

## Types of Attitudes in Students to Bribery as the Form of Corruption

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**Abstract:** This study presents the results of the research realized by students of higher educational institutions of the sense attitudes to bribery. Is defined as a sustainable and being perceived as a means to achieve a goal psychological attitude of a subject when a bribe is presented in his/her mind as occupying the place of a purpose or a means in the realization by the subject of his/her particular needs and values. Types of such attitudes were determined: a means of saving time and minimizing the responsibility of a briber; a means of obtaining significant results for an individual; a type of business transaction; universally immoral way of realization needs; means for solving the career issues. For each of the types we have disclosed the contents of its cognitive, conative, emotional and assessment components.

**Key words:** Corruption, bribery, bribe, sense attitude, components of an attitude, types of an attitude, young students

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### INTRODUCTION

Corruption is defined in the Federal Law of the Russian Federation as an abuse of official position, giving bribe, bribe-taking, abuse of power, commercial bribery or other illegal use by a natural person of his/her official position contrary to the legitimate interests of society and the state in order to obtain benefits in the form of money, valuables, other property or property services, other property rights for him/herself or for third parties or illegal provision of such benefits to the said person by other natural persons. Drawing attention to the widespread prevalence of corruption in Russia, experts reveal its historical and economic bases, discuss its factors, conditions, present different criteria for revealing numerous types of corruption (progressive, civilized, political, western, eastern, economic, etc.) (Golubovskiy and Sinyukova, 2015; Reshetnikov, 2008; Keyzerova, 2016). Grassroots (individual) corruption is of particular interest; it includes “acts of corruption committed as a rule, by officers from the lower and middle levels of the job ladder” (Golubovskiy and Sinyukova, 2015).

This type of corruption is directly related to the shadow economy, is regarded as mutually beneficial by participants of corruption, covers the daily life of the population, is the most common, although it does state less significant monetary damages than the top of (institutional) corruption. Experts say about the trend of grassroots corruption growth in modern Russia, together with its significant expression in the areas of road safety, health and education (Repetskaya, 2011; Shirin,

2015; Rotondi and Stanca, 2015; Garmayev *et al.*, 2015; Zamaletdinov *et al.*, 2016; Gostev *et al.*, 2015; Frolova, 2014; Borisova, 2014).

One of the most common forms of corruption is bribery which is interpreted as a “corruption situation when there is a voluntary offering, promising, giving, receiving, readiness to take a certain amount of money in order to influence the actions of an official in own favor” (Golubovskiy and Sinyukova, 2015). The definition of bribery in the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (Article 290, 291) summarizes in a receiving by a bribe taker (a bribed official) and a giving by a briber (a person performing bribery) a bribe, with the possible participation of a mediator. Bribe is received by an official the tangibles (goods, money, services, other property benefit) for an act or failure to act in the interests of the briber which that person could or should make in virtue of his/her official position.

The result of research responses of the main public need on elimination of bribery as a form of corruption is reduced to hopes to lower or achieve in the long run its some optimal level in terms of the social need. Psychological science contributes to achievement of such results. This is confirmed by addressing specialists in different fields of knowledge to finding exactly the psychological mechanisms of corrupt behavior (Repetskaya, 2011; Vasyakin *et al.*, 2016; Gaivoronskaya and Filonenko, 2015) and underlining the important role in the fight against corruption of personal features of citizens (Golubovskiy and Sinyukova, 2015; Vannovskaya, 2009; Garmayev *et al.*, 2015). In the developed psychological research on the corruption

issues the term “psychological corruption” has been introduced as a social basis for all other forms of corruption (Reshetnikov, 2008) and the necessity of a new psychological research direction for the study of the psychological nature of corrupt behavior; the use of the existing categorical and conceptual apparatus of personality psychology is argued (Vannovskaya, 2009).

In our view, this category is a psychological attitude the content of which is revealed through the importance of the objective side of an attitude for a subject. Psychological attitudes referred to as the developed type of mental attitudes represent an integrated system of individual, selective and conscious personality attitudes with the various aspects of reality, arising from the entire history of human development, expressing his/her personal experience, internally determining his/her actions and experiences (Myasishev, 1995). They are characterized by conscientiousness, arbitrariness, integrity (the system) are more individualized and connotative are associated with personal meaning are specified in the interests, assessments, beliefs and conscious motives of people.

The literature on the problems of corruption, specifically emphasizes the content of attitudes of Russian citizens to corruption and in particular to bribery. Researchers attribute to the desired social attitude a zero-tolerance towards corruption. Instead, researchers describe very contradictory the current attitude towards corruption in the majority of Russians: in most cases it is “amazingly loyal” (Vannovskaya, 2009), tolerated (Vasyakin *et al.*, 2016) or familiar, prosaic (Nikolayev, 2011). People condemn “not acts of corruption in themselves but only the exorbitant sizes of bribes” (Vasyakin *et al.*, 2016). The data on the growth of tolerance of young people to corruption what is manifested by students during learning at a university in recognition by them dishonest behavior as an “objective and eligible social reality”, a positive admission of bribes, in the perception by the most affluent young people of “necessity to pay, give bribes, use connections and contacts” as an attribute of a market society (Vannovskaya, 2009).

In our opinion, the above results contain, firstly, evidence of the prevalence of grassroots corruption in universities, namely, bribery and, secondly, an implicit reproach to the address of students. Educational practice in high school is aimed at the formation of knowledge values, highly competitive competent persons but as a result, those young people who represent the most vulnerable part of the population and start building their own professional career and life path, know how to effectively “protect” themselves, including, from lack of

competence. All of this has prompted us to turn to the analysis of not attitudes to corruption but to bribery as a form of corruption. We define attitude to bribery as meaningful or sustainable perceived mental attitude to the last as a means to achieve a goal of in which bribery (bribe) is presented in a subject's mind as taking place of a purpose or means in realization by the subject of his/her particular needs and values (note that the widespread practice of bribery, its admission by the majority of the population, giving a positive value to the ability to give (take) a bribe can turn the latest in instrumental or even in terminal value). The content of this attitude should be considered in the unity of the contents of each of its components (cognitive, conative, emotional and assessment). Results of previous studies give reason to believe that bribery as a well-known phenomenon for young people for the majority of them is a deliberate tool to meet different needs. However, characteristics of attitude to bribery as a form of corruption available in the literature are often ascertaining by their nature have a sign and modality (emotional and assessment component) of this attitude as well as the willingness of subjects towards an act of bribery is very contradictory described in the literature that provides the prerequisites and proves relevance of special study of variations in attitude to bribery in young people.

**Purpose and objectives of the study:** Empirical research conducted by us was aimed at studying the content of types of sense attitude to bribe in young students and its tasks were to establish the types of attitudes and disclosure each of its components for a particular type of content. Subject of research: the sense attitude of students to bribery (bribe); object of study: the attitude to bribery in 105 university students (the city of Rostov-on-Don).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Survey (researchers questionnaire allowing to evaluate the content of each component related to a bribe), content analysis of open questions of questionnaire, testing (differential emotions scale of Izard, 1980); statistical methods (factor analysis by principal component analysis, Shapiro-Wilk, Friedman, Wilcoxon criteria, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient).

Selection of methodological instruments realized in accordance with the purpose of research has allowed to establish the cognitive content (bribery definition and functions); connotative (the reasons for giving and taking bribes), emotional and assessment (experience of the

respondents about a bribery, bribery impact assessment on the state, social groups, a subject, eradication measures) of attitude components.

The respondent's answers to the open questions of the questionnaire were analyzed using content analysis. Results of pilot coding of responses, peer review experts-psychologists) of adequacy of selecting the indicators of a category followed by defining a measure of consistency of this assessment made it possible to identify the categories (by the relative frequency of their occurrence) reflecting the content of interest to us. Content and sense interpretations of a bribe included: the type of business economic transactions ("giving money for the provision of any service", "in terms of money carrying a benefit for both sides", etc.); kind of wrongful act ("crime", "allowing to get around a law", etc.); universal means (a necessary and desirable) to meet the individual needs of subjects ("easy way out", "satisfaction of human needs"); a kind of immoral behavior ("demoralization of society", "the worst of evils"). The functions of a bribe involve a resulting function as ensuring a subjectively useful result ("desired result"), elimination as removal of the possibility of administrative and criminal liability ("to avoid punishment"), resource and time and resource-personal functions as ensuring saving of time and personal resources ("to get anything faster and out of turn", "power save"); total-instrumental function of a bribe in solving everyday problems (a means of satisfying any need). The instrumental function of a bribe in dealing with career issues was assigned to its separate function. This function of a bribe was explicitly stated by most respondents.

There were identified such factors for giving bribe: standing practice of bribery, illegal actions; professional career and personal characteristics of subjects, specific coping strategies of subjects. Factors of standing practice of bribery identified individually for a bribe-giver and a bribe-taker were coercivity to bribery what is present "objectively" in different situations and in different spheres of life, except for the legal sphere and career ("extortion", "pressure", "tradition", "bureaucracy"). The unlawful nature factors are related to the motivation of avoiding responsibility ("to circumvent the law", "in order to have been allowed to breach"); professional and career factors with the building of a career ("the desire to go to the right college", "employability"); personal features were specified in terms of specific features of human makeup (stupidity, laziness, lack of confidence, impatience, incompetence, etc). Temporary strategies of subjects for organizing time ("a desire to speed up a process", "fast way of solving problems") and resource

strategies for saving personal resources ("unwillingness to expend energy to solve the problem") were assigned to specific coping strategies.

There were considered the following reasons (factors) for receiving bribes: standing practice of bribery (the same as for a briber), as well as subjective reasons related to the nature of the material motives ("easy money") and self-assertion motives, as well as personal characteristics of bribe-takers ("greed", "proactiveness").

The general, special and individual consequences of a bribe have been seen as effects of its influence on the state, social groups and an individual. According to the respondents, the consequences for the state are affected on the state budget ("losses," "pricing"), the activities of the authorities ("lack of process control"), ideology ("deteriorating ideology", "permissiveness", "crumbling a credibility to the state"). For social groups, as well as for an individual, the consequences of bribery have ambiguous impact on career processes ("declining a quality of an activity", "opening a business", "improving a position"), interpersonal relationships ("transformation of interpersonal relations in the trade and money ones"), group values ("education of young people in alleged influence of a bribe"). The consequences of bribes for an individual are detailed in meeting a variety of needs; the specifics of his/her career strategies, the dynamics of material well-being, in change of the individual and personal features of people.

When analysing emotional distresses against bribery we took into account conditions for the appearance, function, the sign of fundamental emotions and their complexes (Izard, 1980).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

As a result of factor analysis of indicators which designate the definitions and functions of a bribe 5-factors solution was obtained explaining 71.39% of the variance (Table 1). Subsequent analysis of the leading definitions and functions of a bribe according to estimations of respondents that received high weights (>0.5) in each of the factors has allowed the types of psychological attitudes of students to a bribe to identify:

- The means of saving time and minimizing the responsibility of a briber
- Means to obtain results which are meaningful to an individual (a briber)
- Type of business economic transactions
- Universally immoral way to realize needs
- Means for solving career issues

Table 1: The content and values of factor weights for interpretations and features of a bribe by the respondents

The content and function of a bribe	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
BR-immor	-	-	-	0.52	-
BR-wrong	-	-	-0.83	-	-
BR-econ	-	-	0.86	-	-
BR-satisf	-	-0.84	-	-	-
FLE	0.54	-	-	-	-
RTF	0.81	-	-	-	-
ResF	-	0.62	-	-	-
ICF	-	-	-	-	0.85
RPF	-	-	-	-0.88	-
TIF	-0.60	-	-	0.41	-

BR-immor: immoral behavior; BR-wrong: wrongful act; BR-econ: Economic transaction; BR-satisf: a way to meet the diverse needs of the subject; FLE: function of liability elimination; RTF: resource-time function; ResF: resulting function; ICF: instrumental and career function; RPF: resource and personal function; TIF: Totally instrumental function

Empirical criteria to establish the types of an attitude to bribery according to estimations of respondents were content of the leading functions (1, 2 and 5 types) or bribery interpretations (3 and 4 types).

In general, the students have predominant ideas of a bribe as a business transaction as a wrongful act and an universal means of satisfying needs. According to respondents, bribery functionally appears for a universal tool in solving everyday problems. This is confirmed by the following data: the number of respondents >50% cases convinced in distributing bribes in career professional sphere, is 85.5%; in education 86.5%; in the public sphere 62.5%; in the sphere of interests 24%; in the family sphere 7.7%. (The latter amazing fact is substantiated by respondents as taking a bribe by members of the family for hiding little secrets in the narrow family circle). The fact of bribery in general is in detestation (the desire to move away from the situation) for the respondents while a briber and a bribe-taker are attributed to be of interest.

Respondents unanimously pointed out the negative consequences of a bribe for the state budget, the activities of state power and ideology of the state and include the upgrading of criminal punishment to the main measures of bribery eradication. However, 12.5% of the respondents deny the very possibility of its eradication. Based on these results, bribery is perceived by the respondents as a kind of illegal economic business transactions, contributing to meet the needs of different subjects and the attitude towards it is utilitarian as a means in which a bribe is comprehended as a universal instrument for the realization of needs. These findings are consistent with results of studies (Vannovskaya, 2009) in which there is a lack of moral assessments of bribery against a background of awareness of its unlawful nature.

When disclosing the content of the components of a particular type of attitude we have considered substantively similar variables (the negative effects of a bribe for the state budget, the activities of the government and the ideology of the state, the established practice of rent-seeking as a factor in bribes to both sides thereof; an aversion to bribe) established for each type of attitude to bribery. These variables reflect the prevailing social stereotypes and do not differentiate substantively different attitudes.

**The first type of attitude (17.2% of respondents):** A tool to save time and minimize the liability of the briber a bribe is treated by the respondents simultaneously as a kind of economic business transactions, a wrongful act and a universal means of satisfying the individual needs of subjects. Functionally, a bribe eliminates the responsibility and saves time resources, mainly of a briber.

Factors referred to causes of bribery are the motivation associated with time savings of a briber and motives of the material nature of a bribe-taker. The situation of a bribe causing respondent's surprise (unexpectedness) is actually emotionally neutral. Consequences of a bribe have a negative impact on interpersonal relations and an ambiguous effect on its subject. Its positive impact on a subject (saving time and personal resources) compared to its negative impact (personal features, material well-being) is estimated higher by respondents.

**In the second type of attitude (13.3% of respondents):** A means of obtaining results which are meaningful to the individual (a briber) the emphasis is on its resulting function, even though the bribe is treated as an unlawful act. Respondents attributed to factors of bribery the motivation associated with the illegal actions of a briber as well as personality traits and motivations of the material nature of a bribe-taker. The situation of bribe for the respondents is of interest, surprise, contempt, shame, grief. The combination of these emotions suggests a certain ambivalence of emotions: the simultaneous presence of involvement, inclination and superiority (interest, surprise, contempt) in this situation, on the one hand and the experiences of sadness, uncertainty in security, on the other hand.

Consequences of a bribe have a negative impact on interpersonal relationships, lead to different but in general not various in the frequency of expression of positive (career strategy, time savings, realization of the different needs) and the negative (material well-being, personal features) effects of impact on subjects.

**In the third type of attitude (27.6% of respondents):**

Type of a business economic transaction a bribe is treated as a type of business transaction performing totally instrumental and resource and personal functions.

Factors attributed to bribery is a motivation associated with illegal actions, career strategy, personal features, saving time and personal resources of a briber and also a motivation of the material nature of a bribe-taker.

The situation of a bribe causes a complex of emotions in the respondents: interest and surprise that counts in favor of positive emotional admission of the situation.

Consequences of bribes have a negative impact on interpersonal relations. Intensity of its positive and negative effects did not differ for a subject. Its positive impact on a subject appears in the specificity of a career strategy, increasing the level of material well-being organization of (saving) time, successfully meet the various needs. Deformation of the personal features of a subject dominate among the negative effects.

**The fourth type of attitude (29.5% of respondents):**

Universally immoral way to realize the requirements a bribe is seen as a kind of immoral behavior with its inherent totally instrumental function.

Factors referred to causes of bribery are the motivation associated with the illegal actions and career strategy of a briber, as well as the motivation of the material nature of a bribe-taker.

A situation of bribe causes in respondents a surprise, fear, interest, reflecting the emotional involvement in a dangerous situation. According to respondents, bribery negatively affects interpersonal communication, group values and career processes in social groups. Intensities of the negative and positive effects of the impact of bribery on a subject do not differ. The respondents include to the positive effects the ability to avoid responsibility in the commission of unlawful acts, saving time and personal resources and formation of specific personality traits; and to the negative effects only formation of certain features.

**The fifth type of attitude (12.4% of respondents):** Means for solution of the career issues a bribe is seen as an instrument of career strategy of a subject and performs a resource and personal function and elimination function. Factors of a bribe are the motivation related with career policy and illegal actions of a briber as well as the motivation of the material nature of a bribe-taker. A situation of bribe giving arouses an interest and surprise of respondents, being evaluated by them likely positive. According to respondents, a bribery affects the group

career processes. Its influence on a subject leads to both positive (personality traits, career strategy, saving the time and personal resources, the possibility of realizing different needs) and negative (personal features, material well-being, the inevitability of punishment) effects.

**Resume:** There were empirically established the types of sense attitudes to bribery according to assessment of students what contents allows us to characterize these attitudes as utilitarian and bribery as a universal or specialized means to meet the different deficiency needs of a subject.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, the content of the established attitude types allows us to describe these attitudes as utilitarian and bribery as a universal (4 type of attitude) or a specialized means to meet the different and specific needs of a subject (1, 2, 3, 5 types). The variety and specificity of needs here means rather an opportunity to meet them with the help of bribes in different or separate (specific) areas of life. Respondents have included in the vast majority of bribe factors such as deficiency needs that are not related, for example, with the manifestation of personality, intellectual growth, etc. Therefore, the use of bribes is possible with its help only to adapt with a situation. Awareness by respondents about illegality of bribery does not change the sense of their attitude. Most of the respondents demonstrate the attitude to bribery as a business economic transaction (3rd type of attitude) and a universal but immoral means (4th type). The last type of attitude can reassure the public.

All respondents explained factors of bribery by 'objectively' existing forced situations. But the last for a bribe-taker is adjacent to the material nature of motivation; while for a briber it has substantively varied motivation. Thus, a bribe-taker has been attributed to homogeneous factors of graft regardless of the type of attitude and a briber has been attributed to individually divergent factors depending on the type of attitude. In the proportions of factors said we see a closer identification of respondents with a briber than with a bribe taker. However, this assumption needs to be tested but a more general conclusion about the readiness of the respondents to apply for the similar manner to solve their own problems is self-evident.

Of particular interest are the affective evaluations of a bribery situation and bribery influence to a subject. None of the types of attitudes have revealed stable negative affective evaluation of this phenomenon. In contrast, the emotional admission of a bribe fact is

established (3rd, 5th types) and even the dominance of the positive effects of the impact of a bribe on a subject what is typical for 1st attitude type. Moreover, for the 3rd, 5th types and the 1st types of attitudes intensity of positive influence frequency for bribes on a subject was significantly higher than the intensity of the frequency of the positive influence of bribes characteristic to the 2nd and 4th attitude types. Therefore, it has a lot of systematic work to develop an intolerant attitude for bribery on which stability in the long term the researchers hope.

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