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Border Corruption

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In many countries, customs and border protection agencies are perceived as the most corrupt government institutions. Officers in those organizations have more opportunities to participate in corruption than do employees in other law enforcement agencies. Moreover, border related corrupt activities may be directly linked to organized crime groups. Despite the importance of the topic, border corruption has remained conceptually underdeveloped. Complementing already existing classification schemes, this study uses two dimensions to develop a six-cell conceptual typology of border corruption: (1) the actor of the corrupt transaction on the client side, and (2) the collusive/coercive nature of the exchange. Possible implications for research and practice are also discussed.

Keywords: border corruption, law enforcement corruption, conceptual typology

Due to terrorist events, politicization of illegal migration, drug epidemics, and transnational organized crime, border security has recently emerged as one of the top public agendas in many countries. As a response, governments are enhancing border security. However, quite frequently the governments' own officers facilitate the illegal movement of goods or people across a country's borders by taking bribes and acting against their public organization's policy and the law. Border control authorities are viewed by citizens as the most corrupt government institutions in many countries (Hors, 2001; Mandic, 2017; McLinden & Durrani, 2013; Special Eurobarometer-470, 2017). Customs agencies are particularly badly perceived in Africa, Latin America, and most of Central and Eastern Europe (Transparency International, 2005). A recent report claims that "arrests for corruption of CBP (U.S. Customs and Border Protection) personnel far exceed, on a per capita basis, such arrests at other federal law enforcement agencies" (Homeland Security Advisory Council, 2015, p. 6).

Despite the growing importance of border related corrupt activities, the concept of border corruption is still underdeveloped. While many studies have discussed other forms of corruption, the empirical and theoretical academic literature on border corruption is surprisingly limited.

Moreover, the findings of such sporadic scholarship have never been integrated. The main argument of this study is that border corruption is a unique form of corruption and it is worth the scholarly effort to provide greater clarity of the concept. Why does corruption happen at the border and what makes it distinctive? What are the main types of border corruption and

the relevant theoretical dimensions of each type? This study intends to develop a concise concept of “border corruption” through fusion of various elements from the general corruption literature. Drawing upon two dimensions: (1) the actor of the corrupt transaction on the client side (individual, informal group, formal organization), and (2) the collusive/coercive nature of the exchange, the article offers a conceptual typology of border corruption. The new typology is complementary to existing classifications in interpreting border corruption.

This article contributes to the literature in two ways. First, using two dimensions, emerged from existing classification schemes, a new conceptual typology of border corruption is developed that explains a wide variety of corrupt activities at the border. The typology provides a useful heuristic device to highlight the relevant theoretical dimensions of the phenomenon. Another goal of this typology is to reduce complexity. It helps identify similarities and differences between border corruption cases; thus, dissimilar forms can be separated for future analysis. Second, based on this typology, the possible anticorruption strategies on different types of border corruption are discussed. This helps improve the match between actual forms of border corruption and policy responses.

The study starts with a brief discussion of border management activities and a working definition of border corruption. The second part focuses on the specific factors contributing to border corruption. The third part explains the analytical approach to developing the typology. The next section reviews existing classification schemes of border corruption. Then, each border corruption type is presented. Finally, the study offers some implications for research and practice.

Border Management and Border Corruption

The focus of this article is a distinctive form of corruption, a set of illegal practices defined and determined by the existence of the border. Borders simultaneously represent different things. They are edges of territory; signs of geographical separation; zones of connectivity; and spaces of governance. They can also shape people’s perceptions of the world (Rumford, 2006). In most cases, formal government authorities manage borders between nation states. While crossing a border, people, vehicles, and goods must comply with the laws of both the exit country and the entry country. The two main general functions of border control agencies are national security and revenue collection: keeping undesirable goods and people out while collecting revenue and taxes on goods that are allowed in (Doyle, 2011). Border corruption occurs when border law enforcement officers, whose job is to collect revenue and ensure security, are bribed in order to not perform their duty and to act against their organization’s policy and the law.

At official points of entry, authorities accommodate customs, immigration, and control-related activities (Zarnowiecki, 2011). In most countries, the border areas between ports of entry are also patrolled by officers to prevent illegal border crossing. Yet there is a wide variation of how different states organize their border management. In some countries, these often-overlapping tasks are carried out by one border control organization, while in many other nations each task is carried out by a special agency or department. These functions may also be organized under authorities such as police, military, or tax agencies.

Applying the resource transfer approach to corruption (Jancsics, 2019), this study defines border corruption as an illegal exchange of different resources between two or more actors—border officer(s) (bribe taker) and client(s) (bribe giver)—who may be individuals, firms, or organized crime groups. In the most typical case of border corruption, a client bribes an agent in return for nonenforcement of the law at a port of entry. Yet the resource provided by the agent may have other forms such as sharing information about patrol routes, shift schedules, or vulnerabilities in border defense; producing permits for illegal immigrants; giving warnings of investigative activity; or giving names of individuals who cooperate with the government (Flores, 2017).

The form of corruption discussed herein is related to physical movement of goods and people from one country to another. Instances when smugglers bring or mail drugs or other materials illegally to another country without the involvement of official personnel are not considered corruption. Illicit international financial flows (e.g., laundering money or financing terrorism) that do not require physical border crossing are also out of the scope of this article. Similarly, other white-collar crime activities on the border such as fraud; embezzlement; theft; submission of false claims; tax evasion; or nepotism, are excluded from this study because they are not border specific. They may occur in any public organization. Although this article mainly focuses on corrupt deals between border law enforcement and clients, it is worth noting that other government personnel who work away from the border but have access to sensitive agency information (e.g., intelligence activity) may be bribed by actors who are interested in illegal movement of things across countries (Frost, 2010). Moreover, employees of private companies (e.g., staff from airlines, airports, or ports) may be also involved in border related corruption (Koser, 2008).

Why Corruption Happens at the Border

A special combination of social and organizational factors makes border control organizations particularly prone to corruption. In most countries, they are among the largest public sector agencies because of their extensive network of offices and stations spread out amongst many locations (Ferreira, Engelschalk, & Mayville, 2006). Moreover, compared to average street level bureaucrats, law enforcement officers deal with an especially high number of transactions at the border which multiplies the opportunities for corruption (Parayno, 2013). For example, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), one of the world's largest uniformed law enforcement organizations, interacts with and clears into the United States over one million people, on average, every single day (CBP, 2018; Homeland Security Advisory Council, 2016). This alone indicates that a large number of border officers might be exposed to corruption.

Generally, the interaction between the structure of an organization and the actors' position within this structure creates opportunities by providing settings where corruption might occur (Graycar & Prenzler, 2013, pp. 28-29; Jávora & Jancsics, 2016; Vaughan, 1982). A unique opportunity arises from the nature of the border operation which predisposes customs and border agencies to an especially high probability of corruption. The factor mentioned by scholars most often is the combination of administrative monopoly and broad discretionary power of officers over valuable goods (Ferreira et al., 2006; Klitgaard, 1988; McLinden,

2005; Wickberg, 2013). The fact that relatively low-wage agents make critical decisions about whether individuals or valuable goods are allowed to enter a country may encourage officers to use such power for illegal private gain, often by extorting clients to pay bribes. One of the main tasks of border control agencies is to prevent the movement of illegal goods such as drugs; weapons; alcohol; tobacco; wildlife; stolen archeological finds; arts and other cultural treasures into a country. Since smuggling those goods is a highly profitable illegal activity, organized crime groups often attempt to bribe border officers. As a result, border corruption, more than any other form of corruption, can be linked directly to the activities of crime syndicates.

In many areas of public administration, technology has depersonalized the relation between public employees and private actors (e.g., online procurement), thereby reducing the risks of corruption. At the border, however, direct contact cannot be avoided because goods must still be physically inspected. The physical contact between potential corrupt partners creates further opportunity to initiate a corrupt transaction and/or develop a long-term corrupt relationship (McLinden, 2005).

The organization's geographic location and the distance between units can also generate opportunity for unlawful behavior by creating structural secrecy (Vaughan, 1982). The physical location of remote land borders creates "authority leakage" which makes it difficult for the upper levels or headquarters to supervise subunits (Gounev, Dzhekova, & Bezlov, 2012; Tullock, 1965). It is even harder to monitor and supervise the activity of agents who do not work at stations but patrol the border between ports of entry (Balla, 2016).

The occupational structure of border agencies is similar to other law enforcement organizations, especially police. In many countries, border control even belongs to the national police authorities. Distinctive characteristics of such organizations are the highly integrated workforce and its special organizational subculture that prevents reporting corruption. Covering up the illicit or illegal behavior of colleagues is a phenomenon empirically confirmed by police corruption research (Chan, 2003, p. 34; Westmarland, 2005). In these organizations, a large number of individually corrupt employees act collectively to make sure that no one's corruption is detected (Pinto, Leana, & Pil, 2008; Rose-Ackerman, 1999, p. 51). For example, a border officer whose shift ends may collect monetary bribes from corrupt colleagues who received them from clients and sneak the money outside the border station (Kardos, 2014). Therefore, officers do not have to carry suspiciously large amounts of money while working. Later, corrupt officers can split the illegal profit and even give a portion to supervisors to "buy" their silence. Such corrupt organizational subcultures also help socialize noncorrupt new recruits into accepting corruption.

METHODOLOGY

Some classifications of border-related corruption are already in existence, yet they suffer from weaknesses. They merely focus on customs related corrupt activities, excluding other immigration or control related forms. Moreover, they are unidimensional and therefore fail to cover every theoretically relevant category. The goal of this study is to develop a multidimensional conceptual typology that captures all essential forms and features of border related

corruption. In order to achieve such a goal previous classifications were completed and further developed.

The analytical approach of this study to developing a new typology was based on qualitative thematic analysis techniques (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) in which initial themes were developed from existing classifications of border corruption. In the first stage of the process, these classifications were reviewed. After excluding nonborder specific corruption forms, such as nepotism, theft, or embezzlement, two recurring themes emerged from the review process. The first one was related to the clear distinction between two actors on the client side: one type who typically bribes border officers, that being trade companies with legal operations versus the other type—namely, criminal groups using illegal activities. The second common theme referred to the collusive or coercive nature of the corrupt transactions on the border. The second stage of developing a typology was an iterative process where similarities and convergences of the themes with a general corruption theory were established (Glaser & Strauss, 2011, p. 37). Here, an additional element, the individual client, was added to the two client categories already mentioned in the literature.

In the third stage, the modified two themes (actors on the client side and collusion/coercion dichotomy) were used as the main dimensions of the new typology. By combining these two dimensions, a six-cell typology of border corruption was created. Each cell represents a unique form of corruption. Examples from different countries were also added to the conceptual subcomponents in order to make it easier to apply the typology to practice. The existing classifications of border related corruption are briefly discussed in the following section.

Existing Classifications of Border Corruption

Hors (2001) distinguished among three types of corruption within customs administrations: (1) “routine corruption,” when private operators are forced by customs employees to pay bribes as part of the standard operating procedures in order to “facilitate” even fully legitimate transactions and avoid being unduly harassed; (2) “fraudulent corruption,” when export-import firms try to pay less tax and tariff than due or evade them completely and pay bribes to buy customs officers’ cooperation; and (3) “criminal corruption,” when clients bribe customs officers to allow a totally illegal operation such as drug or human smuggling.

McLinden (2005) discusses three forms of corruption in customs: (1) bribery that includes the payment of money by export-import companies to customs officers to facilitate the processing of licenses, clearances, or alter or reduce duty or taxation liabilities. Here, clients often feel pressured to pay officers to “facilitate” even fully legitimate transactions and avoid harassment. The next form, (2) nepotism, in the customs context includes the selection, transfer, or promotion of individuals or groups within customs administrations on the basis of an existing relationship rather than on merit. The last category, (3) misappropriation, includes white-collar crime activities that can be found in any public administration, such as theft; embezzlement; falsification of records; and fraud.

According to Yang (2009), corruption in customs takes two generic forms. The first one is simply the theft of government resources, when corrupt customs officers turn over to the government treasury only a fraction of monies collected from importers while simultaneously falsifying documentations in order to hide the revenue theft. The second form of corruption

is extraction of bribes from importers, for example, by intentionally delaying incoming shipments under the false excuses of problems with the documentation.

Buehn and Eichler (2009) studied smuggling across the United States–Mexico border from 1975 to 2004. The authors differentiated between smuggling illegal and legal goods. In the first case, trade misinvoicing occurred when entrepreneurs bribed officials to falsify documents and misreport the value of legal exports or imports in order to evade tariffs and taxes. The second form of smuggling involved illegal “freight,” such as illicit drugs and illegal immigrants, typically conducted by dangerous criminals.

Dutt and Traca (2010) emphasized two types of corruption that customs officials are particularly likely to engage in. In the first, extortion emerges because customs clearance procedures offer officers control over something that firms particularly value—access to and from the outside world—so officers can exploit such dependency. In the second type, evasion arises as payoffs to officers to reduce tariffs and other regulatory barriers to trade.

Border Corruption: A New Typology

The first dimension used in this study to build a border corruption typology is the primary actor on the client side that can be: (1) an individual; (2) an informal group; or (3) a formal organization. Here, an additional actor, the individual client, was added to the two categories already mentioned in the literature. The second dimension of the typology refers to the collusive/coercive nature of the corrupt transaction.

Collusion suggests that both parties, the client and the agent, benefit from the transaction. It indicates a horizontal relationship structure, exchanges between more or less equal partners. Coercive corruption refers to a dependency-based unequal social relationship. Here one party is forced by the other to participate in corruption. Very often, the agent creates a situation in which the client feels a real pressure to pay bribes for fair treatment, such as payment for service that would be otherwise free, extra money beyond official fees, or money for not falsifying records. However, in some cases it is the client (e.g., organized crime group) who uses coercion and forces the agent to make a corrupt deal. Combining these two dimensions creates a six-cell typology, as shown in Table 1. Each cell represents a qualitatively different type of border corruption comprising different motivations and social mechanisms. The next section presents each border corruption type.

TABLE 1
Typology of Border Corruption

Actors on the client side	Collusion	Coercion
Individual	Individual receives illegal advantages or avoids negative consequences	Individual pays to receive fair treatment
Informal group	Informal group reduces risks derived from its illegal activity	Organized crime group coerces border officers into facilitating illegal activity
Formal organization	Trading company increases its official profit by using illegal means	Trading company pays to receive fair treatment

Client as an Individual

Collusion

When a border-crossing individual bribes a border officer, it is typically a form of market corruption (Jancsics, 2019). Here, the agent (officer) and the client (individual) meet “on the spot” and make an ad hoc corrupt deal (Jancsics, 2013). It is a pure commodity type exchange between actors who are socially unbonded (Gregory, 1982, p. 42). The agent and the client engage in corruption because, according to their personal cost-benefit analyses, acting in a corrupt manner seems to be the most rational decision that will maximize their personal profit (Klitgaard, 1988; Rose-Ackerman, 1975; Shleifer & Vishny, 1993). In this situation, a particular external social setting dominates the transaction. Due to the time constraint and the fact that the partners probably will not meet in the future, the whole deal must be made immediately in that particular place (Jancsics, 2013). The actors cannot delay the transfer and the counter-transfer in time and space.

The client’s motivation to engage in collusive market corruption at the border is the receipt of special illegal advantages. This situation is also called “corruption with theft” because in this case border officers do not turn anything over to the government and simply hide the illegal deal (Shleifer & Vishny, 1993). An individual avoids taxes; tariffs; fines; or other negative consequences by bribing officers to ignore that individual’s expired passport or overstay in a country. Small bribes are also paid to facilitate the petty smuggling of consumer goods, such as alcohol, tobacco products, or petrol, especially where their prices are significantly different across a border. In other cases, the clients pay for speeding up the border passage of cars and persons, particularly when the port of entry is busy (CheNe, 2018; Gounev et al., 2012). This corruption is impersonal. The client will try to bribe whoever is on duty, and in many countries, it is often an open secret among citizens that officers at a particular port of entry accept such bribes.

Coercion

A border-crossing individual can also be forced by an agent to buy “fair treatment,” such as paying for service that would be otherwise free, paying extra money beyond official fees, or paying for not falsifying records (Bauhr, 2017). This is also a form of market corruption, an ad hoc corrupt transaction between rationally calculating individuals, but instead of maximizing his/her personal profit, here the client tries to minimize the costs intentionally created by a corrupt agent. At the border, there is a significant potential for such extortion because agents have wide discretion to block people’s or goods’ physical movement. Border officers often demand bribes for made-up offenses such as allegedly missing documentation, forms, or signatures. Another typical example of market-type coercive corruption is the practice where agents intentionally slow down border traffic and go back to normal pace only if they receive a bribe from the traveler (Ndonga, 2013; Wickberg, 2013). Sometimes there are even standard rates for bribes in order to avoid long waiting or unjustified procedures. For example, on the Hungary–Ukraine border there was an officer whose job was to record the number of passengers and the plate number of each car. Every driver knew that they should

give him/her HUF 200 (about USD 0.7) to “ensure” a smooth border crossing process (Magyar, 2015). Another example from Niger suggests a very similar practice: paying small bribes to officers is common in order to speed up the border crossing (Hahonou, 2016).

Client as an Informal Group

Collusion

A qualitatively different type of border corruption is that of a broad informal social network found on the client side of the corrupt exchange instead of just an individual. Here, corrupt partners clearly gain material benefits from this corruption but, in contrast to market corruption, their relationship also has an important social element. This is a form of social bribe, a recurring activity, assuming some level of trust and social bonds between the corrupt partners (Jancsics, 2019). Social bribe is based on the logic of gift-giving and reciprocity which allows the partners to delay the counter-transfer and exchange immaterial forms of resources (e.g., different kind of favors); both the counter-transfer and the immateriality of the exchange can blur the corrupt nature of the deal and make corruption more undetectable (Lawler & Hipp, 2010).

Transaction costs and risks are generally higher in corrupt exchanges than in legal economic business (Della Porta & Vannucci, 1999; Lambsdorff & Teksoz, 2004). Since making illegal deals with strangers is the riskiest form of corruption, the actor’s intrinsic interest is to make corrupt deals with the same trustworthy partner on a regular basis and turn market corruption, the ad-hoc impersonal exchange, into a social bribe, a bond-based reliable relationship (Graef, 2004; Graycar & Jancsics, 2017).

Many agents come from the border regions or surrounding areas where family ties and social relations are very strong (Heyman & Campbell, 2008; Velkova & Georgievski, 2004). For example, an earlier empirical study claims that in the USA, 56% of border patrol officers and 89% of port of entry inspectors grew up in border counties (Heyman, 1995, p. 272). This suggests potential kinship or friendship connections to people who are directly or indirectly involved in local smuggling activities (Gounev et al., 2012). For example, travelers on the Belize–Mexico border with a close personal connection with customs officers regularly entered (or left) a country with undeclared (or underdeclared) goods in their personal baggage (Wiegand, 1993). Another instance is a CBP official in El Paso, Texas, who worked with his wife and brother-in-law in a drug-trafficking ring (Cobler, 2016). An extreme example of such an overlapping arrangement between community networks and border authority is the case of a small village in Russia, close to the Ukrainian border (Ferreira et al., 2006). Almost all male village inhabitants worked at the customs office where they operated a major corruption network. Local smugglers in Central America also intentionally cultivate friendships with border officials and meet them on a regular basis, for example biweekly to have drinks and arrange bribes (Galemba, 2012). Members of organized crime groups even pursue employment in border control authorities solely to engage in smuggling activity (GAO, 2012). For example, between 2006 and 2014, about 30 applicants who were seeking a job at CBP admitted during the polygraph test that they were sent by Mexican cartels (OIG, 2017; Spagat, 2017).

Coercion

Border corruption involving informal groups may also have a coercive form, but in these cases, coercion does not come from a border officer but from an informal group on the client side. While many social bribe schemes are based on horizontal relationships structures (exchanges between more or less equal partners), in some situations organized crime groups deliberately develop dependency-based unequal social relationships with border officers. They target officers that are vulnerable, people who are prone to infidelity or drug or alcohol abuse, and exploit such vulnerabilities (U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, 2010). Criminal groups also use prostitutes to seduce officers or even develop a long-term relationship with them. They are then blackmailed, with videos or photos, to facilitate regular smuggling for the crime group.

Client as a Formal Organization

Collusion

There are border corruption cases when export/import firms or other companies moving their goods across borders are the clients of the illegal transaction. This is the phenomenon of corrupt organizations, when neither an individual nor an informal group but a whole formal organization is the primary and direct financial beneficiary of the corrupt transaction (Jancsics, 2019; Pinto et al., 2008; Wheeler & Rothman, 1982). This is a “bureaucracy-to-bureaucracy” transaction, where both parties exchange organizational resources instead of private or community resources (Graycar & Jancsics, 2017). As part of the cost of doing business, export/import firms even calculate how much should be paid as bribery (Mathews, 2015). This collusive border corruption can be either ad-hoc market corruption or social bribe type corruption. It is market corruption when truck drivers or other representatives of the company bribe anyone who is on duty to do things like overlook overweight vehicles or undeclared goods; permit underinvoiced goods; speed or skip inspection; permit traders to claim drawbacks for fictitious exports; issue import licenses or warehouse approvals without proper justification; or accept fraudulent VAT refund claims (Dutt & Traca, 2010; Ferreira et al., 2006; Michael, 2012).

Yet since market corruption is exceptionally risky and formal organizations are keen to reduce environmental uncertainty by developing interpersonal ties to other significant organizations (Schoorman, Bazerman, & Atkin, 1981), exporters who intend to avoid tariffs on a permanent basis may seek out personal connections among border officers in order to make the bribe payment standard and corruption more predictable. Therefore, they prefer social bribe corruption over market corruption when they can make corrupt business arrangements repeatedly with the same officers (Jancsics, 2019). In this case, mutual trust allows actors to conspire strategically. For example, days or weeks after a transaction, the partners can meet in a neutral place (restaurant; bar; hotel; or private apartment) to make the payment and schedule the next transaction.

Yet there is a significant difference between social bribes that are paid by exporters and those paid by informal criminal organizations. While exporters and other firms run legal

businesses and try to increase their official profit by using illegal means, organized crime actors develop informal cooperative structures for a long time in order to gain profit from their illegal activities such as smuggling in drugs; weapons; people; or other illegal materials. (Velkova & Georgievski, 2004; Viano, 1999, pp. 13–21).

Coercion

Corrupt border officers also extort bribe payments from formal organizations. For example, they can threaten importers with misclassification of imports into more heavily taxed categories unless they agree to pay them a bribe (Dutt & Traca, 2010). The most vulnerable representatives of formal organizations are truck drivers, especially those with perishable freight, who can be easily forced to pay bribes just to avoid an overnight wait at the border. There are many anecdotes from Eastern European countries that truck drivers keep handy several packs of cigarettes, high quality liquor, or small bills in local currency while crossing multiple borders just in case they have to bribe coercive border officers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The typology has implications for future research. Although conceptual typologies are important heuristic tools to provide understanding of complex social issues, they are also theoretical abstractions and therefore may not exist in reality in their pure form (Bailey, 1994, p. 15). A more advanced theory of border corruption should be tested by rigorous empirical research by measuring the deviation between real life occurrences and elements of this conceptual typology.

Formal hypotheses should be proposed and empirical investigations should be undertaken to test such hypotheses based on the different types introduced in this study. Moreover, this typology does not tell much about the variation of each type across countries. It is quite possible that some types of border corruption are more widespread in particular regions than others. Future empirical research needs to address the question of what types of border corruption are more likely within what cultural, social, and organizational contexts.

This analysis also has some implications for practice. The study offers both general and corruption-type specific policy recommendations. The general feature of border management activities is that agents work in close proximity to the physical boundaries of their organization (e.g., remote land borders), frequently meet large number of outsider clients, and have considerable discretion in making decisions. Therefore, regular monitoring, a widely used internal top-down anticorruption strategy, is likely to be less effective or costlier against border corruption than against other forms of corruption. Similar to police departments, the highly integrated rank-and-file workforce in border control agencies tends to develop a corrupt subculture, compelling members to get involved in corruption or at least remain silent about it (Gino & Galinsky, 2012). In these types of organizations, internal whistle-blowing, a popular internal bottom-up anticorruption strategy, is often viewed as betrayal and sanctioned by the corrupt group.

Effective anticorruption policies should be corruption-type specific and distinguish among variations in corruption (Jancsics, 2019). When individuals or export/import firms engage in collusive market-type corruption at the border, the most powerful driver is the actor's rational calculation. Therefore, increasing the costs by using harsher disciplinary procedures and enforcing sanctions might be a successful strategy (de Graaf, 2007; Trevino, Weaver, Gibson, & Toffler, 1999)—although if the code of silence is maintained, that would be difficult. Border officers in this type of corruption must take the risk to make a deal with an unknown client, thus undercover agents can relatively easily play the role of a bribe giver and expose corruption. Random intelligence practices including wiretaps, body microphones, and sting operations might be effective against market corruption (Newburn, 1999). In the case of coercive market-type corruption, extorting individuals or traders may easily trigger disproveable, protest among them against corrupt border officers, and a willingness to report corruption. Such external whistle-blowing should be encouraged by billboards; posters; advertisements; and 24/7 hotlines at the ports of entry. Finally, because this corruption must be conducted “on the spot,” corrupt officers need to carry much collected bribe cash while on duty. Thus, limiting and randomly checking the amount of cash with an officer might be another effective anticorruption tool.

In social bribe-based border corruption, the agent and the client are often members of the same social network outside the organization and subject to the same informal normative system (Jancsics, 2019). Here, rule-based, top-down anticorruption policies such as penalties, rewards, or codes of ethics are often rendered illegitimate and subject to deceit by closely connected corrupt actors (Schweitzer, 2004). In the case of a weaker social tie between the agent and the client, asymmetric punishment might prove an effective anticorruption policy. Prosecuting and punishing the border officer and imposing no legal liability for the client may undermine the already unstable trusting relationship between them and therefore making the client to confess corruption (Lambsdorff & Nell, 2007; Rose-Ackerman, 1999, p. 53). Social bribe cases are typically prearranged and coordinated with sophistication during the corruption process, often by using text messages or phone calls. Therefore, banning officers from carrying private cell phones while on duty might be a simple but effective anticorruption tool. Moreover, another popular strategy, “staff rotation,” can be successful in limiting the partner's opportunity to develop social bonds (Abbink, 2004). Yet this tool may be less effective against corrupt relationships based on preexisting social arrangements, such as family, friendship, or community networks.

In summary, practitioners need to be aware of the nature of border corruption they face and develop more corruption-specific anticorruption policies.

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