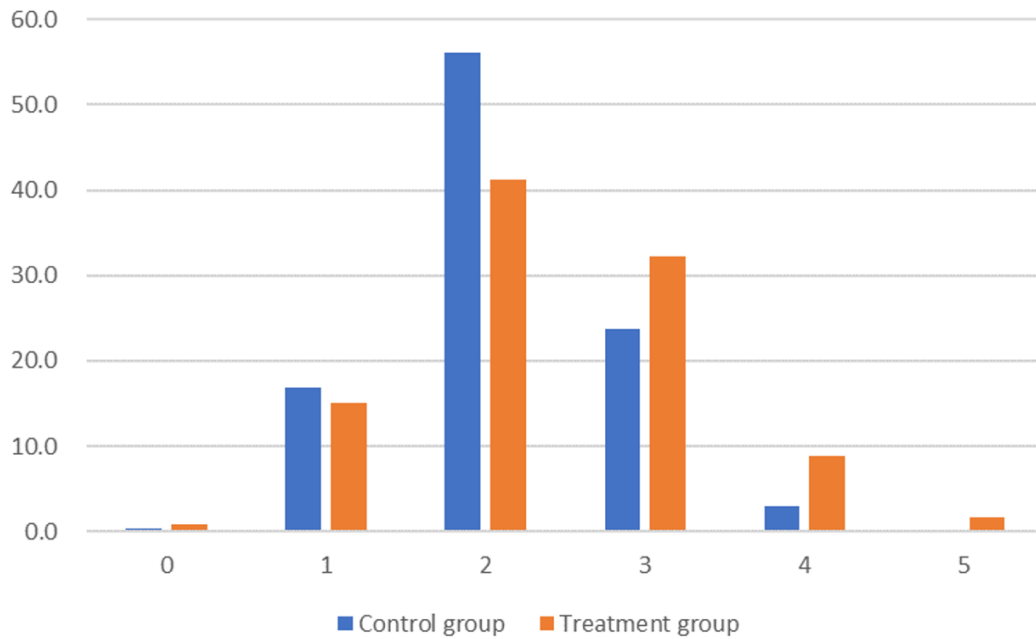


Figure 1. Percentage of respondents for each answer category in the list experiment.

6. Empirical Results

This section presents the empirical results of the study. We first estimate the overall prevalence of bribery among civil servants using the difference-in-means estimator of the list experiment. We then examine whether bribery behavior varies systematically across different characteristics of civil servants, including gender, bureaucratic position, and service group.

6.1. Prevalence of Bribery

The list experiment allows us to estimate the prevalence of bribery by comparing the average number of statements reported by respondents in the treatment and control groups. Under the standard assumptions of the list experiment, the difference between these group means provides an estimate of the proportion of respondents who agreed with the sensitive statement concerning the receipt of informal payments. Table 3 reports the results of the difference-in-means estimation (see Table A2 in the appendix for the corresponding results from the model with additional controls). The average number of statements reported in the control group is 2.118, compared with 2.382 in the treatment group. The difference between the two groups is 0.264 and is statistically significant at the 1 percent level. This estimate suggests that approximately 26.4 percent of civil servants in our sample received informal payments from private individuals or firms while providing public services.

Table 3. Involvement in bribery.

Demographic information	No. of obs.	Control	Treatment	Difference
Respondents (all)	1,634	2.118	2.382	0.264***
		(0.025)	(0.032)	(0.041)
Gender: Male	1,256	2.133	2.357	0.224***
		(0.028)	(0.037)	(0.047)
Gender: Female	378	2.066	2.462	0.396***
		(0.056)	(0.068)	(0.088)
Position: Non-Gazetted (non-officers)	1,103	2.061	2.280	0.219***
		(0.029)	(0.038)	(0.048)
Position: Gazetted (officers)	531	2.230	2.609	0.378***
		(0.048)	(0.061)	(0.078)
Service group: General administration	1,036	2.108	2.401	0.292***
		(0.032)	(0.042)	(0.053)
Service group: Others	598	2.135	2.349	0.214***
		(0.041)	(0.053)	(0.067)

Note: ***p < 0.01. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Because respondents were not required to disclose their involvement in bribery directly, the list experiment helps mitigate social desirability bias and may provide a more credible estimate of sensitive

behavior. This study does not include a direct-question benchmark. However, existing evidence suggests that bribery is an important concern in Nepal. According to World Bank firm-level evidence from Nepal, the most problematic transactions involving requests for informal payments were construction-related permits (17.8 percent of firms), telephone connections (15.5 percent), tax inspections (15 percent), and dealings with government officials (15 percent) (Afram & Salvi Del Pero, 2012). Our estimate of 26.4 percent is numerically higher than these reported figures, which may indicate a higher prevalence of bribery than is captured by those transaction-specific payer-side measures. At the same time, these comparisons should be interpreted cautiously because the underlying measures are not directly comparable. The World Bank figures reflect firm-side reports for specific transactions, whereas our estimate captures self-reported receipt of informal payments by bureaucrats using an indirect elicitation method. Table 3 also reports subgroup estimates by respondents' demographic and professional characteristics. These descriptive estimates suggest that the prevalence of bribery may vary across groups of civil servants. For example, the point estimate is higher among female respondents than among male respondents, and it is also higher among gazetted officers than among non-gazetted officials. Likewise, the point estimate is higher among respondents in general administration than among those in other service groups. These subgroup patterns may offer preliminary descriptive insights relevant to Hypotheses 1–3, but they should be interpreted with caution. The subgroup estimates are based on unconditional comparisons and do not by themselves establish that the differences across groups are statistically significant. Moreover, the observed patterns may reflect differences in other respondent characteristics, such as education, work experience, or occupational role. Thus, the next subsection presents multivariate analysis to assess whether these patterns remain after controlling for multiple respondent characteristics simultaneously and to evaluate the hypotheses more rigorously.

6.2. Multivariate Analysis

To examine whether individual characteristics are systematically associated with bribery behavior, we estimate a constrained maximum likelihood list experiment model in which the probability of endorsing the sensitive item is specified as a function of observable respondent characteristics. This approach follows the statistical framework developed by Imai (2011) and Blair and Imai (2012) which extends the basic difference-in-means estimator by incorporating covariates into the analysis of list experiment data. Although linear regression can be applied to aggregated list experiment responses, the maximum likelihood estimator is better suited to this setting because it improves efficiency and respects the bounded nature of the latent probability of agreeing with the sensitive item. By modeling the sensitive response indirectly, this approach also preserves the anonymity advantages of the list experiment design while allowing covariate-adjusted inference.

Table 4 presents the results of the multivariate analysis (see Table A3 in the appendix for the corresponding results from the model with additional controls). The model includes binary indicators for respondent gender (1 = female, 0 = male), bureaucratic position (1 = higher-ranking/gazetted officer, 0 = lower-ranking/non-gazetted officer), and service group (1 = general administration, 0 = others). The estimates reveal that bureaucratic position is the only respondent characteristic significantly associated with the sensitive item. Specifically, the coefficient for POSITION is positive and statistically significant, indicating that higher-ranking civil servants are systematically more likely to have received informal payments than their lower-ranked counterparts. Substantively, the model predicts an estimated bribery probability of 29.2 percent among high-ranking officials, compared with 9.3 percent among lower-ranking officials.⁴ This finding provides strong empirical support for Hypothesis 2, confirming that informal payments are more prevalent among bureaucrats who occupy positions with greater administrative authority.

Table 4. Multivariate regression results (Maximum likelihood constrained model).

	Est.	S.E.		Est.	S.E.
Sensitive item			Control items		
(Intercept)	-2.451***	0.536	(Intercept)	0.107	0.055
GENDER	0.981	0.739	GENDER	-0.029	0.085
POSITION	1.384**	0.648	POSITION	0.153**	0.070
SERVICE	-0.076	0.628	SERVICE	0.031	0.064
Log-likelihood	-2086.077				
No of obs.	1634				

Note: The sensitive item captures whether the respondent received an informal payment while providing public services.

***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05.

⁴ In the maximum likelihood framework developed by Imai (2011) the probability of endorsing the sensitive item is modeled using a logistic link function. To derive the substantive probabilities, we calculate the average predictive margins by setting the bureaucratic position variable to 0 and 1, respectively, while keeping all other covariates at their observed sample values. This procedure yields average linear predictions (log-odds) of -2.272 for lower-ranking officials and -0.888 for higher-ranking officials. The difference between these two indices corresponds exactly to the estimated coefficient for the position variable (1.384). These linear indices are then converted into predicted probabilities using the standard logistic transformation $P = 1/(1 + e^{-x\beta})$. Applying this transformation, the estimated probability for lower-ranking officials is $1/(1 + e^{2.272}) \approx 0.093$ (9.3 percent), and for higher-ranking officials, it is $1/(1 + e^{0.888}) \approx 0.292$ (29.2 percent).

This result is consistent with theoretical arguments that emphasize the role of bureaucratic discretion in facilitating corruption. Higher-ranking officials often exercise greater authority over decisions involving permits, procurement, regulatory enforcement, and the allocation of administrative benefits. Because these decisions can create substantial private gains for citizens and firms, they also generate stronger incentives to offer informal payments to officials in positions of authority. Thus, the multivariate analysis suggests that hierarchical location within the bureaucracy is a more important predictor of bribery than individual demographic characteristics alone.

On the other hand, the analysis provides no statistically significant support for Hypothesis 1. Although the descriptive estimates in the previous subsection suggested differences between male and female respondents, those differences do not remain statistically distinguishable from zero after controlling for position and service group. This pattern suggests that the descriptive gender difference may reflect variation in institutional roles rather than a direct effect of gender itself. More broadly, this interpretation is consistent with the argument that gender differences in corruption often depend on institutional opportunity structures rather than fixed gender-specific behavioral traits. In addition, the results provide no statistically significant support for Hypothesis 3. After controlling for other respondent characteristics, service group is not significantly associated with the likelihood of bribery. This suggests that differences in corruption are driven not by specific occupational roles, but likely by the degree of authority and discretion attached to bureaucratic rank. Figure 2 illustrates these patterns by plotting the estimated probabilities of bribery across respondent groups with 95 percent confidence intervals, showing a clear difference by position but comparatively small and statistically imprecise differences by gender and service group.

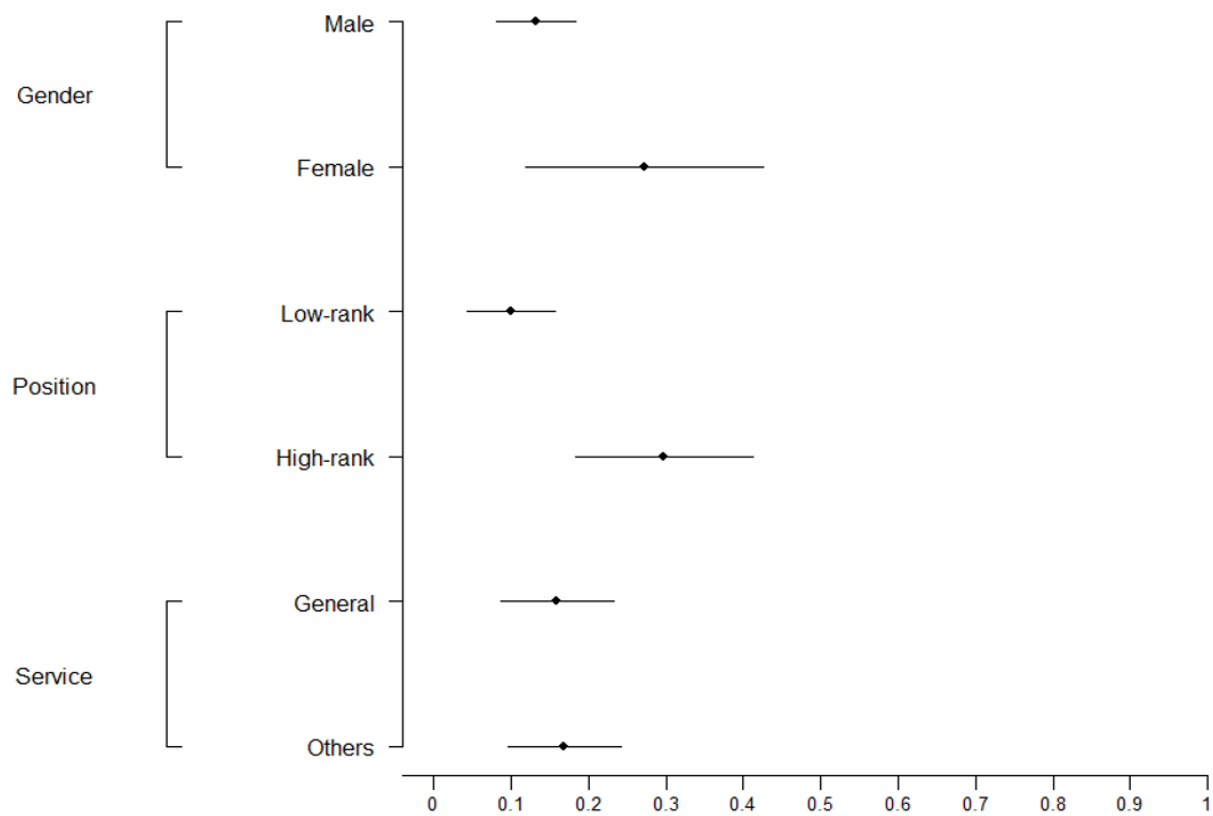


Figure 2. Multivariate estimates of bribery.

Note: The dots represent the estimated proportions of respondents engaging in bribery, and the lines show the 95% confidence intervals from the regression model in Table 4. The vertical axis shows respondents' attributes.

The multivariate results indicate that bureaucratic hierarchy plays a central role in explaining bribery within public administration. Officials in higher positions appear to face greater opportunities for rent extraction, whereas gender and service group do not exert independent effects once institutional location is taken into account. These findings underscore the importance of anti-corruption reforms that target organizational structures of discretion and oversight, especially among higher-ranking officials.

7. Discussion and Policy Implications

The empirical results of this study provide new, micro-level insights into rent-seeking behavior within public administration. Using an indirect elicitation method among civil servants in Nepal, the analysis reveals that bribery is not an isolated phenomenon, with approximately one-quarter of respondents estimated to have

received informal payments while providing public services. More crucially, the results highlight the role of bureaucratic hierarchy in shaping corruption opportunities. Civil servants occupying higher-ranking, gazetted positions are significantly more likely to engage in bribery than lower-ranking officials, whereas gender and service group do not systematically predict illicit behavior once hierarchical rank is taken into account.

These findings have several theoretical implications for understanding corruption in bureaucratic organizations. First, the results strongly suggest that administrative authority is the central determinant of corruption vulnerability. High-ranking officials possess concentrated decision-making power over permits, regulatory enforcement, and resource allocation. Because these discretionary actions generate substantial economic benefits for private actors, individuals and firms have strong incentives to capture administrative outcomes through informal payments. This confirms classical theoretical arguments that highlight the dangerous intersection of monopoly power and administrative discretion in facilitating corruption (Klitgaard, 1988; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993) as well as more recent evidence showing that discretionary procedures can be associated with corruption in procurement settings and that features of bureaucratic encounters can increase bribery risk in citizen–state interactions (Decarolis et al., 2025; Nieto-Morales et al., 2024).

Second, the absence of statistically significant gender differences in the multivariate analysis suggests that corruption behavior among civil servants may be driven more by institutional incentives than by individual demographic characteristics. While some early studies suggested that women may be inherently less likely to engage in corruption due to stronger ethical standards or higher risk aversion (Dollar et al., 2001; Swamy et al., 2001) the findings of this study indicate that such descriptive differences may disappear once bureaucratic roles and institutional contexts are taken into account. This result supports the growing consensus in the literature that corruption behavior is largely shaped by structural features of administrative systems, such as access to corrupt networks and positions of authority, rather than individual demographic traits alone (Bjarnegård, 2013; Detkova et al., 2021; Jha & Sarangi, 2018; Yu et al., 2024).

Third, the null finding regarding occupational specialization suggests that the capacity to extract bribes matters more than the frequency of citizen interaction. Although officials in specialized administrative sectors, such as taxation or customs, often face intense contact with private actors, the ability to execute discretionary, high-stakes decisions ultimately dictates corruption risk. This aligns with evidence demonstrating that while frontline officials frequently interact with the public, the most substantial corruption vulnerabilities arise only when bureaucrats possess the discretionary authority to allocate high-value public contracts, manipulate regulatory enforcement, or protect favored firms from competition (Romero, 2025; Svensson, 2003).

From a policy perspective, these findings indicate that anti-corruption strategies must specifically target the institutional structures surrounding high-ranking officials. One critical approach is the reduction of concentrated administrative discretion. Simplifying bureaucratic procedures, codifying regulatory guidelines, and requiring multi-signature approvals for high-stakes decisions can diffuse authority and reduce the leverage individual senior officials hold over service users. Additionally, the results lend support to structural disruption tactics, such as the strategic rotation of public officials across administrative posts. Because bribery often requires trust and repeated interactions to overcome the risk of detection, frequent staff rotation, particularly among senior, decision-making ranks, can prevent the formation of entrenched corrupt networks between bureaucrats and private actors.

Finally, monitoring and accountability mechanisms must be recalibrated to reflect the empirical hierarchy of risk identified in this study. Given our estimate that high-ranking officials are substantially more likely to engage in bribery than their lower-ranking counterparts, oversight institutions, such as independent anti-corruption agencies and internal auditing bodies, should prioritize scrutinizing the discretionary decisions of senior bureaucrats. Because high-level corruption involves complex regulatory and procurement approvals rather than routine frontline transactions, effective oversight requires specialized, independent auditing capable of tracking these high-stakes decisions. Ultimately, the results of this study underscore the need for anti-corruption research and policy design to shift their analytical focus away from individual demographic characteristics and toward institutional architecture. Although corruption is frequently framed as a failure of personal ethics, our evidence suggests that bureaucratic hierarchy and the concentration of administrative discretion are the true channels for rent-seeking within public administration.

8. Conclusion

This study examined bribery among civil servants in Nepal using a list experiment designed to measure sensitive behavior indirectly. By applying an indirect elicitation method to bureaucratic corruption, the study contributes new micro-level evidence on a form of behavior that is difficult to capture through conventional survey questions. The results yield two main conclusions. First, bribery appears to be a meaningful concern within the sampled bureaucracy, with the prevalence estimate indicating that informal payments are not an isolated phenomenon. Second, the multivariate analysis shows that bureaucratic position is more strongly associated with bribery than either gender or service group. Higher-ranking officials are significantly more likely to receive informal payments, whereas the effects of gender and occupational specialization are no longer statistically significant after controlling for other characteristics. These findings suggest that corruption within public administration is shaped less by individual attributes than by the distribution of authority within

bureaucratic organizations. In particular, they point to the importance of discretionary power and hierarchical position in creating opportunities for rent extraction. Thus, anti-corruption efforts may be more effective when they focus on institutional arrangements that govern high-stakes administrative decisions, especially those involving senior officials.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations that provide clear avenues for future research. First, the sample is drawn exclusively from central government offices in the capital, Kathmandu, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Central-level bureaucracies often operate under different oversight mechanisms, political pressures, and transaction types compared to provincial or municipal governments. Particularly in decentralized or federalizing contexts like Nepal, the dynamics of informal payments at the local level, where bureaucrats interact more intimately with community networks, might exhibit entirely different vulnerability profiles. Second, while the list experiment effectively mitigates social desirability bias to provide a credible prevalence estimate, the indirect nature of the design inherently limits the depth of information that can be collected. The methodology captures the ‘extensive’ margin of corruption, whether an official has received an informal payment, but it cannot measure the ‘intensive’ margin, such as the frequency of these transactions or their monetary magnitude. Furthermore, the aggregate nature of the sensitive item does not allow us to distinguish between collusive bribery (where both the official and the citizen benefit) and coercive extortion, nor does it identify the specific administrative procedures that triggered the payment.

These limitations point to several promising directions for future research. Methodologically, future studies could employ dual-elicitation techniques, such as combining list experiments with endorsement experiments or randomized response techniques, to capture both the prevalence and the magnitude of corrupt transactions. Expanding this empirical framework to sub-national governments or conducting cross-country comparisons would also help determine whether the strong association between hierarchical rank and bribery holds across different political and institutional environments. Finally, complementing survey experiments with objective administrative audit data or qualitative fieldwork could further reveal the precise micro-mechanisms through which bureaucratic discretion leads to rent extraction.

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Appendix.

Our study has discussed the bribery engagement of bureaucrats and what types of civil servants are engaged in bribery. Concerning the later part, the issue of individual characteristics of corrupt civil servants, this study has examined three hypotheses related to gender, position, and service group classifications by using multivariate regression analysis initiated by Blair and Imai (2012) and Imai (2011). This section presents our empirical results related to Hypotheses 1-3 and checked whether our findings are still valid or not even if the multivariate model adds other six individual characteristics: (i) age (30 years or less = 0; more than 30 years = 1), (ii) marital status (single = 0; married = 1), (iii) education (bachelor or below = 0; master or above = 1) (iv) family size (5 or less = 0; more than 5 = 1), (v) work experience (5 years or less = 0; more than 5 years = 1), (vi) family members in civil service (No = 0; Yes = 1).

First, Table A1 examines the test for the conditions of randomization and confirms its effectiveness. Second, Table A2 illustrates the results of univariate analysis for each characteristic, which finds a statistically significant difference between control and treatment groups in their respective responses at the 1 percent level. Third, Table A3 exhibits the estimated coefficients of the multivariate analysis together with standard errors, and Figure A1 shows the estimated proportions of respondents engaging in bribery confirming consistent results with the empirical findings obtained from the baseline model incorporating three individual characteristics: gender, position, and service groups related with hypothesis 1-3. The enlarged model also finds position as the predictor of bribery engagement showing high-ranked bureaucrats are more likely to engage in bribery. Concerning other individual characteristics, the multivariate analysis reveals that bribery is not associated with most of the individual characteristics except the family size of bureaucrats which is statistically significant at a 10 percent level of significance. Civil servants having more family members tend to involve in bribery than those who belong to lean families. This can be explained from an expenditure needs and income perspective. A larger family size increases the financial stress of civil servants to find alternative income sources for fulfilling their family needs which may motivate them for engaging in such corrupt activities. In Nepal, even low-ranked government officials and his family hold more property and live lavish lifestyles give pressure on bureaucrats in the name of maintaining social status and prestige.

Table A1. Probit model test of balance in randomization.

Variable	Coef.	S.E.
GENDER	0.067	0.074
POSITION	-0.071	0.075
SERVICE	0.014	0.065
AGE	0.037	0.080
MARITAL	-0.061	0.090
EDUCATION	0.001	0.072
WORKWEAR	0.005	0.079
FAMCIVIL	-0.013	0.064
FAMSIZE	-0.062	0.087
Constant	0.029	0.094
Log-likelihood	-1130.847	
No of obs.	1634	

Note: The dependent variable is the indicator of whether the respondent was assigned to the treatment group.

Table A2. Involvement in bribery.

Demographic information	No. of obs.	Control	Treatment	Difference
Age: 30 years or below	589	2.037 (0.040)	2.309 (0.052)	0.271*** (0.066)
Age: 31 years or above	1,045	2.165 (0.032)	2.424 (0.042)	0.260*** (0.053)
Marital status: Unmarried or others	321	2.071 (0.055)	2.319 (0.074)	0.248*** (0.092)
Marital status: Married	1,313	2.129 (0.028)	2.398 (0.037)	0.269*** (0.046)
Education: Bachelor or below	713	2.037 (0.035)	2.404 (0.045)	0.368*** (0.057)
Education: Master's or above	921	2.180 (0.036)	2.364 (0.047)	0.185*** (0.059)
Work experience.: 5 years or below	474	2.059 (0.044)	2.290 (0.060)	0.231*** (0.074)
Work experience.: 6 years or more	1,160	2.142 (0.031)	2.420 (0.039)	0.278*** (0.050)
Family in civil service: Yes	963	2.112 (0.032)	2.389 (0.042)	0.277*** (0.053)
Family in civil service: No	671	2.127 (0.040)	2.372 (0.052)	0.245*** (0.066)
Family size: 5 or less	1,377	2.102 (0.027)	2.384 (0.033)	0.282*** (0.043)
Family size: more than 5	257	2.199 (0.073)	2.372 (0.108)	0.173*** (0.131)

Note: ***p < 0.01. Standard errors are in parentheses.

Table A3. Multivariate regression results (Maximum likelihood constrained model).

Sensitive item	Est.	S.E.	Control items	Est.	S.E.
(Intercept)	-3.066***	1.034	(Intercept)	0.072	0.087
GENDER	1.179	0.766	GENDER	-0.017	0.078
POSITION	1.878**	0.942	POSITION	0.165**	0.081
SERVICE	-0.210	0.683	SERVICE	0.040	0.063
AGE	1.314	0.924	AGE	0.001	0.073
MARITAL	-0.508	0.828	MARITAL	-0.000	0.081
EDUCATION	-1.139	0.925	EDUCATION	-0.031	0.073
WORKYEAR	-0.042	0.778	WORKYEAR	0.090	0.074
FAMCIVIL	0.565	0.706	FAMCIVIL	-0.016	0.065
FASIZE	1.187*		FASIZE	-0.082	0.085
Log-likelihood	-2,080.626				
No of obs.	1,634				

Note: The sensitive item captures whether the respondent received an informal payment while providing public services.

***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

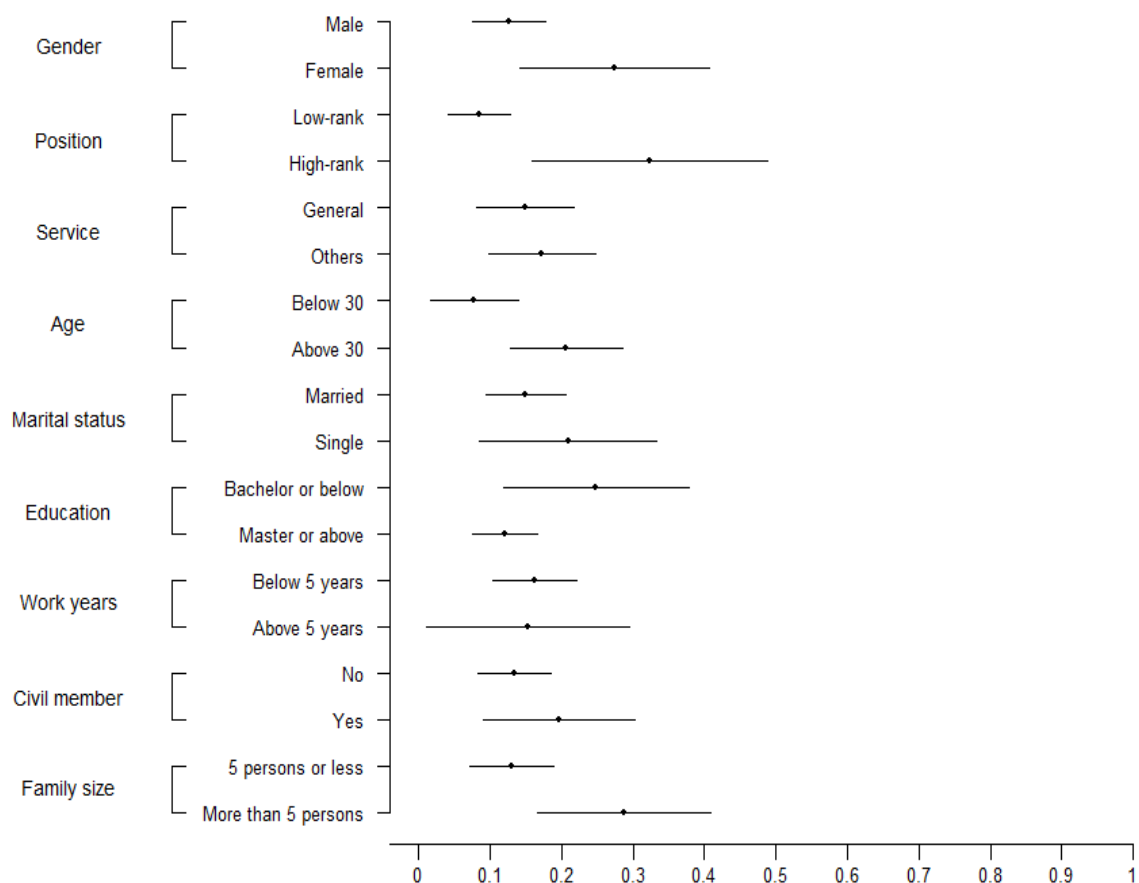


Figure A1. Multivariate estimates of bribery.

Note: The dots represent the estimated proportions of respondents engaging in bribery, and the lines show the 95% confidence intervals from the regression model in [Table A3](#). The vertical axis shows respondents' attributes.