The Curse of Good Intentions:

"Why Anticorruption Messaging Can Encourage Bribery" by Cheeseman and Peiffer (2022)

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Cheeseman and Peiffer (2022): *"The Curse of Good Intentions"*

- Causing waste of public resources, distorting incentives for officials and citizens
- The impact of anti-corruption campaigns on citizens' corruption behavior
- Conflicted expectations:
  - Anticorruption efforts $\rightarrow$ less/more Corruption?
- Conflicted empirical support:
  - No consistent effect of anticorruption messages
  - Some messages more impactful than others
- Underspecification of the theoretical causal mechanisms

Corruption, Citizens, and Political Behavior

- Two mainstream ways to intervene in corruption:
  1. Interventions to incentives of politicians to carry out corrupt policies
     - Public Financial Management and Audit Institutions (Zaum, Taxell, and Johnson 2012)
     - Aligning incentives among elites, building coalitions, and designing for sectoral differences (Khan, Andreoni, and Roy 2019)

Corruption, Citizens, and Political Behavior

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  2) Interventions to the information of citizens to encourage anti-corruption attitudes when electing politicians and interacting with officials
  - Channel 1: People do not know corruption exists (clandestine corruption, not known)
    - Insignicant messages
    - Partisan sources, state propaganda, social norm nudging (Hoffmann and Patel 2017)

Corruption, Citizens, and Political Behavior

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  - ② Interventions to the information of citizens to encourage anti-corruption attitudes when electing politicians and interacting with officials
    - Channel 1: People do not know corruption exists (clandestine corruption, not known)
      - Insignicant messages
      - Partisan sources, state propaganda, social norm nudging (Hoffmann and Patel 2017)
    - Channel 2: People do not know corruption affects their lives (intangible corruption)
      - Direct effect through taxation and local politics (Peiffer 2020)
      - The struggle of their leaders and authorities against the corruption

The Impact of Anticorruption Campaigns on Citizens' Corruption Behavior

- Framing Effect:
  - Anticorruption messages that make people think about the problem more and change their behaviors (Corbacho et al. 2016)
  - Being primed about corruption might push people to systemic corruption equilibrium (Persson, Rothstein, and Teorell 2019, @corbacho2016corruption)
  - Social norm nudging (Bicchieri and Dimant 2022)
  - Social norms to reduce bribery South Africa (Köbis et al. 2022)

The Impact of Anticorruption Campaigns on Citizens' Corruption Behavior

- Positive Persuasion:
    - Anti-corruption messages that change how people think about a problem instead of making them think more (Lenz 2009)
    - Content of messages, Papua New Guinea (Walton and Peiffer 2017)
        - Emphasis on local more impactful than an emphasis on authorities or the rule of law
        - Underestimation of the personal impact of corruption
        - Direct vs. Indirect Taxes

The Impact of Anticorruption Campaigns on Citizens' Corruption Behavior

- Leadership Framing:
  - Leadership framing working as a heuristic, which is informational shortcuts people could rely on
  - Citizens taking cues from the politicians about involving in corruption (Rose-Ackerman 2015)

Questions:

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  - the partisanship of the committer (government vs. opposition supporter)

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- To what degree does willingness to pay bribe captures the dependent variable of raising awareness and creating demand for clean politics?

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