



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Corruption Perception and Government Effectiveness in Combating Corruption, and Citizens' Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

The study assesses citizens' perceptions of corruption in Qatar, and examines the effect of corruption perception and government Effectiveness in combating corruption on citizens' satisfaction. The research is based on surveys using structured questionnaires. The study sample comprised 238; the number of males was 116, representing 48.7%, equal to the number of females, which amounted to 117, representing 49.2%. The average age was 32 years, with a standard deviation of 8.8. The questionnaire was used as a research tool. All scales have high, valid, and reliable coefficients.

Findings showed that all corruption perception and government effectiveness in combating corruption explained 22% of the variance in citizens' satisfaction. Moreover, there were significant effects ($F=19.854$, $\alpha=.000$) of Corruption Perception and Government Effectiveness in Combating Corruption on Citizens' Satisfaction. Conclusions are derived from a mix of descriptive and inferential analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Qatar, an Arab state with a population of 650,000, heavily relies on oil, natural gas, and subsidiary industries for its economy. With oil reserves of 3.3 billion barrels and the world's third-largest liquefied natural gas reserves, Qatar is self-sufficient for 70% of summer and 40% of winter vegetables. The government promotes the development of both heavy and light industries, focusing on in-country resources. Qatar's geography and environment are influenced by its location along the western coast of the Arabian Gulf, with sea waters covering 35,000 sq km. ([United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, 2024](#)), [United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, 2024](#)). Qatar has emphasized the importance of combating corruption in its fight against the rule of law and the ability of states to strengthen governance systems that respect human rights standards. The State of Qatar has taken steps to combat corruption, including the establishment of the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority in 2011 and the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center in Doha. Qatar has also provided support for the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center in Doha, which promotes respect for the rule of law and fighting corruption. The State of Qatar has also joined the United Nations Convention against Corruption and allocated an annual award to HH the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. The State of Qatar and the United Nations have signed a declaration of intent to establish the United Nations Judicial Integrity Center for research and training in Doha ([MFA, 2024](#)). The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived. A country or territory's score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

* Data were based on MA thesis, Department of Security Studies. Graduate College. Police Academy. Qatar

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corruption hinders human development by affecting institutions, increasing economic inequality, distorting public decision-making, penalizing innovation, and discouraging investments. It also affects individuals, with high levels of perceived corruption associated with lower subjective well-being and life satisfaction. This research examines the mechanism behind this association. It proposes that corruption reduces life satisfaction by undermining trust in institutions, which is crucial for the correct functioning of judicial, economic, and governmental bodies. (Ciziceno & Travaglino, 2018)

Qatar's Penal Code, Law No. 11, addresses corruption through various offenses such as bribery of public officials, abuse of office, embezzlement and misappropriation, and fraud and forgery. Key offenses include offering or accepting bribes, exploiting office for personal gain, unlawfully appropriating public funds, and engaging in deceptive practices or falsifying documents. Qatar has made significant strides in combating corruption through the Unified Economic Account Law, Penal Code amendments, and establishing Administrative Control and Transparency in 2011. It has also joined the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and launched the first-ever Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani Anti-Corruption Award in 2016, promoting justice and accountability. Qatar ranks second in the Gulf and Arab world for the third consecutive year, thanks to the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority's efforts to enhance integrity, transparency, and prevent corruption. The Authority is finalizing the National Strategy for Integrity, Transparency, and Prevention of Corruption, utilizing national, regional, and international references. (Administrative Control and Transparency Authority, 2024). Qatar scored 59 points out of 100 on the 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. The Corruption Index in Qatar averaged 63.45 points from 2003 until 2024, reaching an all-time high of 77.00 points in 2010 and a record low of 52.00 points in 2004. Qatar's level of Corruption Perception is 59.7 against a global average of 48.4. (Trading Economics, 2024)

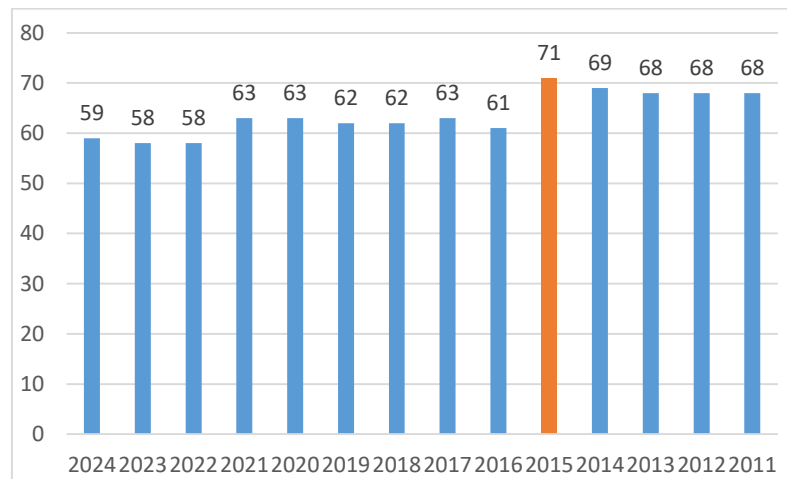


Figure 1 Qatar CPI for the years 2011-2024

Source: <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/qatar>

In 2021, Qatar's Finance Minister, Ali Sharif al-Emadi, was arrested over allegations of misuse of public funds and abuse of power. This prominent case marked a significant shift in Qatar's strategy to combat corruption at the highest levels. World Cup 2022 Allegations: Qatar faced international scrutiny over alleged bribery in securing the 2022 FIFA World Cup hosting rights. While FIFA's ethics committee cleared Qatar of significant wrongdoing, the incident highlighted vulnerabilities in global sports governance and Qatar's international image. Anti-corruption provisions apply to various individuals, including public officials, private entities, and public functions. Violations can result in imprisonment for up to 10 years and fines of either QAR 5,000 or the equivalent value of the bribe or benefit. (The Arab Convention Against Corruption). Anti-Corruption Measures: Institutions like the State Audit Bureau and the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority have been established to oversee government operations. However, these bodies often lack independence, and

their reports are not publicly accessible, reducing transparency. (Transparency International, 2024). Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI): In 2023, Qatar scored 58 out of 100, ranking 40th globally. While this places Qatar among the better-performing countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the score has remained stagnant, indicating limited progress in combating corruption. (Transparency International, 2024). In Jordan, a study by Alhassan & Al-Badayneh (2017) found that results that the government efforts in the fight against corruption, citizen satisfaction with the government's performance, and the personal, social, and economic characteristics of participants explain 14% of the variation in the participation in the social movement in Jordan, and the impact of these variables was statistically significant ($F = 9.708$, $\infty = .000$). The effect of individual regression coefficients of gender, party affiliation, and the causes for the spread of corruption prevalence, and government efforts to combat corruption were statistically significant. A negative relationship between the participants in the social movement governorate (-0.189), where less participation in the social movement in the south and increasingly in the center and north regions, party affiliation (-0.243), where participation increases with party affiliation and youth organization, the weakness of the government's efforts in the fight against corruption (-0.241), and the dissatisfaction of citizens with government services (-0.216). Moreover, there was a positive relationship between participation in the social movement and age (0.110) and education (0.109), the type of party (0.132), and the causes for the spread of corruption (0.134). (Alhassan & Al-Badayneh, 2017). Corruption constitutes the exploitation of public authority for personal gain (Akçay 2006; Ko and Weng 2011). Corruption significantly impacts individuals' material conditions, exacerbating inequality. People's perception of fair treatment is crucial in determining grand corruption, but only in relatively equal societies. In unequal societies, people do not expect fair treatment, viewing corruption as inevitable and beyond their control. Inequality demoralizes people, leading them to believe they are not masters of their fate. In societies with more equitable resource distributions, people have greater expectations of fairness, believing that unfair treatment violates the integrity of the government system (Ariely&Uslaner 2016). Corruption significantly impacts criminality (Montinola and Jackman 2002), while diminishing the quality of public decision-making (Akçay, 2006). Corruption skews resource allocation, thereby impairing government efficacy, hindering economic progress, and diminishing the efficiency of both public and private organizations (Voliotis 2011). Some people believe that corruption can have some benefits in certain situations, like in developing countries, by making government processes faster and encouraging unofficial investments, but most experts agree that corruption mostly slows down economic growth and weakens government effectiveness. Individuals tend to be acutely aware of the presence of corruption in their environment and perceive accurately how corrupt their country is (Lancaster & MContinola (2001) compared citizens' perceptions of corruption with experts' assessments regarding the levels of corruption in various EU member states. They found that, overall, citizens' estimates matched those of experts. Salim et al. (2018) examine the relationship between citizens' satisfaction with government performance and public trust in the Yemeni government. It found that public trust is low in Arabic countries, and factors like quality of public services, transparency, and corruption performance positively correlate with trust. Demographic characteristics, particularly low and middle school education, contribute to trust. The study emphasizes the significance of public trust in Yemen's government during civil war or transition, prioritizing citizen satisfaction before weapon spending. However, its cross-sectional nature and limited scope make it a subject of future research. (Salim et al., 2018). Corruption remains a significant issue for citizens in Serbia, with 12% identifying it as the primary problem affecting them and their families. Over half of respondents, mostly young and highly educated, believe corruption is widespread in Serbia. The majority recognize its impact on society, politics, business, and personal and family life. Citizens think corruption has not improved in the past year, with 37% saying it is the same as in November 2019. The main culprits for increased corruption are the president, government, and police. Citizens' trust in all institutions, including the president, and their ability to oppose corruption has declined over the last three years. Local governments also face low satisfaction with their budget management, with 41% of respondents having a negative perception. Most citizens are unaware of Local Action Plans (LAPs) and are dissatisfied with the level of responsibility, consciousness, and responsiveness of local authorities to their interests and needs. (USAID ,2020). Citizens in Jordan, Ethiopia, and Fiji perceive corruption and e-governance differently. Public sector corruption and demands for bribes are increasing in each country. Only a few people are aware of e-governance and feel that it can help

in curbing corruption. (Pathak et al., 2010). Corruption and citizen satisfaction in Qatar are complex and paradoxical due to the country's unique political, economic, and social dynamics. Corruption is often perceived as limited and administrative, contrasting with regional patterns. Qatar's government's investment in infrastructure, healthcare, education, and public welfare contributes to high levels of citizen satisfaction. However, as Qatar diversifies its economy and strengthens institutions, public expectations regarding governance, accountability, and transparency are evolving. Future research should focus on changing attitudes and aligning anti-corruption initiatives with governance reform and citizen engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Research tool

Al-Badayneh (2010) developed the questionnaire as a research tool. Al-Hassan (2012) used the research tool to study perceptions of corruption among the Jordanian popular movement, and Al-Shammari (2014) used it to study perceptions of corruption in the public and private sectors in Saudi society regarding administrative corruption.

Demographic (personal) data. This includes data about the participants related to the type of sector in which they work, their gender, age, job title, education, and work. This data is useful for identifying the characteristics of the Qatari population.

Corruption Perceptions Scale. This scale consists of (42) items distributed into (14) items for each type of corruption (bribery, use of personal relationships, and assault on public funds and property). The main question in this scale is the extent to which (14) entities, including political leaders, senior officials, the police, etc., engage in bribery, use of personal relationships, or assault on public funds and property.

Effectiveness of Government Effort Scale. This scale asks the participant to determine their level of satisfaction with the performance of some government institutions and independent bodies. the validity of the study tools. This scale consists of (10) items, the main question being the participant's level of satisfaction with the performance of these institutions.

Responses to the questionnaire items are graded on a scale from (0) to (10), with (0) being the least and (10) being the highest in all scales used.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Respondents are asked to indicate the number that best represents their opinion for each item in the questionnaire.

First: Face Validity

The questionnaire was distributed to 5 evaluators, and they agreed at a rate of 97% on all its paragraphs. Second: Construct Validity. A citizen satisfaction scale was added for validity testing purposes. Correlation coefficients were calculated between citizen satisfaction and the perceptions of corruption and were $r=.276$, $\alpha=.000$, indicating a significant construct validity coefficient.

Reliability

Using Cronbach's alpha, all scales were highly reliable. The reliability coefficients were the satisfaction scale (.910), the Cronbach's alpha for corruption perception scale (.94), and the effectiveness of government efforts to combat corruption scale (.90).

Sample. The study sample comprised 238 People: 116 men and 117 women. Regarding the participants' gender, the number of males was 116, representing 48.7%, equal to the number of females, which amounted to 117, representing 49.2%. The average age was 32 years, with a standard deviation of 8.8.

Data Analysis

We analyzed the data using descriptive statistical analyses and ANOVA (utilizing SPSS v. 21).

FINDINGS

Findings showed that all corruption perception and government effectiveness in combating corruption explained 22% of the variance in citizens' satisfaction. Moreover, there were significant effects ($F=19.854$, $\alpha=.000$) of Corruption Perception and Government Effectiveness in Combating Corruption on Citizens' Satisfaction (Table 1).

Table 1. Regression Analysis of Corruption Perception and Government Effectiveness in Combating Corruption on Citizens' Satisfaction

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	75016.500	3	25005.500	19.854	.000b
Residual	260705.292	207	1259.446		
Total	335721.791	210			

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), corruption Perception, Government Efforts, Prevalence

Table 2. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	α
	B	Sd	Beta		
(Constant)	97.617	10.233		9.539	.000
Government Efforts	.297	.104	.175	2.854	.005
Prevalence	.639	.123	.367	5.212	.000
Corruption Perception	.049	.030	.113	1.608	.109

The unique contribution of each independent variable, specifically corruption perception and government effectiveness in combating corruption, to citizens' satisfaction was significant, except for the contribution of corruption perception itself. (Table 2).

CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the significant role that both corruption perception and government effectiveness in combating corruption play in shaping citizen satisfaction in Qatar. With these factors explaining 22% of the variance in satisfaction levels, the results highlight the importance of public trust in governance and transparency for maintaining and enhancing citizen contentment. The statistically significant relationship affirms that efforts to improve government accountability and reduce perceived corruption can positively influence public sentiment. These conclusions, drawn from robust descriptive and inferential analyses, provide helpful tips to policymakers aiming to strengthen institutional performance and public confidence in Qatar.

Corruption impacts not just individuals' material and economic circumstances but also their psychological well-being, namely life happiness, by eroding their trust in institutions. This research enhances our understanding of how institutional-level influences, rather than individual attributes, may affect people's well-being. Corruption degrades the quality of institutions, increases economic inequality, and limits economic growth. Studies indicate that corruption is also associated with lower satisfaction with life (Akçay, 2006; Ciziceno & Travaglini, 2018).

Qatar has remained the second-most corrupt country in the Arab world on the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), with a score of 58 out of 100. The United Arab Emirates leads the Arabs with a CPI score of 67, while war-ravaged countries like Libya, Yemen, and Syria were the most corrupt. The Middle East and North Africa, the least peaceful region in the world, are plagued by authoritarianism and political corruption. The report highlights the lack of transparency in state security budgets, which allows funds to be spent without public input and redirected by unscrupulous actors. Denmark topped the index with 90 points, followed by Finland and New Zealand with 87 points each. Conflict-hit countries Somalia and South Sudan join Syria at the bottom of the index. (The Peninsula 2023).

It has also joined the United Nations Convention Against Corruption and launched the first-ever Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani Anti-Corruption Award in 2016, promoting justice and accountability.

Future research is needed in the area of public trust, youth, and the criminal justice system in CP.

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