

Chapter 35

Employment Status and Attitudes Toward Bribery: Summaries of 17 Studies



Robert W. McGee and Serkan Benk

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the results of 17 studies that were conducted on the relationship between employment status and attitude toward bribery. Additional summaries will be published in the second volume of this series, *The Ethics of Bribery: Country Studies* (McGee & Benk, 2023). This volume includes summaries of the following studies:

- Age – 26 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023a)
- Confidence in government – 15 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023b)
- Confidence in the justice system/courts – 6 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023k)
- Confidence in the police – 7 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023c)
- Education – 23 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023d)
- Employment status – 17 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023e)
- Ethnicity – 8 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023f)
- Gender – 31 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023g)
- Happiness – 19 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023h)
- Health – 11 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023i)
- Income – 18 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023j)
- Marital status – 20 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023l)
- Political viewpoint – 16 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023m)
- Religious denomination – 19 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023n)
- Religiosity – 12 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023o)
- Social class – 20 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023p)

R. W. McGee (✉)
Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC, USA

S. Benk
Inonu University, Malatya, Turkey

Sector of employment – 14 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023q)

Size of town – 10 studies (McGee & Benk, 2023r)

Twenty-four studies – 24 studies (McGee, 2023b)

Twenty-eight studies – 28 studies (McGee, 2023a)

Methodology

This chapter summarizes some of the findings of prior studies on the ethics of bribery. Some of the studies used the World Values Survey database as the basis for examining the relationship between employment status and the ethics of bribery. The survey question on bribery asked participants whether it is justifiable to accept a bribe in the course of business using a 10-point Likert scale where 1 = never justifiable and 10 = always justifiable. Other studies solicited the opinions of students and others.

Country Studies

Argentina, Brazil, and Colombia [Three Latin American Countries] (Hernandez & McGee, 2013a)

- Housewives were most opposed to bribe taking; students and the unemployed were least opposed.

Australia (Hernandez & McGee, 2014a)

- Retired people were most strongly opposed to bribe taking, followed by housewives, the self-employed, students, full-time and part-time employees, and unemployed.

Brazil (McGee, 2014)

- The only significant difference in mean scores was the comparison between housewives and full-time employees. In that case, housewives were significantly less opposed to bribe taking but only at the 10% level.
- The “Other” categories were all equally opposed to bribe taking (full-time, part-time, self-employed, retired, unemployed, students).

Brazil, China, Germany, and the USA [Four Large Countries] (Hernandez & McGee, 2012a)

- The retired group had the strongest opposition to bribe taking, followed by the self-employed, full-time and part-time workers, housewives, students, and the unemployed.

Canada, Mexico, and the USA [North America] (Hernandez & McGee, 2013b)

- Retired people tended to be most opposed to bribery, followed by full-time and part-time employees. Housewives and the unemployed were least opposed to bribery.

Egypt (Hernandez & McGee, 2013c)

- Retired and those who were employed full-time were significantly more opposed to bribe taking. Students and the unemployed were least opposed.

Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, and Iraq [Four Muslim Countries] (Hernandez & McGee, 2014b)

- Full-time employees, retired, and others were most strongly opposed to bribery. Those who were unemployed were least opposed. Part-timers and the self-employed were only slightly less opposed.

Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, and South Africa [African Countries] (Hernandez & McGee, 2014c)

- Housewives were most opposed to bribe taking. Self-employed and retired people tied for second place. Full-time employees, students, and the unemployed were in the next group. Part-time employees were least opposed to bribe taking

France (Hernandez & McGee, 2012b)

- For the 1981 study, those most opposed to bribery was the “Other” category, which consisted of retired, housewives, students, unemployed, and others.
- The “Other” category could also be labeled *not in workforce*. Part-time workers were least opposed to bribery. For the 2006 study, part-time workers were most opposed to bribery, while self-employed individuals were least opposed.

France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy [Four European Countries] (Hernandez & McGee, 2012c)

- The group showing the strongest opposition to bribe taking was the retired group.
- There was a tie for second place between housewives and part-time employees. In the fourth place was the self-employed group.
- Tied for the fifth place were full-time employees and the “Other” group. There was a tie for least opposition between students and the unemployed.

The USA (Hernandez & McGee, 2013d)

- In 1982, part-time workers and those in the “Other” category, which includes retired, housewives, students, and others, were most opposed to bribery, while self-employed individuals were least opposed.

- In 2006, the group most opposed to bribery was the part-time group. However, this finding must be heavily discounted, since the sample size for the part-time group was only 4. The group least opposed to bribery in 2006 was the full-time employee group.
- A comparison of the 1982 and 2006 data finds that the full-time and other categories became less opposed to bribery over time, while the self-employed group became more opposed.

Religious Studies

Atheist Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023b](#))

- The unemployed group showed the weakest opposition to bribe taking; the retired/pensioned group showed the strongest opposition. Differences in mean scores among the eight groups were often significant.

Buddhist Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023c](#))

- Students had the least opposition to bribe taking, while those in the “Other” and retired/pensioned categories showed the strongest opposition. However, the difference in mean scores was only significant at the 10% level.

Christian Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023d](#))

- Those in the “Other” category were least opposed to bribe taking; the retired/pensioned group showed the strongest opposition to bribe taking.

Hindu Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023e](#))

- Although students showed the least aversion to bribe taking, and the retired/pensioned group showed the highest aversion, the differences in mean scores were not significant.

Jewish Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023f](#))

- Although students had the least aversion to bribe taking and those in the retired/pensioned group had the strongest opposition, the difference in mean scores was not significant, perhaps due to the small sample size.

Muslim Attitudes Toward Bribery (McGee et al., [2023a](#))

- Is a significant variable. Homemakers not otherwise employed showed the strongest opposition to bribe taking. Those working part-time (less than 30 h per week) tended to have significantly less opposition to bribe taking than several other groups.

References

- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2012a). The ethics of accepting a bribe: An empirical study of opinion in the USA, Brazil, Germany and China. *International Journal of Business, Accounting, and Finance*, 6(2), 178–196.
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2012b). A longitudinal study of French attitudes on accepting bribes. Published in the *Proceedings of the Allied Academies Summer International Conference*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2426964>
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2012c). Ethical attitudes toward taking a bribe: A study of four European countries. *Euro Asia Journal of Management*, 22(1/2), 3–28.
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2013a). Ethical attitudes toward taking a bribe: A study of three Latin American countries. *International Journal of Business & Economics Perspectives*, 8(1), 142–166.
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2013b). The ethics of accepting a bribe: A comparative study of opinion in the USA, Canada and Mexico. *Journal of Accounting, Ethics & Public Policy*, 14(4), 945–998. Reprinted at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2426963>
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2013c). Egyptian attitudes on accepting bribes. *International Journal of Business & Public Administration*, 10(1), 142–164.
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2013d). Attitudes toward accepting a bribe: A longitudinal study of the USA. *Journal of Accounting, Ethics & Public Policy*, 14(4), 907–943. Reprinted at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2426961>
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2014a). Attitudes toward bribery in Australia: A demographic study. *Euro Asia Journal of Management*, 24(1/2), 57–91. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2426968>
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2014b). The ethical perceptions of bribe taking in four Muslim countries. *Journal of Accounting, Ethics & Public Policy*, 15(1), 185–237. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2426966>
- Hernandez, T., & McGee, R. W. (2014c). A demographic study of African attitudes on bribery. *Journal of Accounting, Ethics & Public Policy*, 15(2), 541–596. Reprinted at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2426967>
- McGee, R. W. (2014). Attitudes toward bribery: A case study of Brazil. In B. Christiansen (Ed.), *Economic growth and technological change in Latin America* (pp. 394–416). IGI Global. <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/attitudes-toward-bribery/112278>
- McGee, R. W. (2023a). The ethics of bribery: Summaries of 28 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W. (2023b). The ethics of bribery: Summaries of 24 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (Eds.). (2023). *The ethics of bribery: Country studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023a). Age and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 26 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023b). Confidence in government and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 15 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023c). Confidence in the police and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 7 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023d). Education and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 23 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023e). Employment status and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 17 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.

- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023f). Ethnicity and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 8 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023g). Gender and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 31 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023h). Happiness and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 19 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023i). Health and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 11 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023j). Income level and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 18 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023k). Confidence in the justice system and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 6 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023l). Marital status and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 20 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023m). Political viewpoint and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 16 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023n). Religious denomination and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 19 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023o). Religiosity and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 12 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023p). Social class and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 20 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023q). Sector of employment and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 14 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., & Benk, S. (2023r). Size of town and attitudes toward bribery: Summaries of 10 studies. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Budak, T. (2023a). Muslim attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Yüzbaşı, B. (2023b). Atheist attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Yüzbaşı, B. (2023c). Buddhist attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Yüzbaşı, B. (2023d). Christian attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Yüzbaşı, B. (2023e). Hindu attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.
- McGee, R. W., Benk, S., & Yüzbaşı, B. (2023f). Jewish attitudes toward bribery. In R. W. McGee & S. Benk (Eds.), *The ethics of bribery: Theoretical and empirical studies*. Springer.

Robert W. McGee is a professor at the Broadwell College of Business and Economics, Fayetteville State University, USA. He has earned 23 academic degrees, including 13 doctorates from universities in the USA and 4 European countries. He has published more than 60 books, including several novels, and more than 1000 articles, book chapters, conference papers, and working papers. Various studies have ranked him #1 in the world for both accounting ethics and business ethics scholarship. He is an attorney and CPA (retired) and has worked or lectured in more than 30 countries. He drafted the accounting law for Armenia and Bosnia and reviewed the accounting law for Mozambique. He was in charge of assisting the Finance Ministries of Armenia and Bosnia converting their countries to International Financial Reporting Standards. He is also a world champion in taekwondo, karate, kung fu, and tai chi (both Yang and Sun styles) and has won more than 900 gold medals.

Serkan Benk is Professor of Public Finance at the Inonu University (Turkey), Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Public Finance. He received his PhD degree in public finance from the Institute of Social Sciences, Bursa Uludağ University, in 2007. His research interests in public finance are the theory of taxation, public economics, tax compliance and taxpayer behavior, ethics of tax evasion, and ethics of bribery. In recent years, he has focused on the ethics of tax evasion. He has collaborated actively with researchers in several other disciplines of social science, particularly psychology, business, and law. Prof. Benk has authored and contributed to numerous books, book chapters, articles, and reports.