



YOUTH PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES SURVEY

Findings Report

22 July 2020



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Table of Contents	
Executive Summary	2
Introduction	2
Background	2
Study Purpose	5
Methodological Approach	6
Approach and Rationale	6
Data Validity	6
Sample description	7
Findings	11
Attitudes in Relation to Corruption	11
Definitions	11
Grand vs Petty Corruption	12
Personal Experiences and Behaviour	15
Perception on Corruption	20
Driving Factors	20
Governance, Democracy and Accountability	21
Institutional Corruption	22
Fighting Corruption and Overall Trajectory	23
Corruption Trends	23
Levels of Trust	24
Corruption and Covid-19 Lockdown	25
Overarching Sentiments on Corruption	26

Concerns	26
Recommendations on How Corruption Can Be Curbed	27
Conclusion	27
Annexures	28
Annexure 1: Identification of petty corruption as corruption by province and gender	28
Annexure 2: Themed definitions of corruption by gender, race, income level and province	30
Annexure 3: Finding oneself in a position to offer a bribe or favour by race, gender and province	31
Annexure 4: Bribery in the past	32
Annexure 4: Willingness to bribe in the future by gender, income level and race	34
Annexure 5: Illegal activity in the past by gender, income level, race and province	36
Annexure 6: Illegal activity in the future by gender, income level, race and province	37
Annexure 7: Being asked for sexual favours by province	39
Annexure 8: Perception of the level of corruption in South Africa by province, income and gender	40
Annexure 9: Perceptions on the level of corruption in South Africa in the past by province, income and gender	41
Annexure 10: Perceptions on the level of corruption in South Africa in the future by province, income and gender	43
Annexure 11: Parties responsible for fighting corruption	44
Annexure 12: Concerns about corruption in the country by income level and gender	45

1. Executive Summary

Personal values are a significant predictor of individual behaviour and understanding peoples' values contributes to understanding individual and societal behaviour. South Africa suffers from widespread corruption, though it is considered better than its regional counterparts across a range of key measures. This is, however, no consolation as the scourge of corruption has a tendency to grow and become systemic, exerting the most harmful pressure on vulnerable groups in society. The experiences of corruption by the youth in South Africa is an important theme to understand since they constitute the largest demographic group in South Africa, and they are likely to suffer its effects in very pervasive ways because of their life stage, making them a vulnerable group in many ways. .

Social Surveys was contracted by Corruption Watch to conduct an independent nationally representative quantitative survey using both telephonic interviews, and online self-completion survey among youth aged between 18 and 35. The aim of the study was to gauge their perceptions and attitudes towards corruption in the country.

The survey was completed by 1561 respondents. The survey had 24 questions covering the thematic areas of; attitudes in relation to corruption; definitions of corruption; the understanding of grand versus petty corruption; personal experiences and behaviours; perception of corruption; driving factors of corruption; governance; democracy and accountability; institutional corruption; fighting corruption; corruption trends; levels of trust; corruption; and covid-19 lockdown as well as their concerns about corruption. The analysis of these observations was done in the context income categories, gender, race and provincial lenses..

The findings indicate that the youth have a good understanding of corruption as a criminal act and see it as an abuse of power for personal gain, whether it was petty or grand corruption. With the high rate of youth unemployment in the country, it was not surprising that most respondents raised corruption in relation to its effect on their access to and availability of employment opportunities. .

With questions aimed at testing the extent of the respondents' understanding petty corruption as corruption we found that more than half (61%) of the respondents were able to identify at least half of the scenarios as corruption. This shows a heightened awareness of corruption amongst the youth in their everyday lives and not just what their secondary experience is on grand scale corruption. Interestingly, major differences are seen in how people in different income categories view petty corruption, with over half of the individuals in the high-income groups correctly identifying all seven scenarios, in contrast to only a third of low income respondents. Unemployment, abuse of power, greed and low salaries are perceived to be major drivers of corruption. The vast majority of the youth (79%) feel that politicians and big business exchange money and favours for personal gain. Although 62% of the respondents claim that they never participate in corruption, 67% of them also

feel that it has become the norm for ordinary people to have to pay public officials to get basic services.

Young people generally do not trust big business and politicians. Police and local government are considered to be the most corrupt institutions. When asked about how concerned they are about corruption in the survey, we found that 84% of respondents report being very or extremely concerned about corruption in the country, with 52% of them being extremely concerned. When provincial comparisons are made, the youth in the North West province are the most concerned about corruption in South Africa(90%), followed closely by Limpopo(89%) and the Northern Cape at 86%, with 62% of those being extremely concerned. There is a general trend across all provinces of respondents being very concerned about corruption.

Across all provinces, gender and races the youth are well aware of the different forms of corruption, and its impact on their daily lives. They have shown through the various scenarios presented to them that they have not and are not willing to participate in corrupt activities in the future. We therefore conclude that unless there is significant demonstration of accountability in high echelons of business, politics, public administration, and society in general, the belief in public institutions as organisations that are genuinely fighting against corruption is likely to remain a mirage. The youth in South Africa remain very concerned about corruption regardless of their race, location, gender and income category.

2. Introduction

2.1. Background

Corruption is a global problem that costs both money and lives. Though corruption affects nations in its many different forms, its harm is magnified in poorer nations, than in developed nations.¹

Corruption has been described “as the abuse of public office for private gain.” This refers to gain of any kind – financial, in status – and it could be gained by an individual or a group, or those linked with such an individual or group. Apart from bribery, it can include “patronage, nepotism, embezzlement, influence peddling, use of one’s position for self-enrichment, bestowing of favours on relatives and friends, moonlighting, partiality, absenteeism, late coming to work, abuse of public

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/corruption-global-problem-statistics-cost/>

Corruption costs developing countries \$1.26 trillion every year - yet half of EMEA think it's acceptable, Sean Fleming, 09 December 2019

property, leaking and/or abuse of government information ².” Whilst this definition focuses on the public sector, corruption is also prevalent in the private sector.

Corruption disproportionately affects vulnerable populations and hits the poor the hardest, especially women and youth, who represent a higher share of the world's poor.³

According to some data released by Transparency International to mark International Anti-Corruption Day 2019, across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA region) () and India almost half of all workers think bribery and corruption are acceptable if there is an economic downturn, however, corruption and fraud cost developing countries \$1.26 trillion per year. That's roughly the combined size of the economies of Switzerland, South Africa and Belgium, and enough money to lift the 1.4 billion people who get by on less than \$1.25 a day above the poverty threshold and keep them there for at least six years. The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index scores 178 countries on their degree of corruption – 10 is the cleanest possible, and 0 indicates endemic corruption. In 2010, around three-quarters of all 178 countries scored lower than five; As much as \$132 billion is lost to corruption every year throughout the European Union's member states, according to the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs.⁴

South Africa has not been immune to the prevalence of corruption. It suffers from widespread corruption, though it has performed relatively favourably than its counterparts when considering averages across a number of key measurements. South Africa is considered to have simpler procedures, smoother interactions with tax officials and easier enforcement of commercial contracts when compared to other regional countries. Of note is that Public procurement as a category is particularly prone to corruption, and bribery is pervasive and active at the central government level. Though South Africa has a robust anti-corruption framework, laws are usually inadequately enforced. Legislations such as The Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act (PCCA) criminalizes corruption in public and private sectors, including attempted corruption, extortion, active and passive bribery, bribing a foreign public official, fraud, and money laundering, and it obliges public officials to report corrupt activities. It is a criminal offense to provide any form of “gratification” to an official if it is not lawfully due⁵.

² Desta, Yemane. (2019). Manifestations and Causes of Civil Service Corruption in Developing Countries. Journal of Public Administration and Governance. 9. 23. 10.5296/jpag.v9i3.14930.

³

<https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/frontpage/2019/12/corruption-and-gender--women-and-men-affected-differently-by-corruption--but-no-evidence-women-or-men-are-less-corruptible.html>

⁴ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/corruption-global-problem-statistics-cost/>

⁵ South Africa Corruption Report, <https://www.ganintegrity.com/portal/country-profiles/south-africa/>

Two years ago the African Union (AU) declared 2018 as African Anti-Corruption Year with the theme ‘*Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation*’. This focus was significant to the youth in Africa not only because of their large demographic size, but also because of the socioeconomic challenges they face, many often as a result of corruption. These challenges hinder the progress of Africa’s youth. Studies show that corruption is a major problem in Africa. According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index 2017, out of all the regions of the world, Africa was the worst performer regarding perceived levels of public sector corruption. Globally, 11 out of the 20 countries perceived to be most corrupt are African countries.

Young people are most exposed to and hardest hit by corruption in Africa. Corruption remains a major obstacle to the continent’s social, political and economic transformation, and the causal relationship between corruption and instability is particularly worrying for African states.

The prevalence of corruption in many African states has also meant that the youth are not only victims of corruption but also perpetrators, as research shows they are increasingly tolerating and condoning corruption. Youth participation continues to be limited and superficial and the contributions of young people are not influencing core structural policy decisions. Youth structures and processes in most African states are on the back burner and as a result young people are not meaningfully contributing to the anti-corruption agenda.⁶

In their 2018 policy briefing titled ‘*Arresting Corruption In Africa: Role Of The Youth*’, the *Institute for Security Studies*’ Edward Kahuthia Murimi argues that in order to reverse the corruption trend, it is imperative for the African Union, member states and their anti-corruption agencies to meaningfully involve the youth in the anti corruption agenda. They need to be clear and genuine about the timing of youth engagement in anti-corruption initiatives, the degree of their involvement, who among the youth is to be engaged and the level of control that young people have in driving such initiatives.

In South Africa the youth perceive corruption as a significant problem - although actual experience of corruption is often lower than that perceived , measuring its impact on socioeconomic rights is difficult. There is a lack of centralised, collated information on incidents of corruption and their prosecution. The same dearth of information is noticed on the effects of corruption on the youth. Besides, it is difficult to measure the impact of corruption with certainty as it does not just refer to amounts of money lost, but also obstacles to development and increases in inequality – which are much more difficult to quantify. The nature of corruption as a secretive activity adds to the difficulty of knowing with certainty about where and how widespread it is.⁷

With reference to accountability there is a lack of clear data about the extent and nature of the charges of corruption brought by the police, as cases of corruption are reported within the broad

⁶ https://media.africaportal.org/documents/Arresting_corruption_in_Africa.pdf

⁷ <http://www.casac.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/IMPACT-OF-CORRUPTION.pdf>

category of commercial crime. By focusing on the number of cases, and indeed showing an increase in cases pursued by the police, the police could contribute towards reducing the perception that the perpetrators of corruption act with impunity. In the SAPS 2018/2019 financial year report⁸, these crimes are reported to have increased by 14.4%. A lack of accountability by senior officials and politicians, combined with perceptions of high levels of corruption, could prove detrimental to the future prospects of young South Africans.

If the above perceptions of corruption are anything to go by, the need to hold political elites accountable for their actions is vital: particularly if we are to cultivate the next generation of leaders in South Africa. Young people need to know that there are consequences for perpetrators of corruption, and that they can play an active role in the fight against corruption. In this way we can change the perceptions of young South Africans and build confidence in the government. Young South Africans are also increasingly conscious of fraud and corruption and the negative impact it has on their future. Corruption affects young people in their most earnest endeavours. Young people are fighting an uphill battle trying to improve their lives through work opportunities and education. Unfortunately, corruption has penetrated the lives of youth too.

Unemployment is one of the major issues inhibiting development of South Africa's young population. Youth unemployment is at 53.1% making youth both vulnerable and easily susceptible to corruption when it comes to accessing employment opportunities. Exacerbating this, is the reality that many young people experience corruption in trying to access programmes designed to curb youth unemployment.⁹

Corruption ostensibly has the power to take advantage of the struggles of the young people. The immediate correlation between corruption and issues of young people is clear; direct prevention of access to support and self-development. But the indirect effects are less evident. It is frustrating for young people to witness grand-scale corruption and misuse of government money, when their own financial difficulties remain unaddressed.

2.2. Study Purpose

This quantitative study was commissioned by Corruption Watch to gain a better understanding of the youths' perceptions and attitudes towards corruption in 2020, following on from a previous study that the organisation had conducted in 2013. The study aims to use the knowledge gathered

⁸ <https://www.saps.gov.za/about/stratframework/annualreports.php>

⁹ <https://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/sas-youth-can-help-shape-corruption-free-future/>, *SA's youth can shape a corruption-free future*, Sabeedah Motala, 15 December 2016

from the research to plan programmes and campaigns targeted at the youths aimed at raising awareness about corruption.

The survey addressed the following:

- The levels of trust that young people have in relation to government, business and civil society's efforts to curb corruption;
- Perceptions of the most and least corrupt institutions in the country;
- Perceptions in relation to whether corruption is increasing / decreasing in South Africa;
- Perceptions in relation to the motivating factors that drives corruption;
- Attitudes in relation to whether young people have or will in future engage in corrupt activity;
- Attitudes in relation to petty corruption vs. grand corruption;
- Attitudes in relation to governance and democracy

3. Methodological Approach

3.1. Approach and Rationale

As the entire country is on lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our methodological approach to the study was adjusted to be in line with the emergency restrictions imposed by the lockdown. The study covered all nine provinces and used a quantitative survey approach which was carried out by means of telephonic enumerator administered structured interviews and self-completed zero-data rated online surveys.

The nationally representative sample for the survey was 1500 youth respondents between the ages of 18 and 35. The sample included both urban and non-urban respondents and a spread of socio-economic backgrounds. For the study to be truly representative, 10% of the intended sample was surveyed telephonically in order to reach rural/ semi rural youth who might not have had access to the platforms required for online self-completion. All data was collected remotely.

The telephonic survey covered 148 rural/semi-rural youth respondents and was executed over a period of 5 days between 20 May 2020 – 27 May 2020. The field researcher administered interviews were facilitated by 5 trained field researchers who captured the data through an electronic data entry system (KoboToolbox/ ODK), the same tool was self-administered by those who completed the online survey. The online self-completion survey ran for 51 days from 19th of May till the 7th of July.

A total of 145 telephonic structured interviews and 1416 online self-completion surveys were completed for this study.

The survey questionnaire comprised 24 questions which explored experiences, attitudes and perceptions of youth to corruption. The survey questionnaire was administered in English.

3.2. Data Validity

The following mechanisms were utilised to control and maintain the quality of the data collected for this:

- **Electronic/ automated data quality control**, including programming the interview instrument so that it does not allow for missing data, automatic skips where necessary and pre-set limits for write-in numbers (such as telephone numbers or age). We carried out daily checks for outliers and inconsistent responses within surveys.
- **Continuous contact and communication with all field researchers**, checking on sample adherence, interview completion rates, interview protocol and question response trends.
- **Quality controlling all telephonic interviews conducted**. This was performed by listening to the audio recordings and ensuring that the audios match the data captured.

A total of 3321 interviews were received on our ODK server. 1615 interviews were removed from the data set because the responses were either fake, duplicates, respondents were not within the right age group or the respondents refused to participate.

- 536 duplicate responses were identified and removed. These duplicates were identified by reviewing email addresses and numbers. The earliest response was kept and the rest of the responses with similar contacts and email address were removed.
- 103 responses were identified as fake and removed.
- 853 responses were from people outside of the desired age range and were unable to take part in the survey, and those who could not participate because their province's quota was reached.
- 265 respondents did not give consent to participate in the survey

1.1. Sample description

The intended sample for the study was 1 500 nationally representative youth respondents aged between the ages of 18 and 35. The sample was stratified by geographical location, gender and socio-economic standing as indicated in the table below. Although the Northern Cape is included in the analysis, do note that the sample reached is significantly lower than the intended sample but does offer a fair distribution of ages. The data was weighted by gender in analysis. 97% of the non-urban sample for telephonic survey was reached, whereas the intended sample was not reached for the online self-completion survey (91%) with less than 75% participation in the Northern Cape due to lack of participation from respondents within the desired age ranges.

Table 1: Sample Statistics Breakdown (excluding blanks)

SAMPLE STATISTICS					
Province	Intended Sample	Number of potential respondents reached	Ineligible (age/ province)	Participants	Percentage of target
Grand Total	1500	2558	997	1561	104%
DATA COLLECTION METHOD					
Telephonic	150			145	97%
Self-completed	1350			1416	105%
PROVINCE					
Eastern Cape	150	232	64	168	121%
Free State	100	123	24	99	99%
Gauteng	300	942	520	422	141%
KwaZulu-Natal	250	418	122	296	118%
Limpopo	150	163	24	139	93%
Mpumalanga	150	140	23	117	78%
North West	100	145	35	110	110%
Northern Cape	150	61	11	50	33%
Western Cape	150	334	174	160	107%
GENDER					
Male				829	53%
Female				716	46%
Non-conforming/ Other				16	1%
INCOME					
No income				386	24.7%
R 1 - R 1 600				681	43.6%
R 1601 - R 6 400				295	19.0%

R 6 401 - R 12 800		55	3.5%
R 12 801 - R 51 000		28	1.8%
R51 001 +		2	0.1%
Don't know		4	0.3%
Rather not say		109	7.0%
RACE			
Black		1326	85%
White		28	2%
Coloured		153	10%
Indian/ Asian		22	1%
Rather not say		32	2%

*Note that for this report, personal income level was grouped into three major categories: low income (R0 - R3 200), middle income (R3 200-R12 800) and high income (R12 800 and higher).

The majority of the sampled respondents were black (85%) , with 10% coloured,2% white and 1% Indian/ Asian. Significantly more respondents in the low-income bracket participated in the study (61%). There was also greater female participation with 53% over 43 % participation from their male counterparts, see Figure 1. 1% of the respondents identified as gender non-conforming.

In line with the country's racialised economic divide, there were more Africans in the low-income groups than in the middle-income group according to their personal monthly income, whilst for white and coloured respondents there was a fair split between middle and low income groups. Figure 2 shows that 19% of respondents fell within the middle-income bracket and only 4% were from the high-income bracket.

Across all provinces the different age groups that constitute "youth" were represented on this survey. For all provinces, with the exception of Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Western Cape, the most represented age group is the 26-30 category, Figure 3.

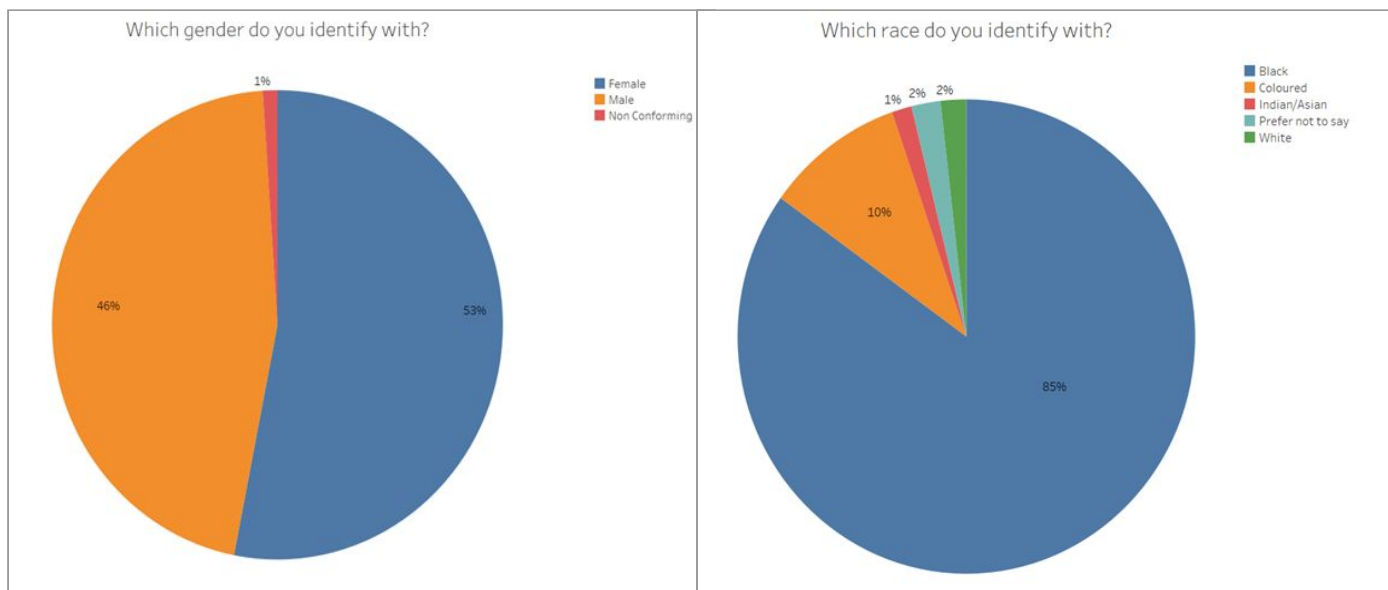


Figure 1: Pie charts of the gender and race distribution of respondents respondents

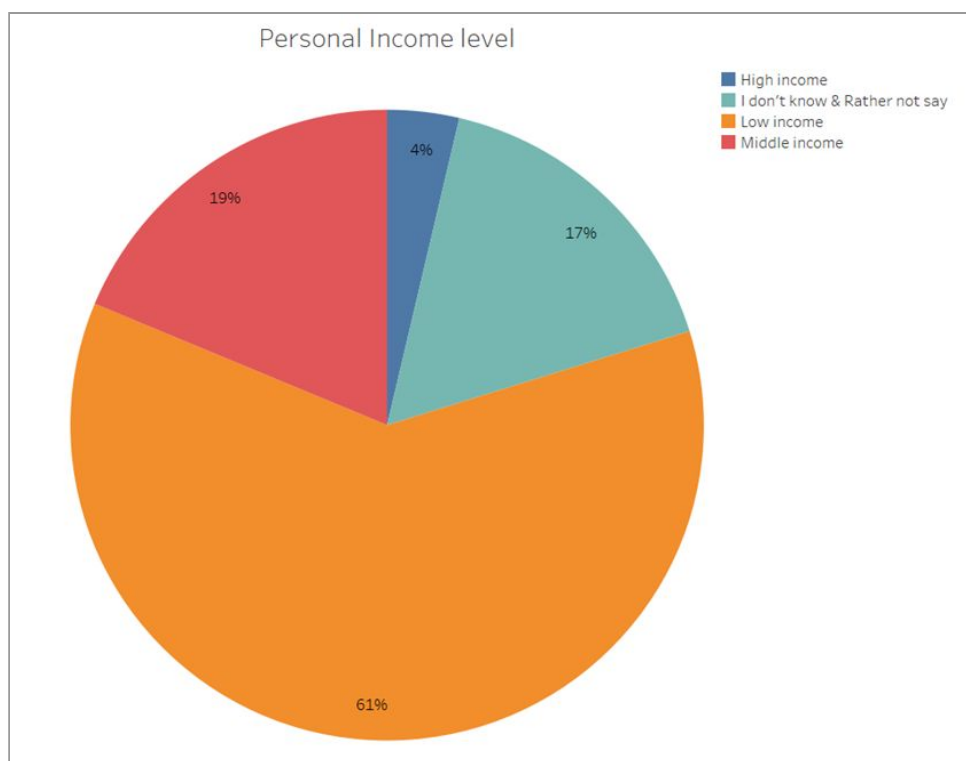


Figure 2: Distribution of personal income of respondents

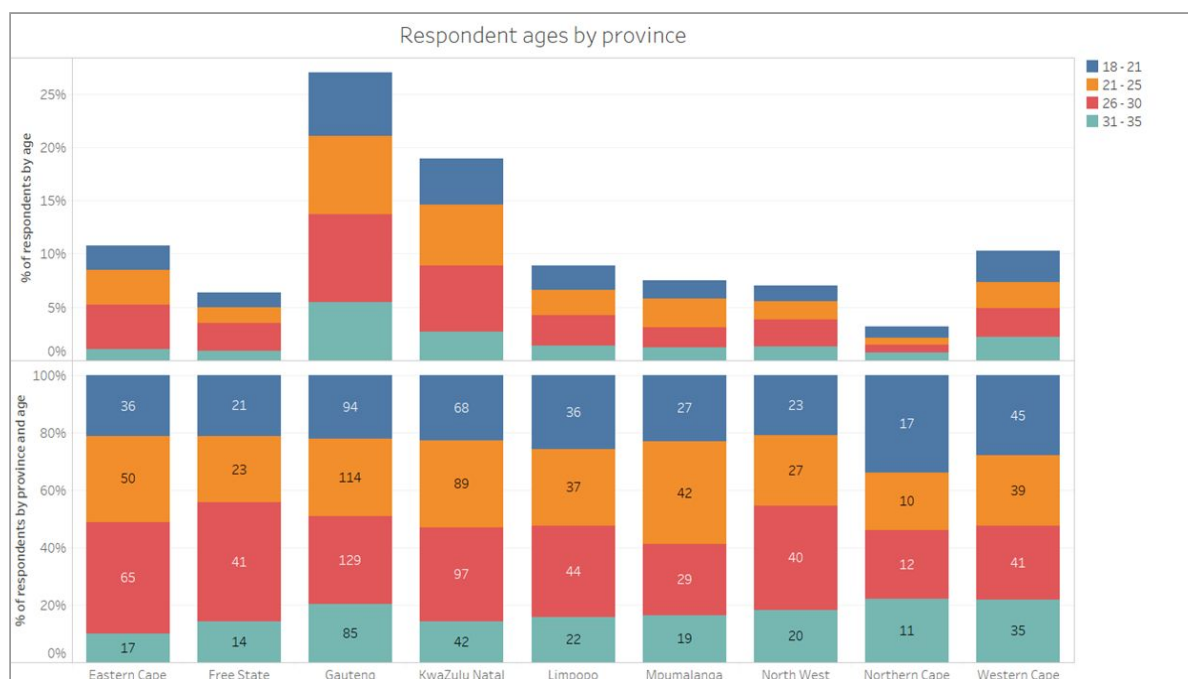


Figure 3: Age of respondent shown by province

4. Findings

4.1. Attitudes in Relation to Corruption

Attitudes are general evaluations that people hold regarding a particular entity, such as an object, an issue, or a person. There is a complex combination of things we tend to call personality, beliefs, values, behaviours, and motivations¹⁰. With this study we attempted to understand the attitudes that the youth have towards corruption in South Africa by gauging their beliefs/ definitions, behaviors and some driving factors, in order to understand the past, present and future behaviours of youth when confronted with situations or scenarios related to corruption.

4.1.1. Definitions

All respondents were asked to define corruption, in their own words, as a means of assessing whether they understand what corruption is and to understand what they view as permissible. This gives solid context to all the other responses they provide to this survey.

All the open-ended responses were coded into 5 main categories, based on what the respondent had mentioned (see Figure 4)

Some respondents (26%) view corruption and corrupt behaviour as the looting of resources committed by those in positions of power which is driven by selfishness and a desire for self enrichment. While most (59%) have more nuanced definitions, filtering down to those in lower positions of authority and power (i.e. any illegal activity including robbing others). Notably 1% of

¹⁰ Pickens, Jeffrey. (2005). Attitudes and Perceptions. Organizational Behavior in Health Care.

respondents have positive definitions for what corruption is (i.e. a blessing to society and the poor). A similar trend is seen when the data is disaggregated by gender, race and income level, province (Annexure 2).

Eastern Cape has the highest number of respondents defining corruption as something that happens in positions of power or authority (35%). While the Western Cape has the highest number of people making reference to corruption as an issue that is worsening the economy (14%), and the highest number of people saying they do not know what exactly corruption is (4%) - Annexure 2.

In line with the plight of youth unemployment in the country, in their definitions, most respondents made mention of the effect of corruption on access to and availability of employment opportunities.

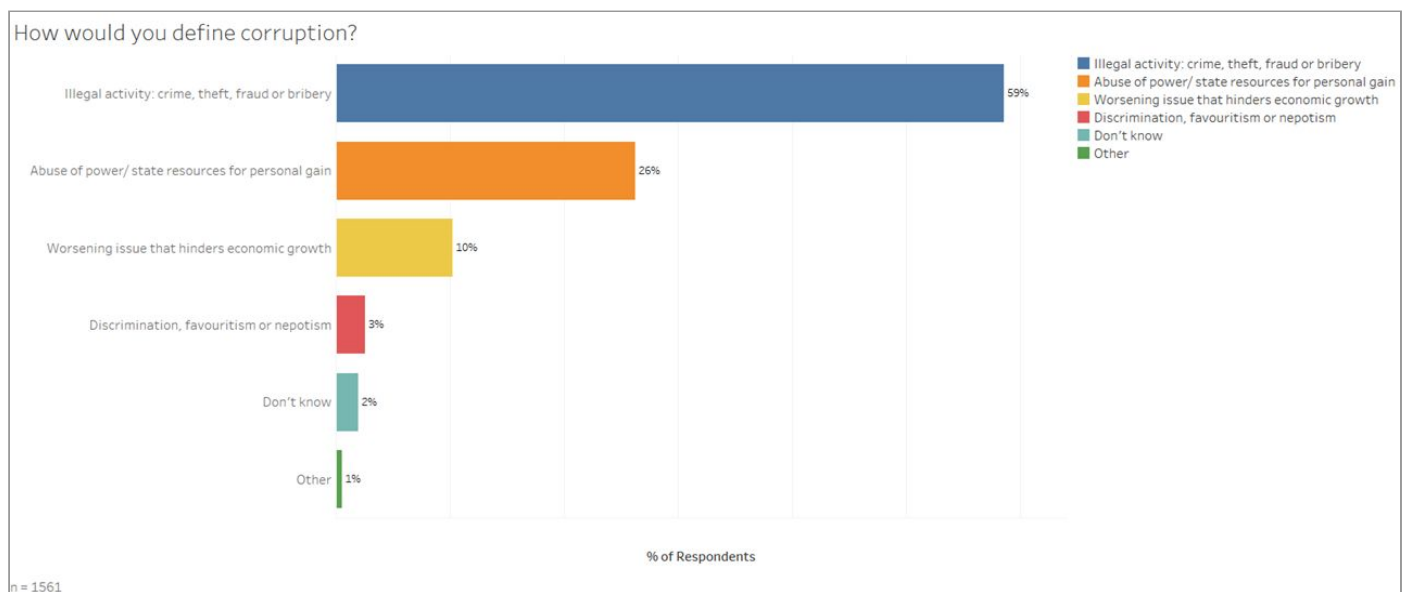


Figure 4: Respondent definitions of corruption (coded/ themed)(n=1651)

4.1.1.1. Grand vs Petty Corruption

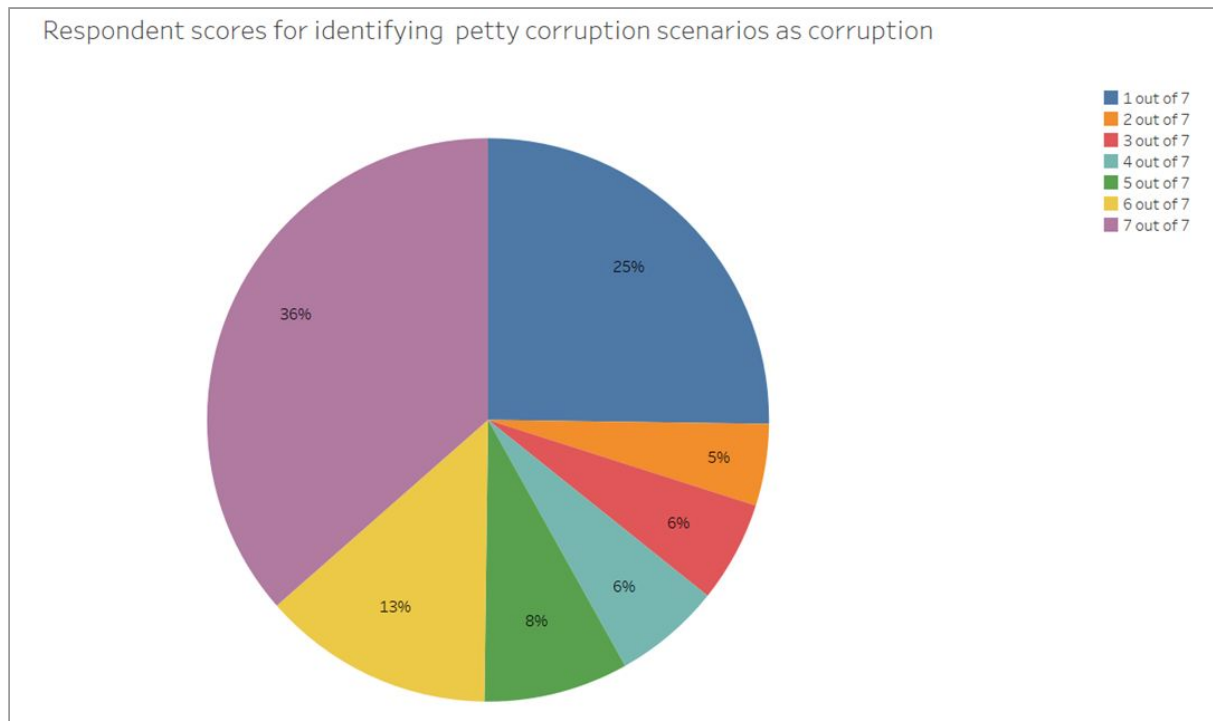


Figure 5: Petty corruption identification scores ($n=1561$)

Respondents were presented with seven distinct petty corruption scenarios, and were asked to say whether they considered that as corruption or not. All respondents identified at least one scenario as corruption. The figure above worryingly shows that 25% of the respondents could only identify 1 out of 7 petty corruption scenarios presented as corruption. However, more than half (61%) of the respondents were able to identify at least half of the scenarios as corruption. This shows a heightened awareness of corruption amongst the youth within their everyday lives and not just on a grand scale. The same pattern is seen when the data is analysed by gender, refer to Annexure 1.

Major differences are seen in how people in different income categories view petty corruption: over half of the individuals in the high income group correctly identified all seven scenarios, in contrast to only a third of low income respondents (Figure 6). Only 87% of respondents in the high income category identified more than 50% of the scenarios as corruption. While only 63% and 70% of low and middle income respondents, respectively were able to do the same. Overall, it should be noted that the general level of awareness and sensitisation to corruption of youth in South Africa is high.



Figure 6: Petty corruption identification scores by income category ($n=1561$)

This same analysis at provincial level (see Annexure 1) shows that more people in the Free State view all the petty corruption scenarios presented as corruption, possibly due to heightened sensitivities as the province has been under a scourge of allegations of corruption that have had widespread implications of no service delivery in the province. However, one of the provinces with the second highest number of people identifying all the scenarios (North West) also had the highest number so people who could only identify one scenario as corruption. The Eastern Cape, Kwazulu Natal and Limpopo are the provinces with the smallest proportion of respondents identifying all seven scenarios correctly, these provinces along with the North West also happen to be the top 4 provinces with the greatest proportion of adults living in poverty according to StatsSA¹¹. This could indicate that as levels of need increase so does the leniency in what is considered permissible for survival, scenario 6 on Figure 7 shows this well (bribing/ thanking the SGB chairperson for a catering contract).

¹¹ StatsSA Living Conditions Survey, 2014/15

Figure 7 shows that most respondents considered threatening a teacher to show the principal their nude pictures for an A on a test to not be petty corruption in comparison to all the other scenarios. Most low income (77%) and middle income respondents (82%) respondents considered bribing a traffic department officer for a license as corruption. While the most high income respondents (94%) considered bribing a road officer at a roadblock as corrupt.

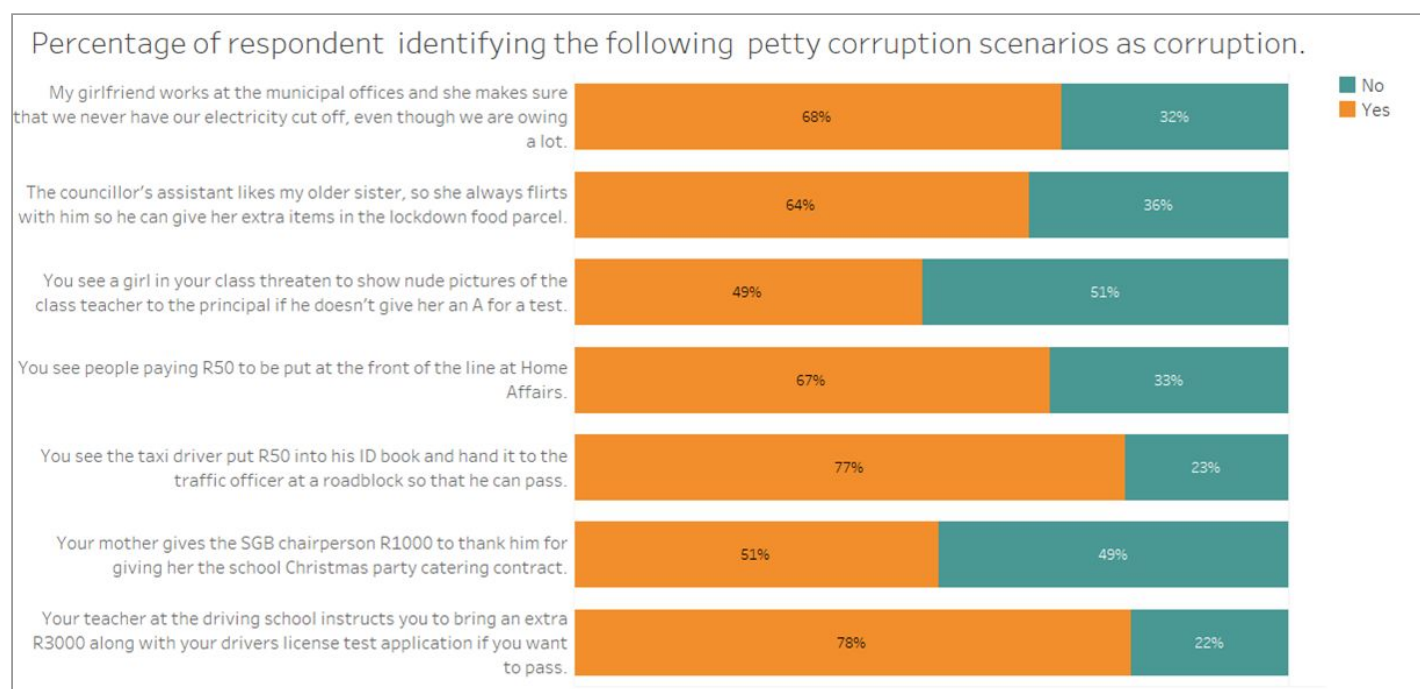


Figure 7: Petty corruption scenario recognition as corruption by income level ($n=1561$)

4.1.2. Personal Experiences and Behaviour

Requests for Sexual Favours

When asked whether they had ever been asked for sexual favours in exchange for something, the majority of respondents (69%) answered that they had never, whilst 14% reported having been asked for a sexual favour in exchange for a job. The national trend is similar to the patterns we see in each province. Something to note is that Gauteng has the highest proportion of people who were asked for sexual favours in exchange for a job (18%) in comparison to 14% or lower in other provinces. Notably, there were no differences in responses according to income levels across all provinces but we do see variations in these experiences across different gender groups.

People who identify as females and gender non-conforming are more than 50% more likely to be asked to perform sexual favours in exchange for access to a job, financial resources and better marks or grades in school than males. Interestingly, gender non-conforming youth are three times more likely to be asked to perform sexual favours in order to avoid getting arrested in comparison to their female counterparts. Males on the other hand, are more likely than any other gender to have someone solicit a sexual favour in order to gain access to a tender, for protection for their small business or to gain access to land and housing as well as to avoid getting a traffic fine.

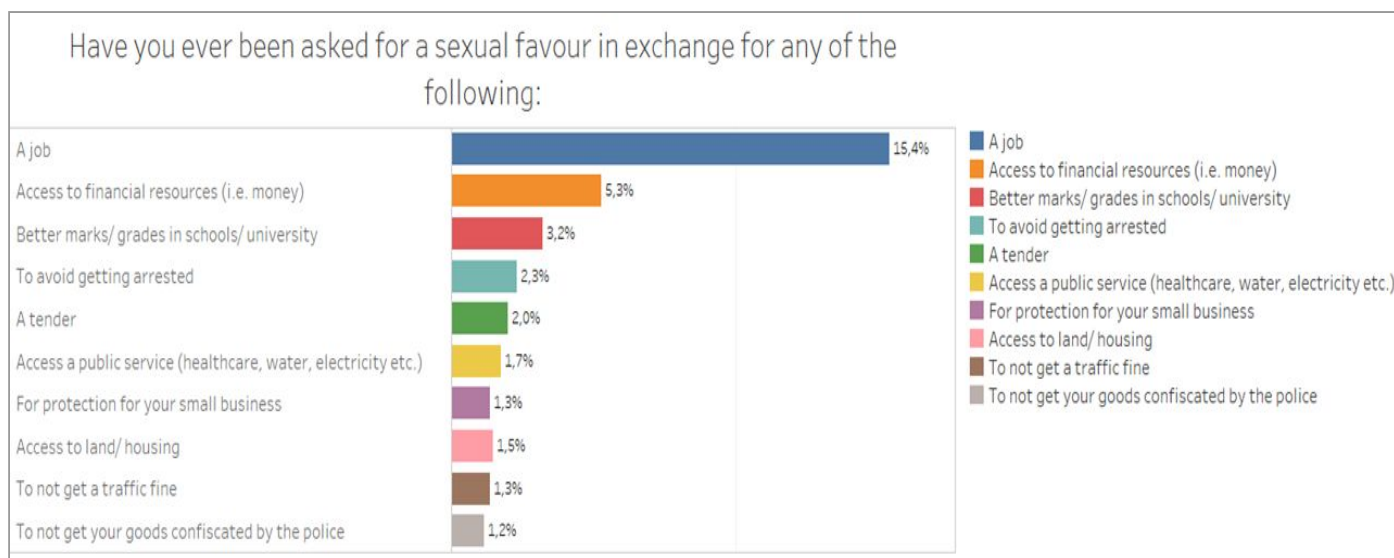


Figure 8: Experiences of being asked for sexual favours by gender ($n= 1651$)

Experiences and Openness to Bribery and other Illegal Activity

Respondents were asked if they have ever been in a position where they had the opportunity to offer a bribe or favour of any sort for gaining access to housing, basic services, an unfair advantage or a job. Strikingly, most respondents have never been in a position to offer bribes or favours whether solicited or self-initiated. This could suggest one of two things: either that corruption at ordinary citizen level is low and needs to be tackled at high positions of power and authority, or that these results could have been affected by a desirability bias. This is a bias where because the respondents know that the research is on corruption they would not want to be seen as being corrupt.

Of the four situations (paying a bribe to gain access to land/housing, to proper basic services, to gain an unfair advantage over others or to get a job that you were unlikely to get), people were twice more likely to be in a position to offer a bribe or favour for getting a job than for gaining access to basic services (see Figure 9). Only 35% of respondents report to have been in a position to offer a bribe or favour for a job in the past - and only 7% report to have offered a bribe for a job. Of the 18% reporting having been in the position to offer a bribe for access to basic services, 7% report having offered the bribe. And of the 7% of respondents who have had the opportunity to offer a bribe for land or housing, 4% made a monetary exchange. Overall, a higher percentage of male respondents have made a monetary exchange for something they needed, this could be because males usually tend to achieve better economic results when negotiating than their female counterparts do,¹² to the extent that some women opt to send a man to negotiate on their behalf (see Figures 9 and 10).

In comparison to other race categories, black people (37%) are most likely to find themselves in a position to offer a bribe for a job, followed closely by white people (33%), see Annexure 3. Across

¹² <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43735850>

three of the four categories/ scenarios Indians/ Asians were least likely to be in a position to offer a bribe - it is only for gaining access to basic services where Indians/ Asians reported the highest exposure to opportunities to offer a bribe.

A relatively high number (23%) of respondents were also likely to be asked for a bribe or favour in order to gain an unfair advantage over others on a tender, exam, etc.

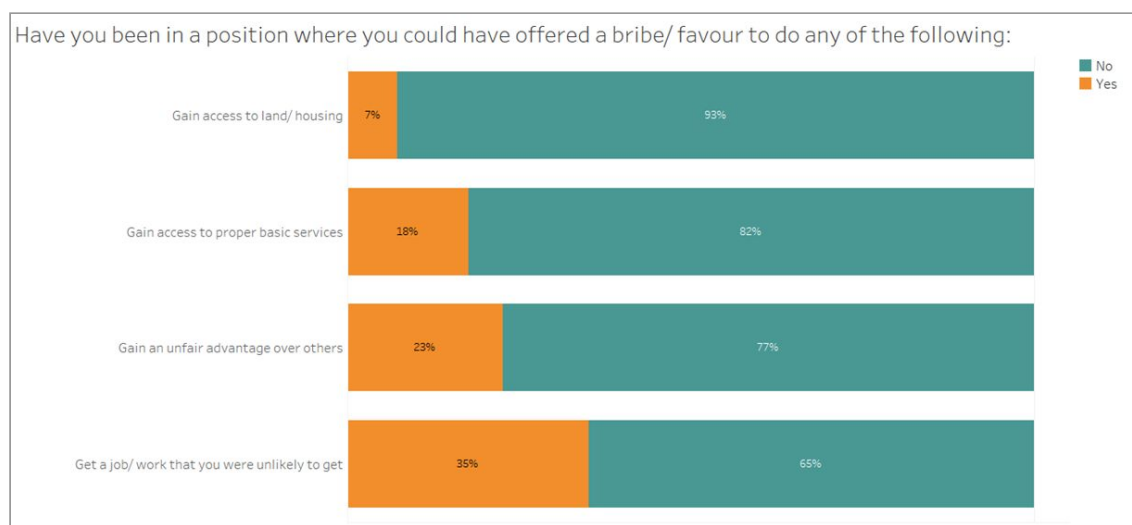


Figure 9: Finding oneself in a position to offer a bribe or favour (*n=1561*)

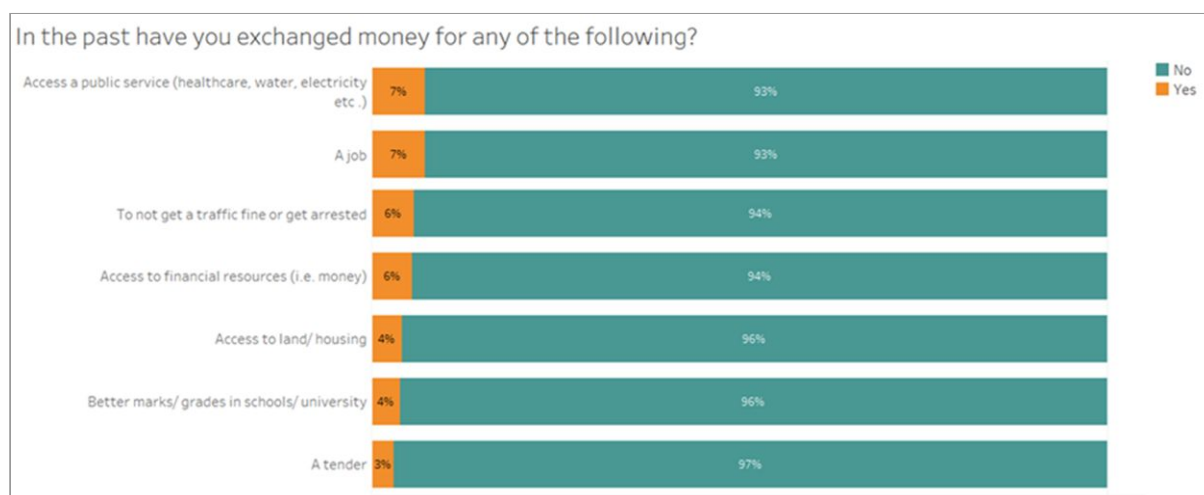


Figure 10: Bribery in the past (*n=1561*)

Although the percentages are minune, a greater percentage of people reported to be willing to exchange money in the future for a job (18%) than those who reported having offered a bribe in the past (7%)

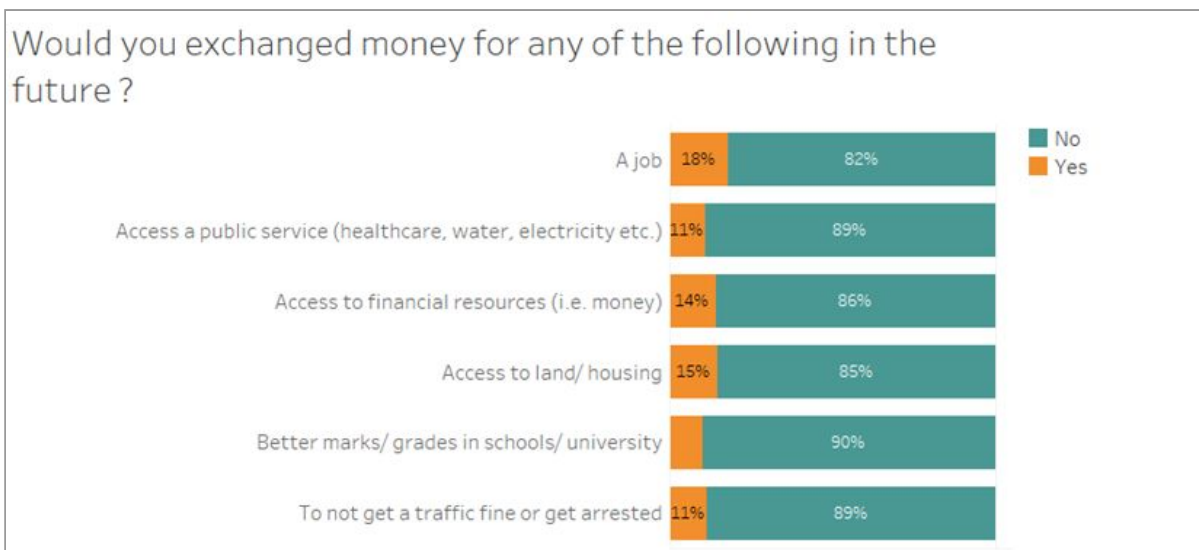


Figure 11: Willingness to offer a bribe in the future (n=1561)

Similar to the results seen on bribes and favours in exchange for something else, most people are not willing to participate in illegal activity which is also coherent with 62% of respondents saying they never participate in corruption and only 13% asserting that they do take part in illegal activity under extreme circumstances (Figure 13) . The figure below shows that more people report to be willing to do something illegal in the future if someone close to them is threatened (19%) or if it will ultimately make their lives easier (15%) in comparison to 8% and 9% respectively who had participated in illegal activity in the past.

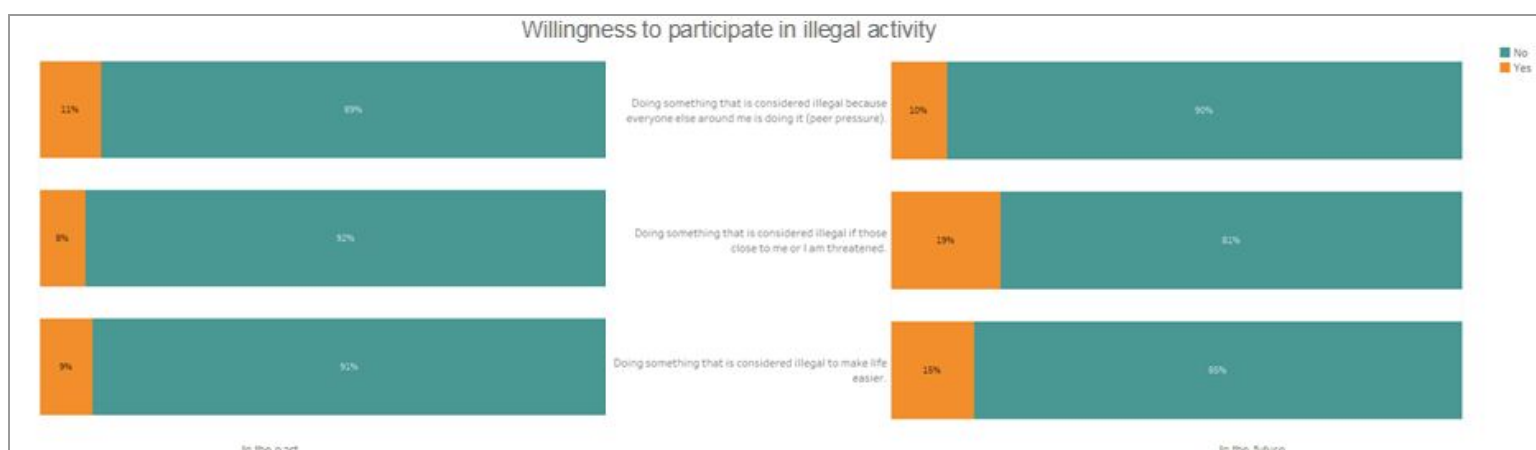


Figure 12: Willingness to offer a bribe in the future (n=1561)

The vast majority of the youth (79%) feel that politicians and big business exchange money and favours to benefit themselves. Although 62% of the respondents claim that they never participate in corruption, 67% of them also feel that it has become the norm for ordinary people to have to pay public officials to get basic services. In spite of this, the youth are not completely despondent about the situation as more than half of them (67%) believe that it is possible to fight corruption by public officials, politics and big business. Slightly over half of the respondents assert that they will report

corrupt public officials and people in politics and big business, even if it is dangerous to do. Comparatively, people are more likely (64%) to report someone they know is taking part in corrupt activities. Over 70% of the respondents say that they do not participate in corrupt behaviour, even under extreme circumstances. There was generally no difference in the trend across provinces, income categories, race and gender.

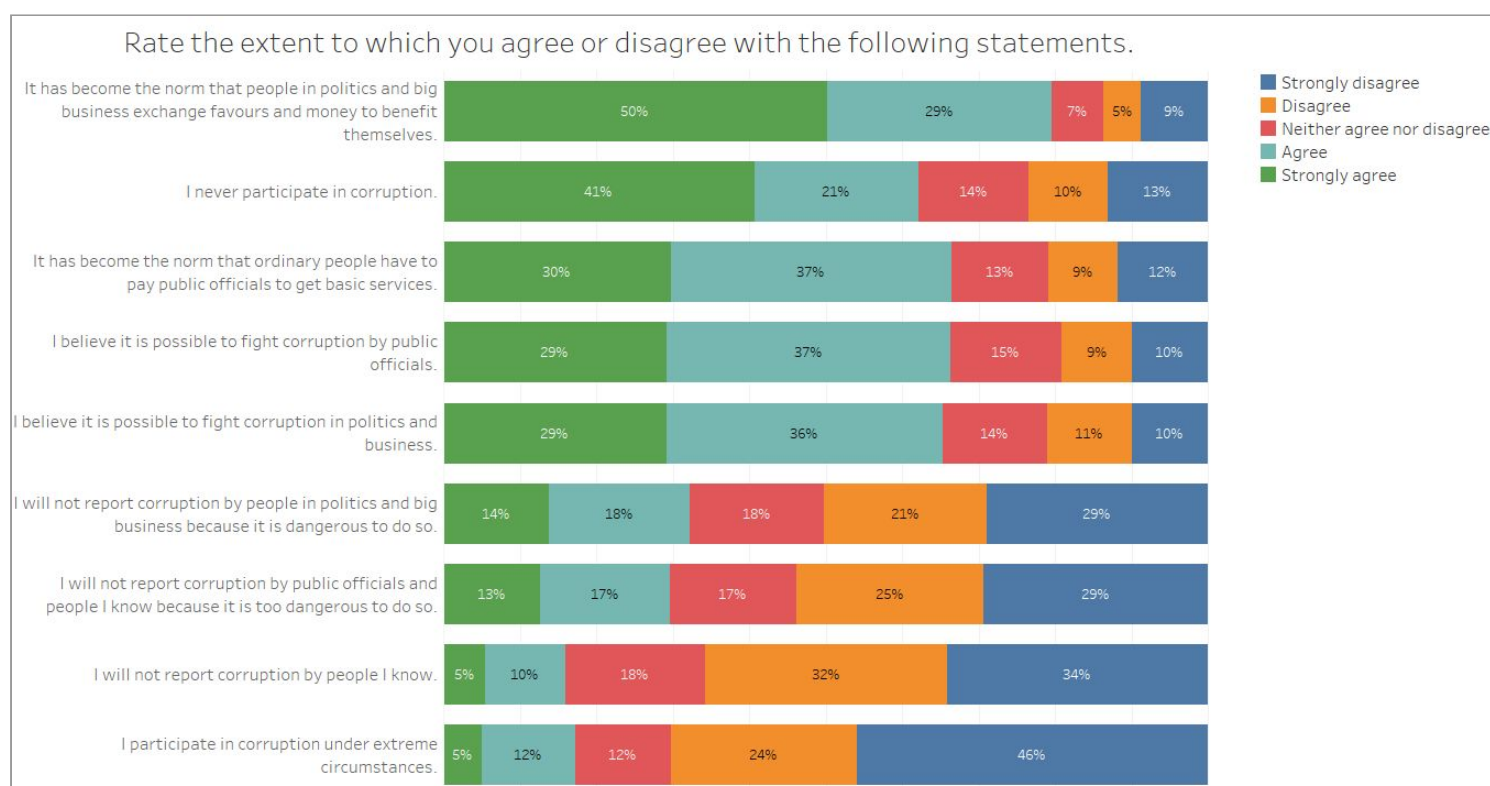


Figure 13: Level of agreement with statements pertaining to corruption (*n*=1561)

4.2. Perception on Corruption

Perception acts as a lens through which we view reality. Our perceptions influence how we focus on, process, remember, interpret, understand, synthesize, decide about, and act on reality. In doing so, our tendency is to assume that how we perceive reality is an accurate representation of what reality truly is. With the following questions we tried to ascertain how respondents perceive corruption in South Africa, which is not a true (or false) indication of the facts, but merely a reflection of their realities.

4.2.1. Driving Factors

As seen on the figure below, abuse of power is cited the main cause of corruption - identified by 93% of the respondents; and 85% mentioned greed as the second most major cause, this aligns perfectly with the definitions respondents have for corruption where a great number of respondents defined

corruption as the act of looting done by those in positions of power out of greed/ selfish motivation. People augmenting their low salaries (79%) was the third highest cause given for people participating in corruption, followed by peer pressure (52%) and fear (50%).

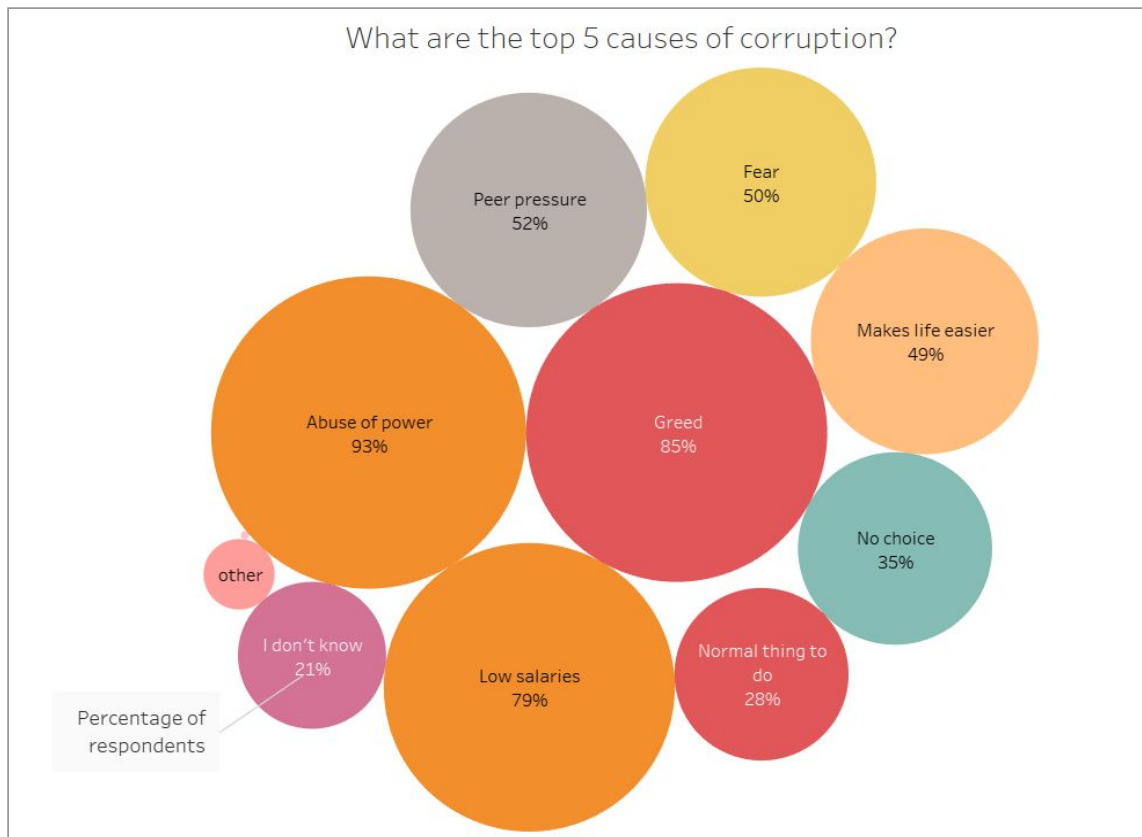


Figure 13: Most cited causes of corruption (*n*=1561)

4.2.2. Governance, Democracy and Accountability

With the youth unemployment rate at an all time high of 59% in the first quarter of 2020¹³, and thousands of young people unable to access higher education as NSFAS is currently under administration after allegations of fraud relating to employees diverting student allowances to their personal accounts¹⁴ - to name but a few issues directly affecting the youth - it is no wonder that 86% of respondents feel that corruption limits the opportunities of young people in South Africa.

The majority of respondents (85%) feel that ordinary people are afraid to report corruption because they do not feel protected if they do. This is supported greatly by Figure 16 where respondents rate SAPS, which is also the institution that 62% of respondents feels is responsible for tackling corruption¹⁵, as the most corrupt institution in South Africa.

65% of the respondents have the perception that only poor, ordinary people face consequences for corruption and that its impact differs across racial and class divides. They also feel ill-equipped with

¹³ <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/youth-unemployment-rate>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.za/speeches/nsfas-statement-9-oct-2019-0000>

¹⁵ See Annexure 11

the necessary knowledge and equipment to fight corruption in their communities, with more than half feeling that their elected representatives are not active in the fight against corruption.

Affirmatively, more young people feel (40%) that there has been more transparency on high profile cases in the past year.

In light of the findings above, a vital initial step to heightening the incidence of reporting corruption is increasing the trust levels of young people and other citizens in institutions with the mandate of gathering information on corruption cases and the protection of whistleblowers. This can be done by being impartial when handling any reports of corruption and continual improvement on transparency levels pertaining to corruption cases. There is also a need for young people to be equipped with knowledge on how to fight corruption themselves and with the intervention of corruption gatekeepers.

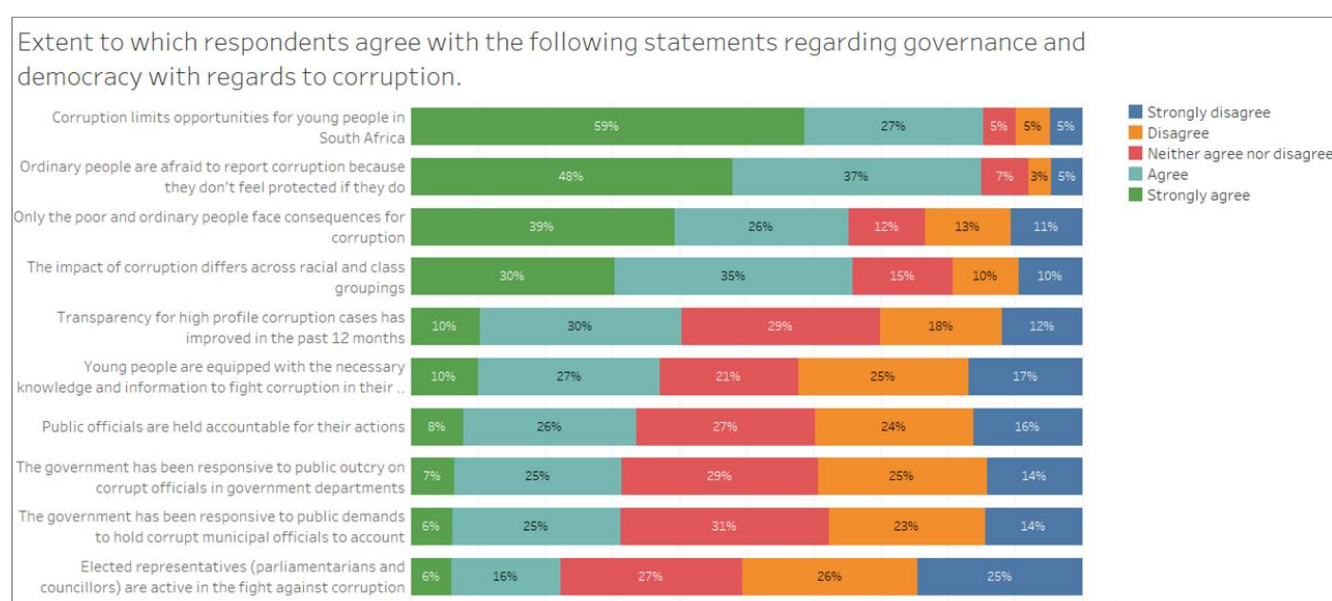


Figure 14: Statements on governance, democracy and accountability($n=1561$)

4.2.3. Institutional Corruption

To understand the perceptions of the youth on major institutions' levels of corruption, respondents rated (on a five-point Likert scale) whether they considered the institutions to be not corrupt at all or very corrupt. Slightly over 52% of the youth surveyed believe that the president is either slightly corrupt or not corrupt at all. The NGO sector (54%) and healthcare facilities (51%) are also considered to be the least corrupt institution.

The top five most corrupt¹⁶ institutions were the SAPS (76%), local government (75%), traffic department (75%), parliament (68%) and the business sector (49%). There were very minor differences between the top 3. Notably that these perceptions have remained the same as the 2013

¹⁶ For the assessment of which institutions are considered to be the most corrupt institutions, the ratings for very corrupt and corrupt are aggregated

youth survey conducted by Corruption Watch, which might be an indication that the efforts implemented as a result of the last survey have not been as impactful as they ought to have been in effecting short-medium term outcomes. An evaluation of each of these interventions, if any, will allow for both programmatic and implementation adaptations that can yield greater outcomes in future.

A significantly higher percentage of respondents in the upper income level believe that the business sector, civil society and traditional leaders have a responsibility to fight corruption alongside the police.

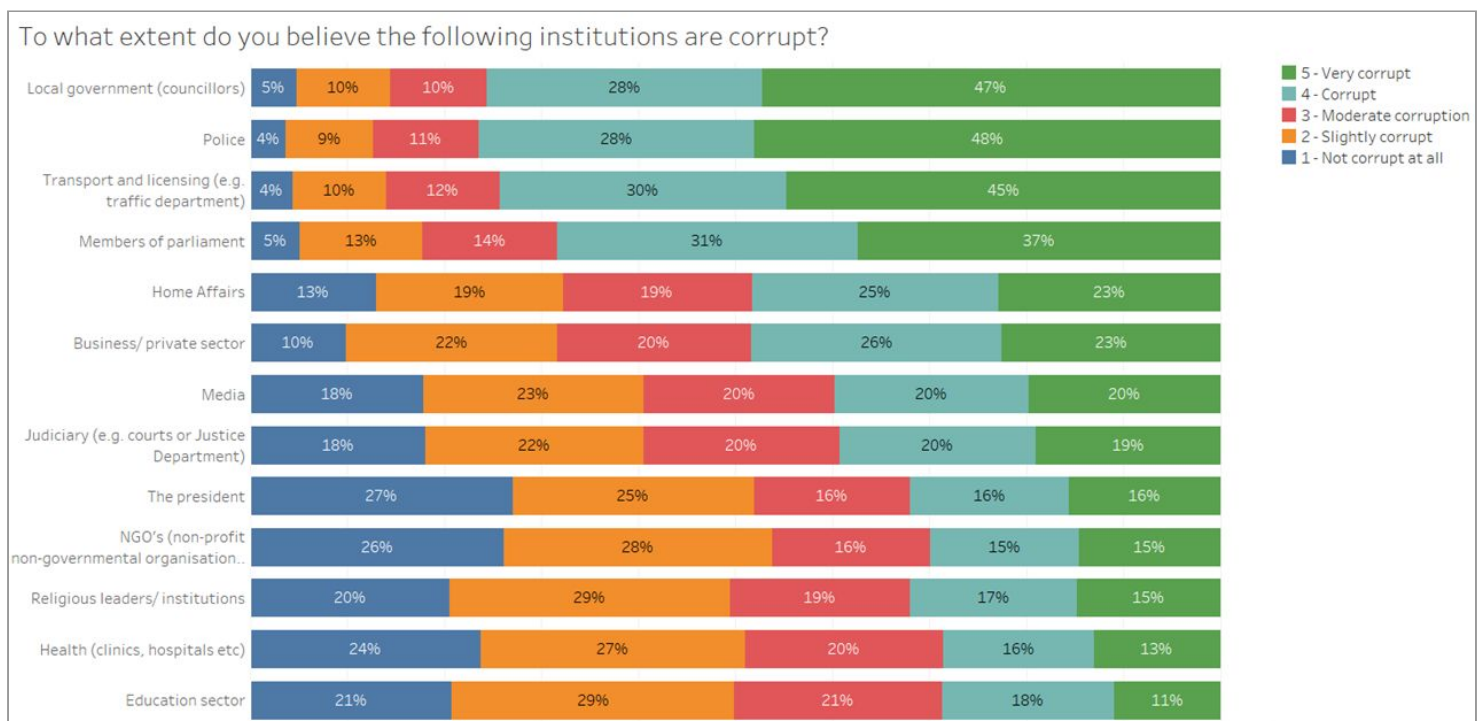


Figure 15: Views on institutions' levels of corruption (n=1561)

4.2.4. Fighting Corruption and Overall Trajectory

4.2.4.1. Corruption Trends

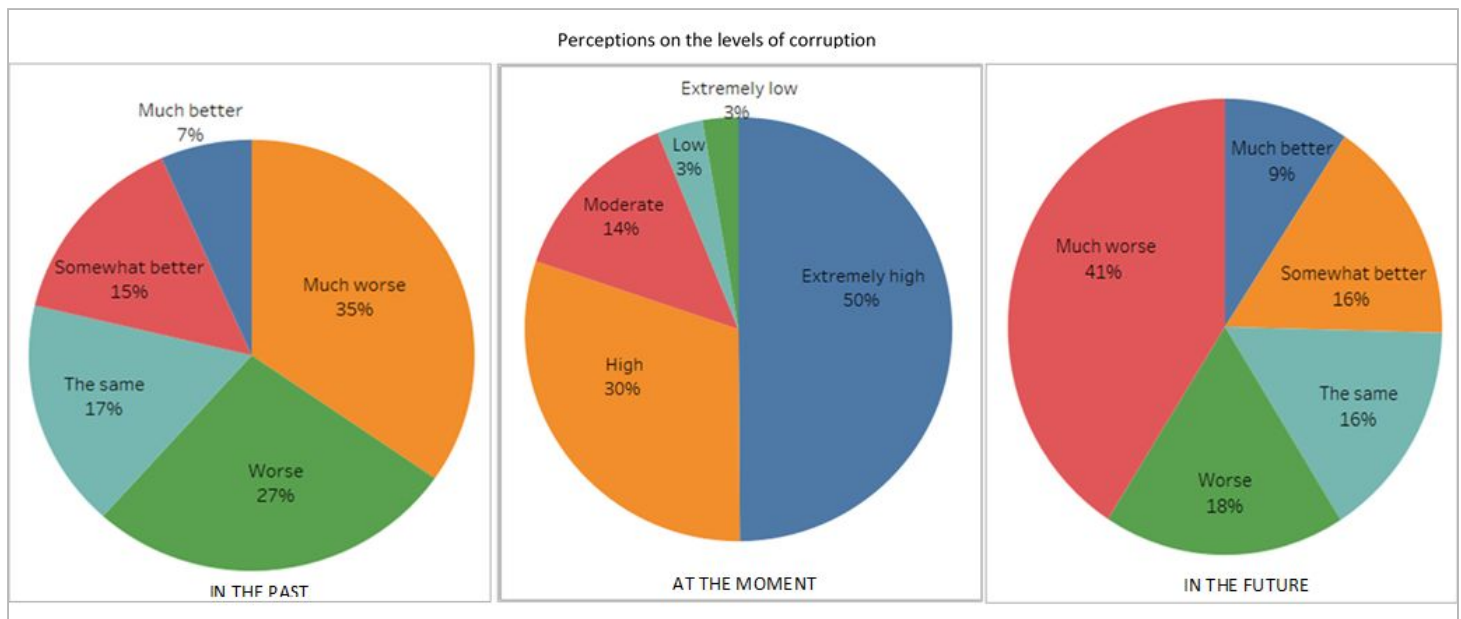


Figure 16: Views on the levels of corruption in corruption in the past and next 5 years, and at the moment ($n=1561$)

Respondents were asked to rate the levels of corruption in South Africa in the past five years and at the moment. They were also asked to state the trajectory they believe corruption in the country will take in the next five years, Figure 16. 80% of respondents view corruption at the moment to be extremely high with very minor distinction across provinces (see Annexure 8). In comparison to the past 5 years, the majority of respondents (62%) of respondents believe corruption has worsened, while 22% hold that things were better then and 17% believe nothing has changed.

When the same results are analysed across income levels, some variations are seen in the views held by South African youth. 91% of high income youth perceive corruption to be high in comparison to 80% of low and middle income youth. There is consensus between youths of different income levels that corruption is now worse in comparison to the past, and that things will get much bleaker in future.

It is important to note that the time, when this survey was conducted (during the nationwide Covid-19 containment lockdown) might have had a great impact on the overall negativity of the respondents on the current state of affairs in comparison to the past and future, with more job losses and reduced access to much needed facilities looming. It is worth pointing out that the ongoing pandemic has introduced new forms of corruption, such as the looting of food parcels and Covid-19 relief funds. This is reflected in respondents' assertions that corruption under Jacob Zuma's presidency was less rife than it is under Cyril Ramaphosa's administration. This perception of corruption being worse now, could also be attributed to the increased media coverage of high profile corruption cases such as the ongoing Zondo Commission. Social media has also played a critical role in ordinary citizens' ability to 'name and shame', and demand more accountability and

transparency. Even so, it is interesting to note that respondents perceive the current Presidency Office to be one of the least corrupt institutions in the country.

The lack of trust in institutions, more generally, and their ability to undergo positive transformation is reflected in what people believe corruption in South Africa will be like in the next 5 years. The levels of trust in different institutions is explored in the next section. Most respondents (59%) believe that corruption will be worse in future, while only a quarter believe that corruption levels will be better.

4.2.4.2. Levels of Trust

The youth surveyed have a general distrust¹⁷ of local government (77%), parliamentarians (70%), , the police (70%) the transport and licencing department (69%) and the private sector (51%) when it comes to their efforts in fighting corruption. Which stands to reason due to their earlier perception of them being the most corrupt institutions in South Africa. Local government ranks as the number one least trusted institution when it comes to fighting corruption. The president and his office is the institution that most people actually trust (36%) to fight corruption, followed very closely by the educational sector institutions (35%) and religious institutions at 32%.

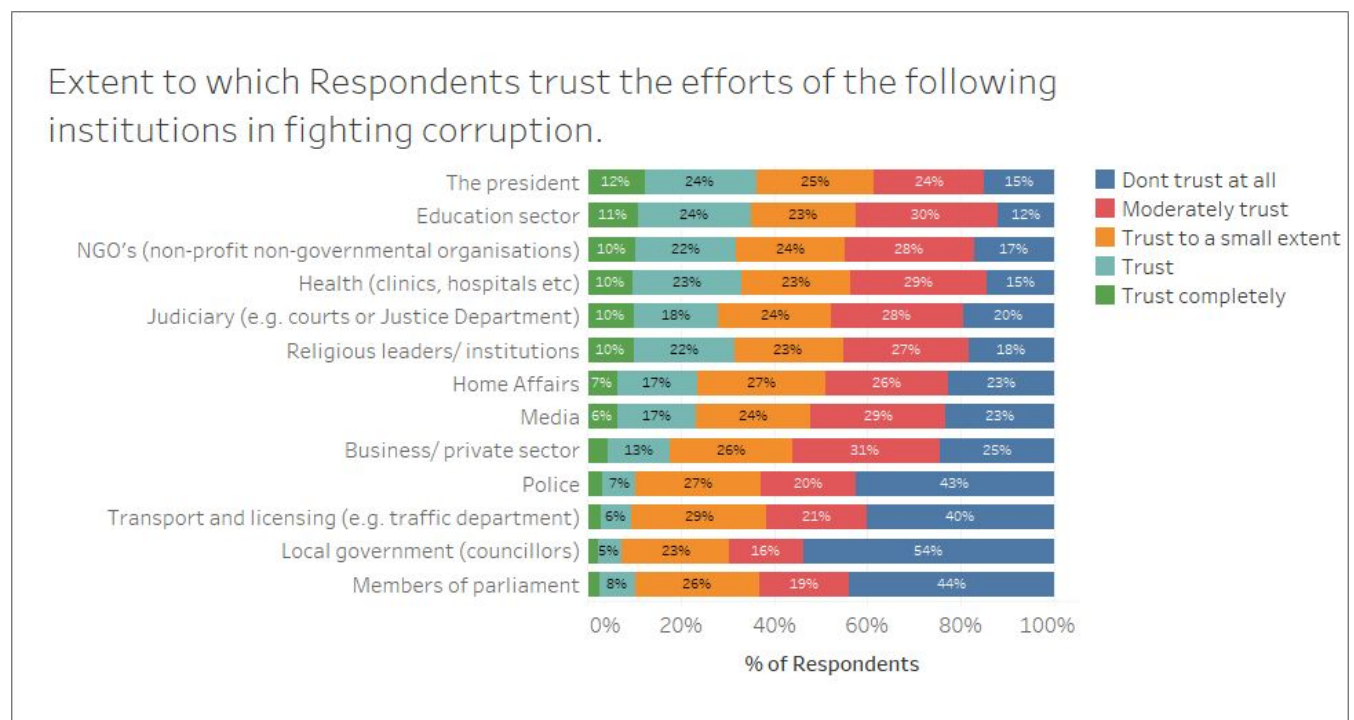


Figure 17: Views on the levels of corruption in corruption in the past and next 5 years, and at the moment ($n=1561$)

¹⁷ General distrust in this context includes ratings for 5- do not trust at all and 4- trust to a small extent

4.2.5. Corruption and Covid-19 Lockdown

The Covid-19 pandemic has adversely affected various aspects that allow for a functional country and populus, leaving many governments with the dreaded decision of choosing between keeping the highest possible number of people alive or keeping the economy afloat - with both scenarios having unfavourable knockon effects on each other. This decision has left even governments with the highest capacity and experts struggling to respond appropriately, South Africa has not been spared of this conundrum. Bad decisions are being made, corners are being cut and regulations are being loosened. It is likely that large contracts are being given out without competitive tenders or normal due-diligence checks. All of these create opportunities for corruption to thrive. Sadly it is the poor and the vulnerable who bear the brunt of institutionalised poverty in this crisis.

85% of the respondents assert that food parcels which are meant to help alleviate hunger during this pandemic are not being distributed fairly, with 49% of them believing that you have to be a member of a particular political party in order to receive food parcels. There is little hope in the measures that are being put in place to provide social assistance to the poor with 41% of respondents feeling that the SASSA Covid19 grant is being badly administered. 48% accuse the police of abusing their powers to harass ordinary citizens during the lockdown. Although half of all respondents do not believe that there are equal opportunities for all to access the programmes to help support small businesses to survive the lockdown, 45% of them do believe that people have an equal opportunity to access hospitals in the event of contracting the corona virus.

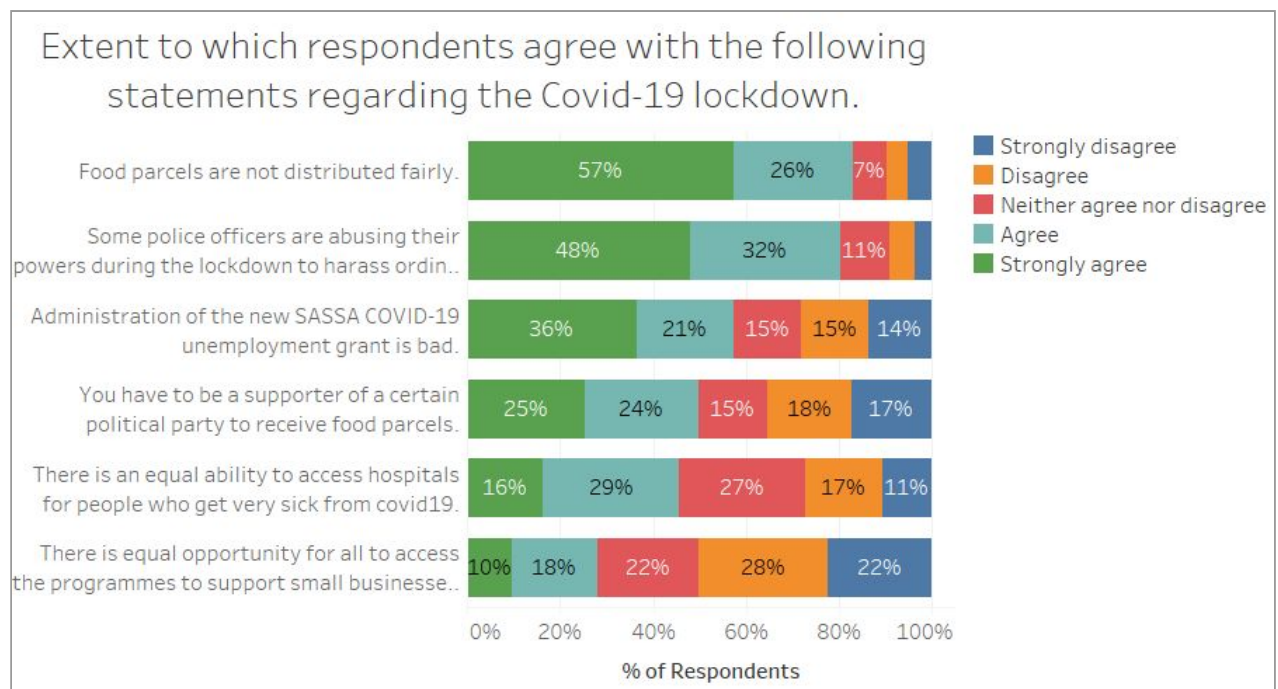


Figure 18: Corruption during the lockdown($n=1561$)

4.3. Overarching Sentiments on Corruption

4.3.1. Concerns

Regardless of the fact that most respondents reported to have no direct involvement in corruption. Merely living in this country does not spare anyone of the effects of corruption and concerns associated with living in a corruption ridden nation.¹⁸ 84% of respondents report being very or extremely concerned about corruption in the country, with 52% of them being extremely concerned.

The youth in the North West province are the most concerned about corruption in South Africa(90%), followed closely by Limpopo(89%) and the Northern Cape at 86%, with 62% of those being extremely concerned. There is a general trend across all provinces of respondents being very concerned about corruption.

The middle income respondents were the most concerned about corruption (87%), followed by respondents in the high income level (84%). The lower income respondents were the least concerned with corruption (83%), but their concern levels across income levels is generally extremely high.

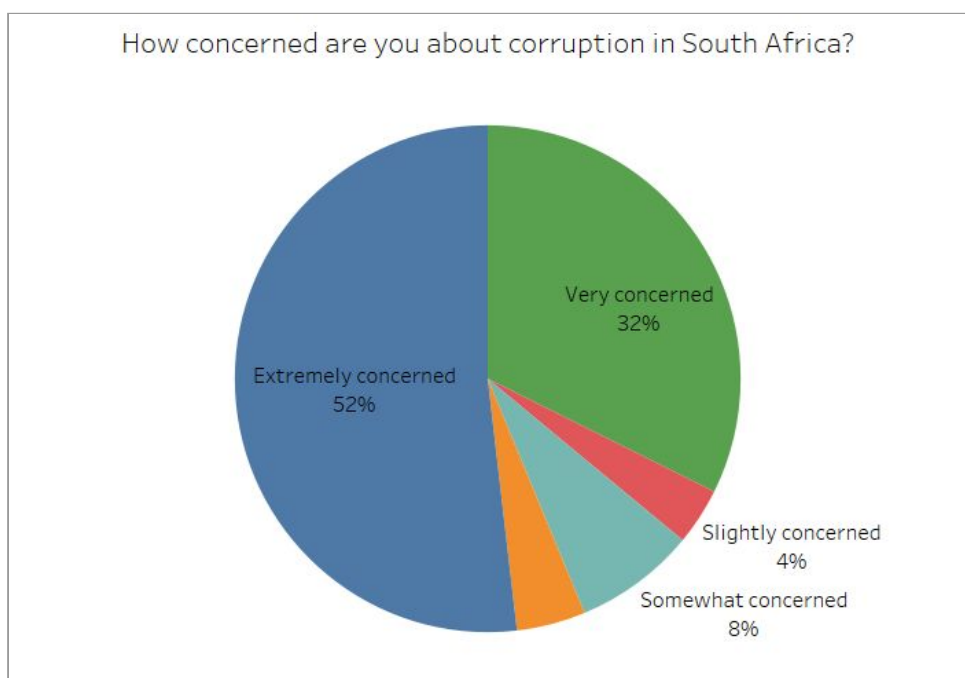


Figure 19: Level of concern regarding corruption in the country($n=1561$)

5. Key highlightss

Based on the findings above the following conclusions and general recommendations can be drawn:

¹⁸ See Annexure 12

1. **South African youth understand what corruption is.** Definitions on what people see corruption to be are not limited to people in government or positions of authority, in fact most young South Africans use definitions of corruption that encompass both petty and grand corruption.
2. **Unemployment, abuse of power, greed and low salaries are perceived to be major drivers of corruption.** Although most young people have not committed corruption in the past, more than double the number who have in the past would consider being involved in illegal deals in order to get a job. Most people who were asked for a sexual favour in the past were asked in exchange for a job.
3. **Young people generally do not trust big business and politicians**
4. **Police and local government are considered to be the most corrupt institutions.** This is a worrying finding as both are mandated with tackling corruption at local level. Young people also fear for their safety if they were to report corruption due to the corruption within these institutions. Resolving corruption in these institutions serves a good precursor to increasing confidence in these institutions to fight corruptions more generally.
5. **Levels of corruption are perceived to be higher than before.** South Africa is viewed to be faring worse now in terms of corruption levels than it was 5 years ago. This is most likely driven by increased transparency on high profile cases of public interest as well as the corruption linked to Covid-19 relief funds .
6. **No institution is trusted by more than half of the youth population to tackle corruption.** Solutions for fighting the corruption conundrum should leverage both the capacities of individuals, as well as institutions at all levels.

6. Conclusion

With the Covid-19 pandemic creating global uncertainty about the future and what that will look like, the problems which confront the youth today are unprecedented. They are already trying to deal with challenges of unemployment, lack of access to higher education and societal inequality. Across all provinces, gender and races the youth are well aware of the different forms of corruption, and its impact on their daily lives. They have shown through the various scenarios presented to them that they have not willingly participated in corruption and are not willing to participate in corrupt activities in the future.

Young people have a fundamental role to play in bringing a new culture of integrity to all levels of the society, but they are also vulnerable. It is therefore important to devise appropriate empowerment strategies and to build their capacity to stand up against it, ensuring their proper inclusion as stakeholders in any policy development and implementation of anti-corruption strategies.

Though they are willing to speak out against perpetrators of corruption, they fear for their lives as they do not trust the police or the institutions who are supposed to protect them or in whose interest exposing corruption should be. The role of whistleblower protection thus remains a key factor that policy makers will need to strengthen if progress in the fight against corruption will be made. Similarly, public institutions will need to work differently and co-creatively with the youth to win their hearts and minds in terms of their responsiveness to corruption.

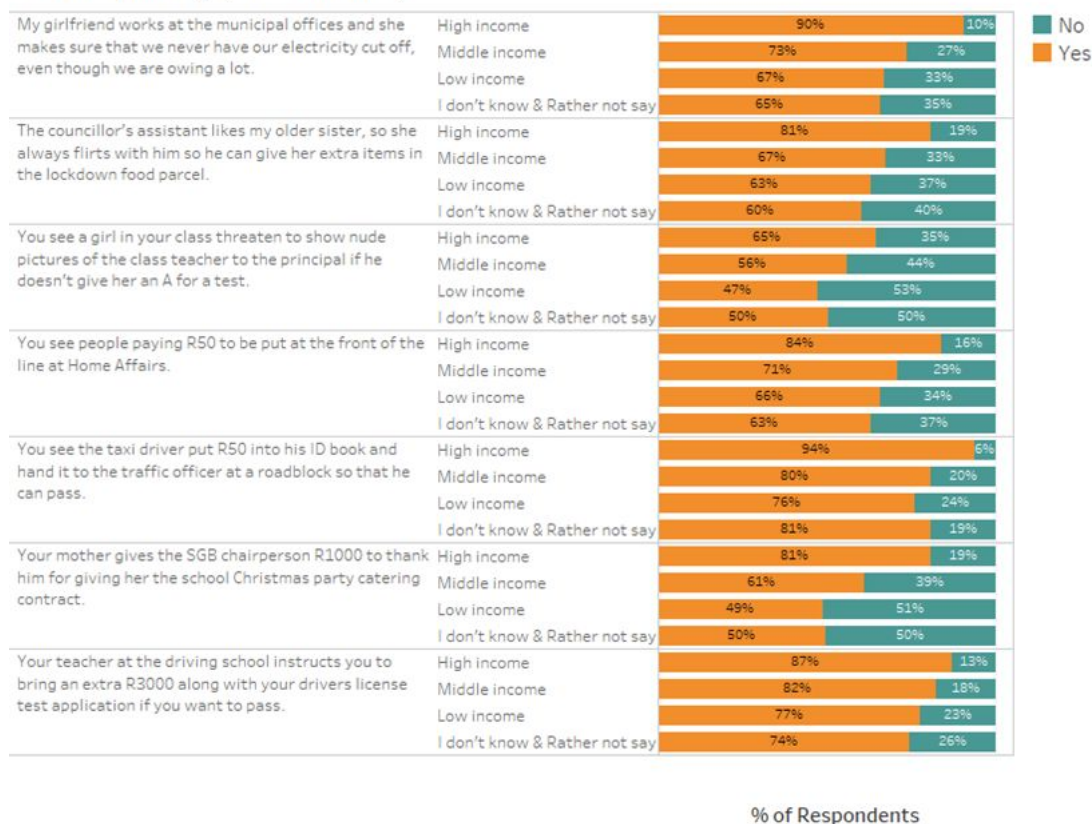
Unless there is significant demonstration of accountability in high echelons of business, politics, public administration, and society in general, the belief in public institutions as organisations that are genuinely fighting against corruption is likely to remain a mirage. The youth in South Africa remain very concerned about corruption regardless of their race, location, gender and income category.

Annexures

Annexure 1: Identification of petty corruption as corruption by province and gender

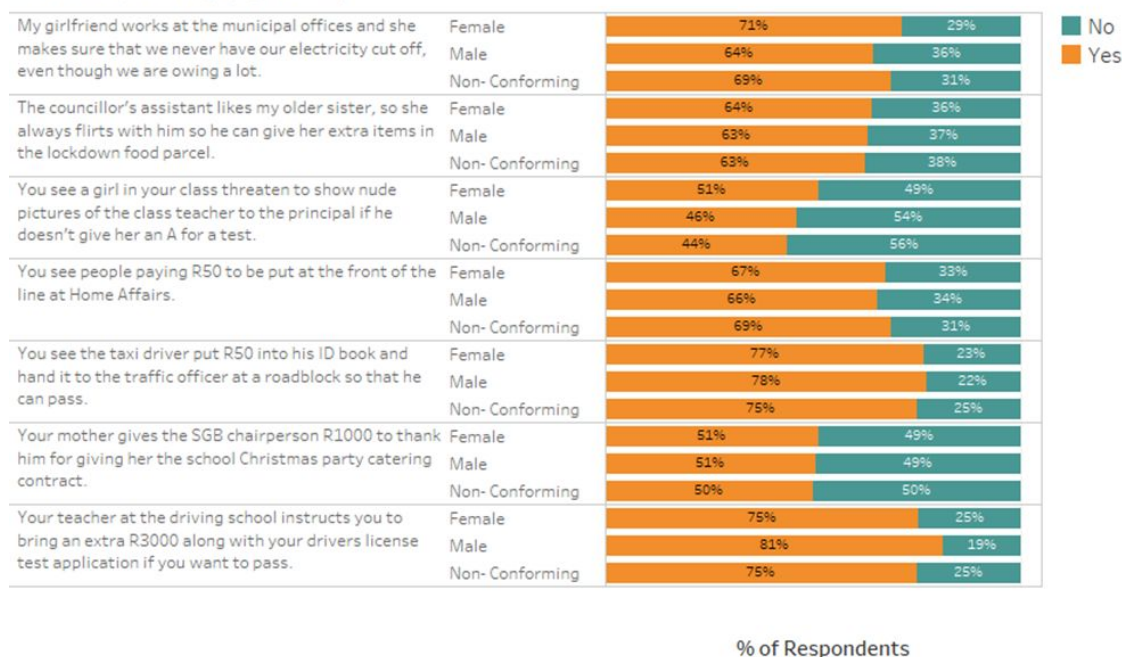


Percentage of respondent identifying the following petty corruption scenarios as corruption. (by income level)



n = 1561

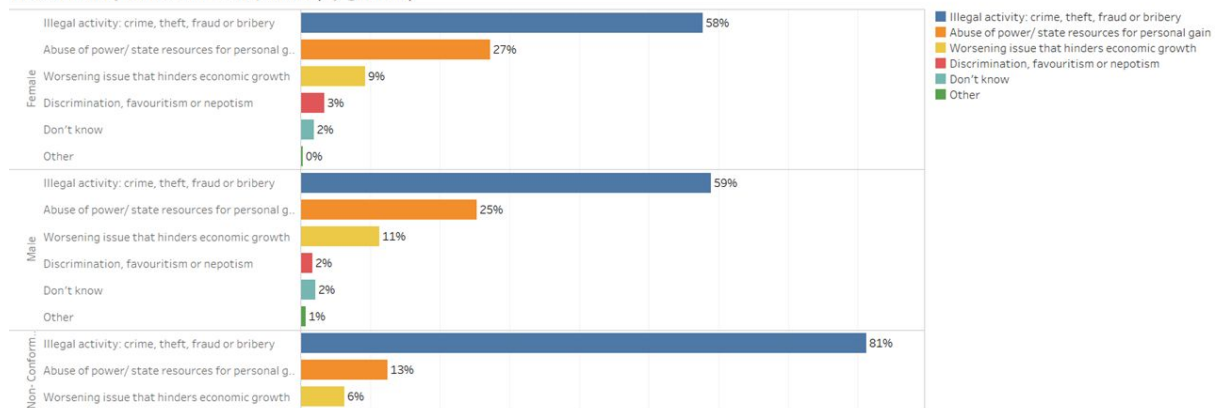
Percentage of respondent identifying the following petty corruption scenarios as corruption. (by gender)



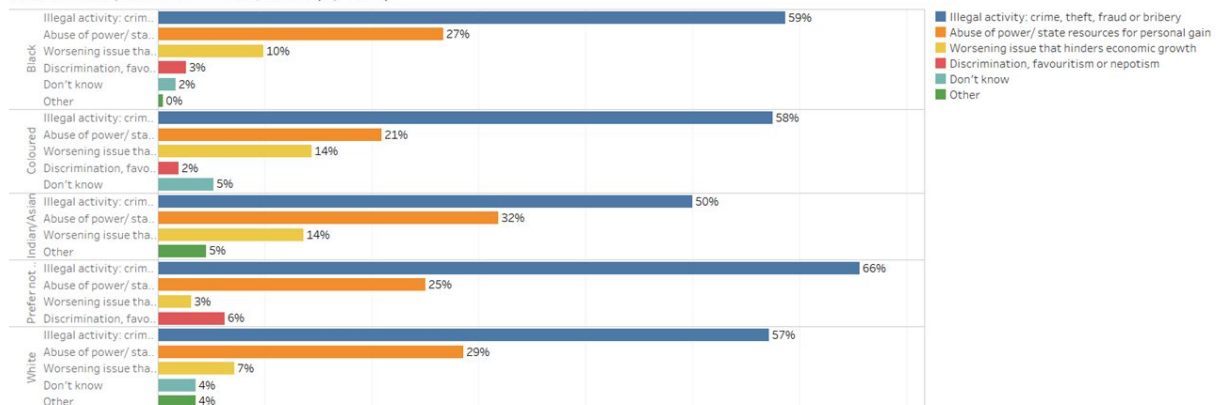
n = 1561

Annexure 2: Themed definitions of corruption by gender, race, income level and province

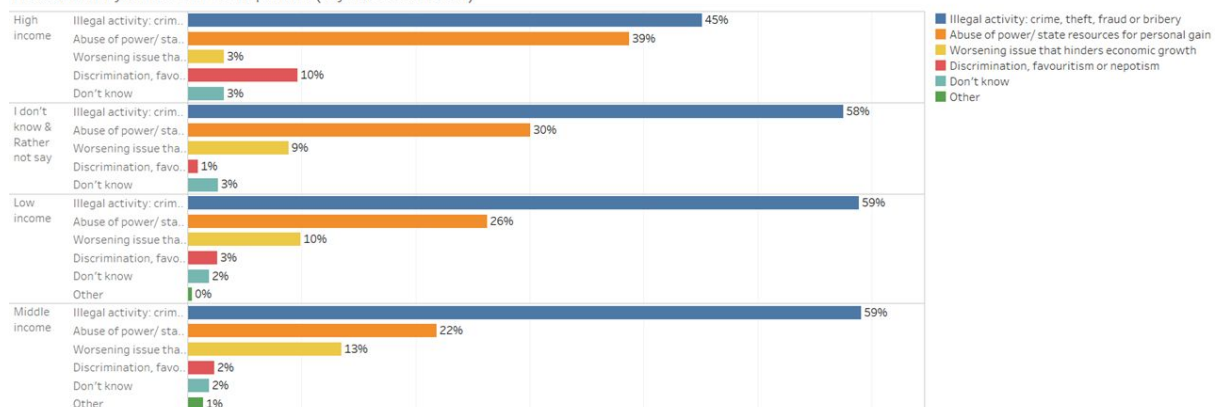
How would you define corruption? (by gender)



How would you define corruption? (by race)

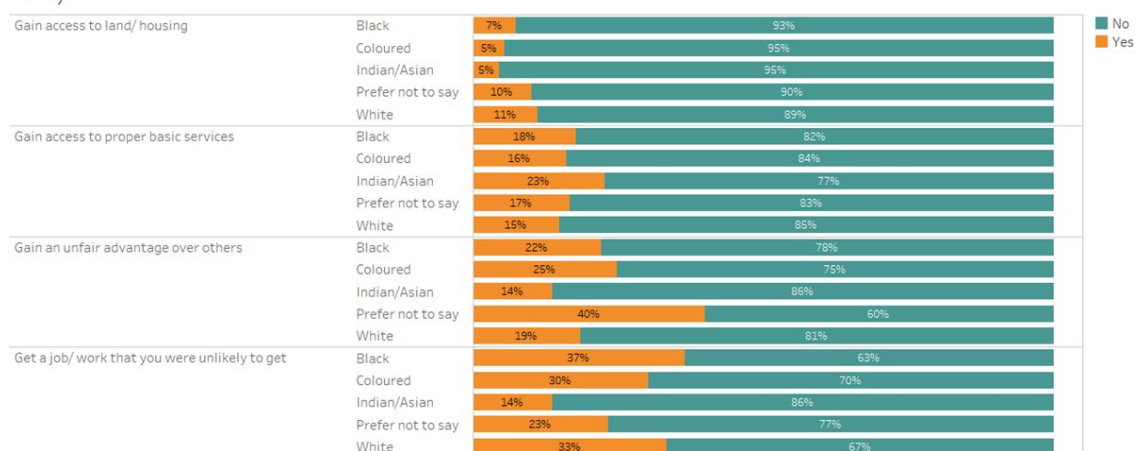


How would you define corruption? (by income level)

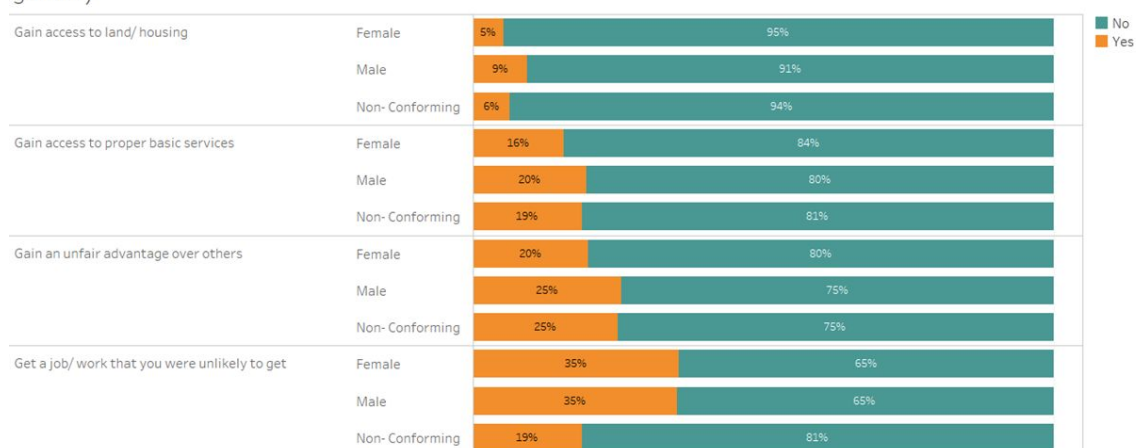


Annexure 3: Finding oneself in a position to offer a bribe or favour by race, gender and province

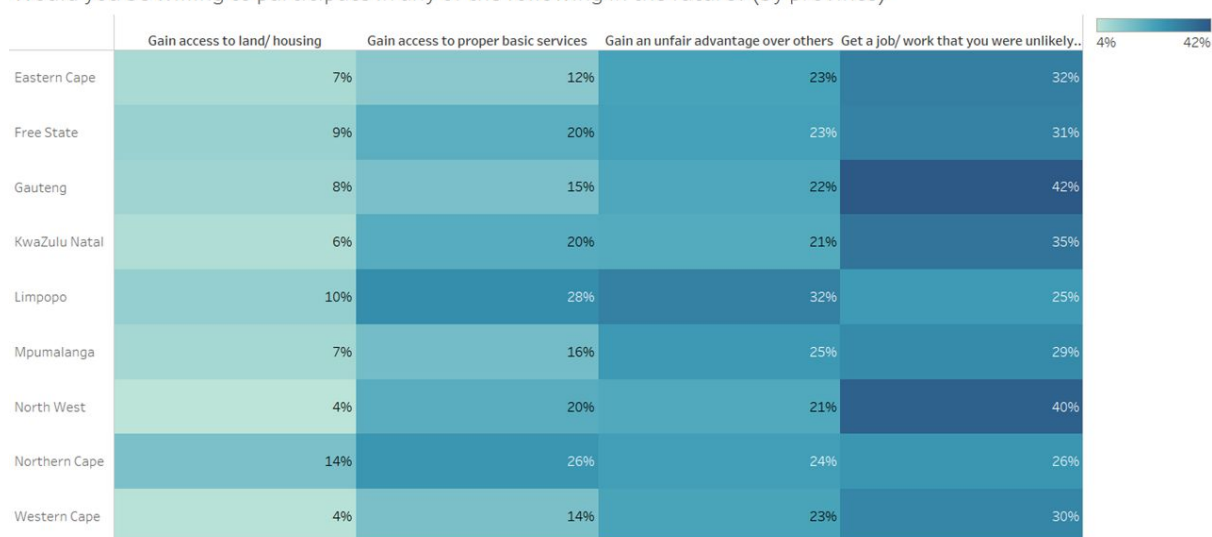
Have you been in a position where you could have offered a bribe/ favour to do any of the following: (by race)



Have you been in a position where you could have offered a bribe/ favour to do any of the following: (by gender)

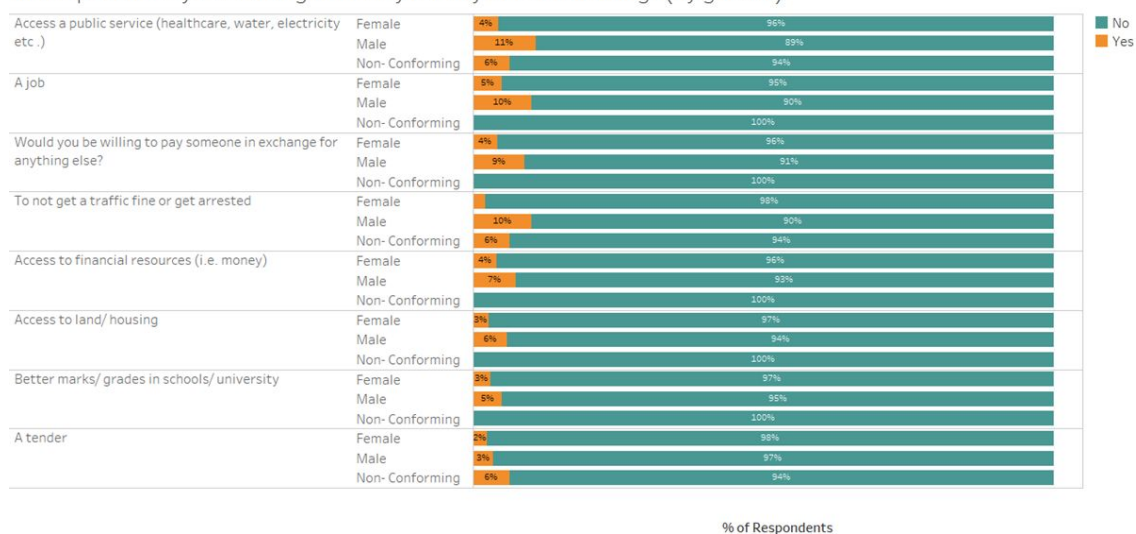


Would you be willing to participate in any of the following in the future? (by province)



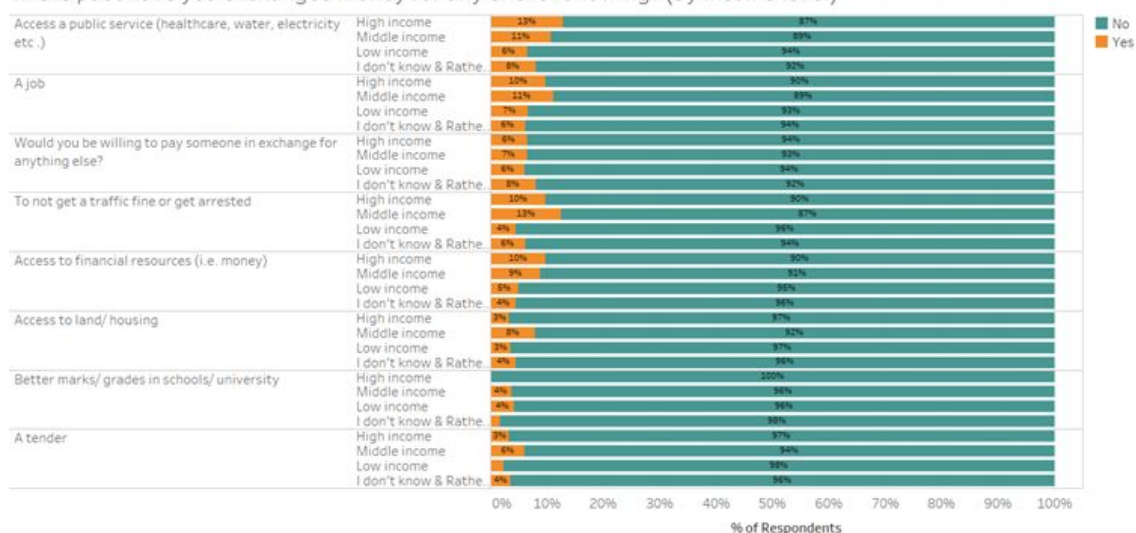
Annexure 4.1: Bribery in the past

In the past have you exchanged money for any of the following? (by gender)



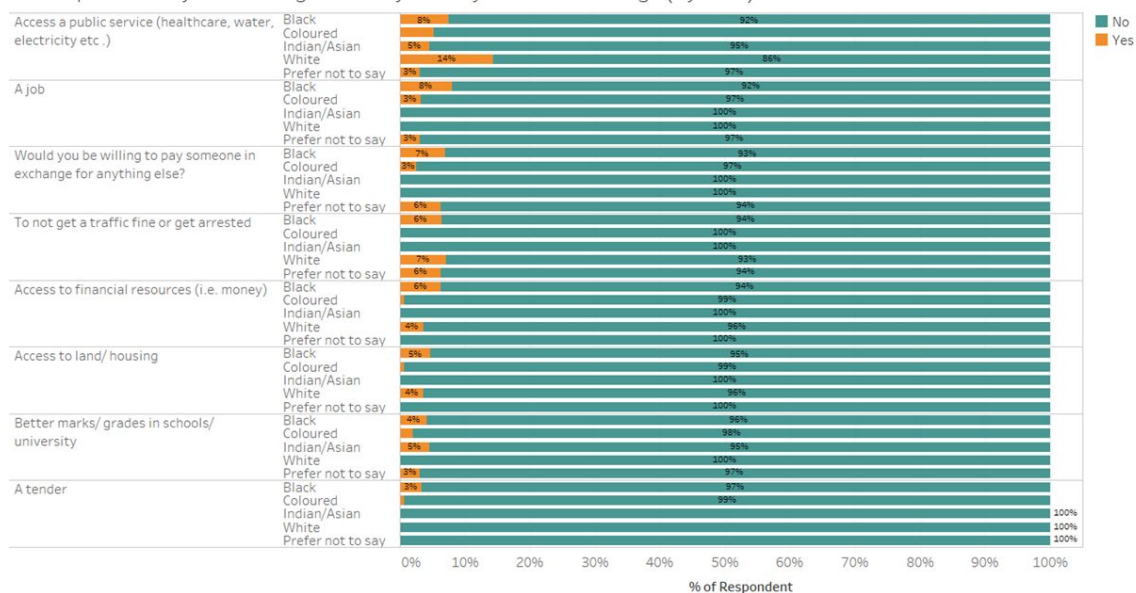
n = 1561

In the past have you exchanged money for any of the following? (by income level)



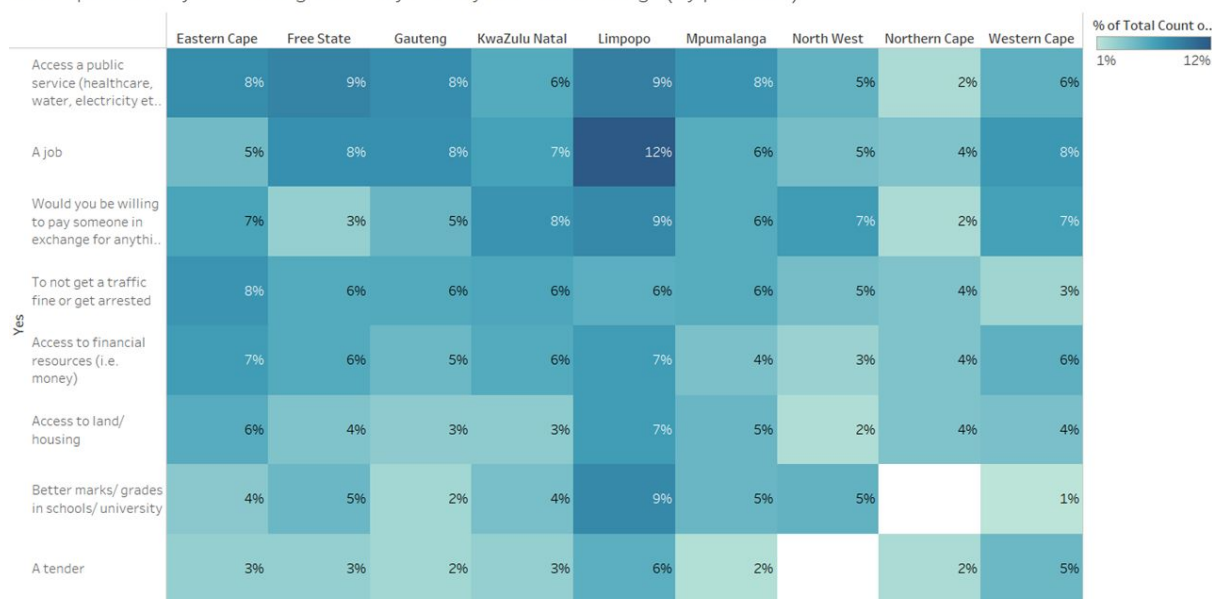
n = 1561

In the past have you exchanged money for any of the following? (by race)



n = 1561

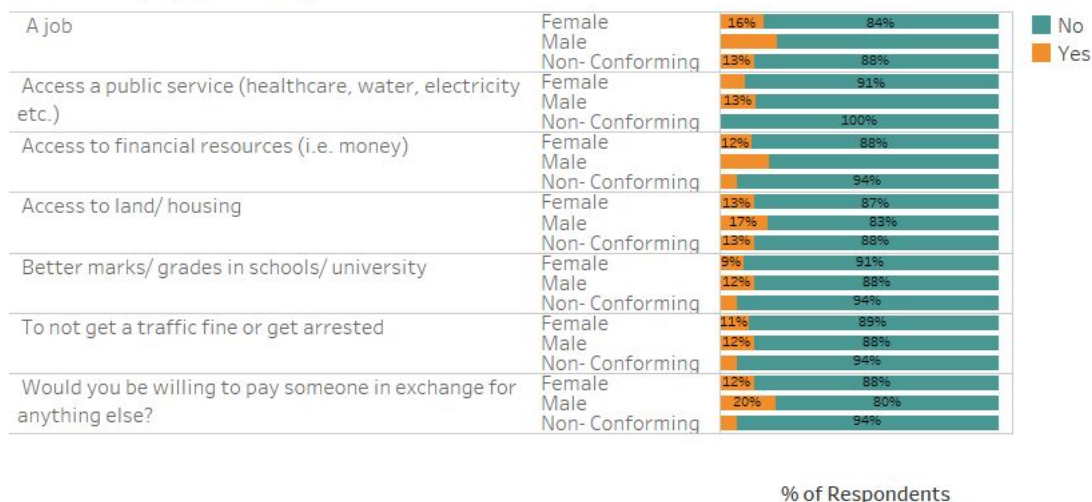
In the past have you exchanged money for any of the following? (by province)



n = 1561

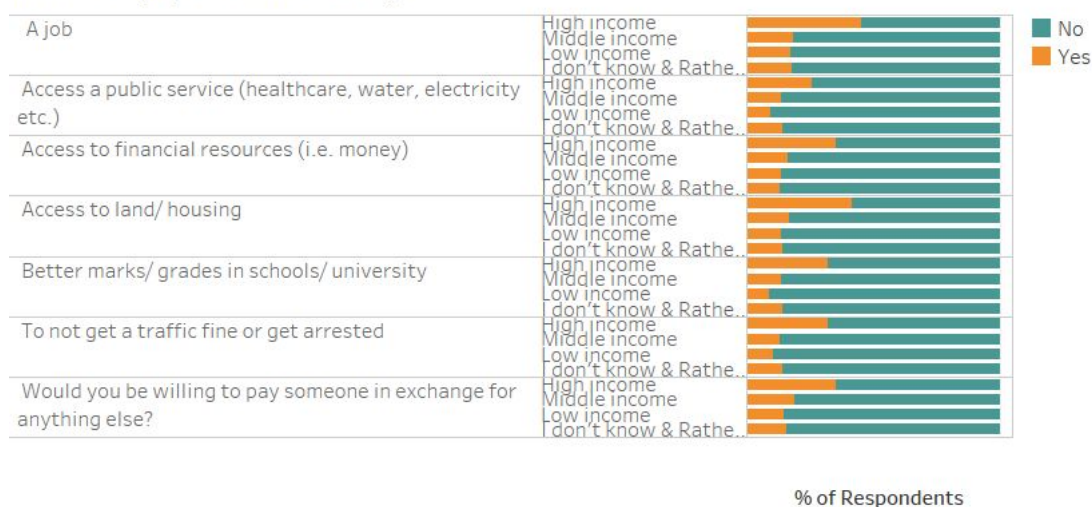
Annexure 4.2: Willingness to bribe in the future by gender, income level and race

Would you exchange money for any of the following in the future? (by gender)



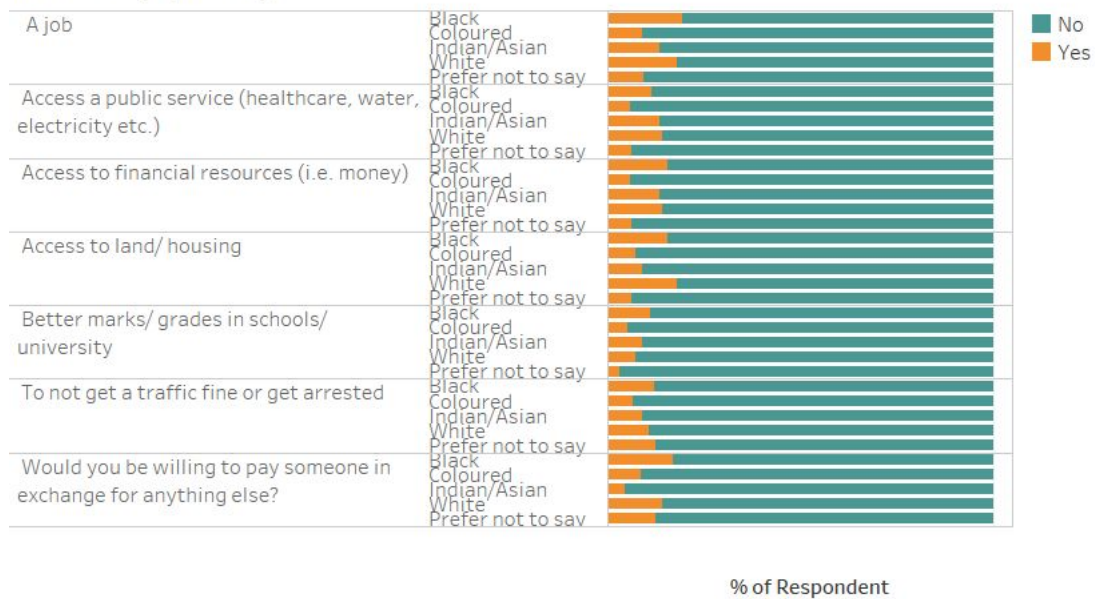
n = 1561

Would you exchange money for any of the following in the future? (by income level)



n = 1561

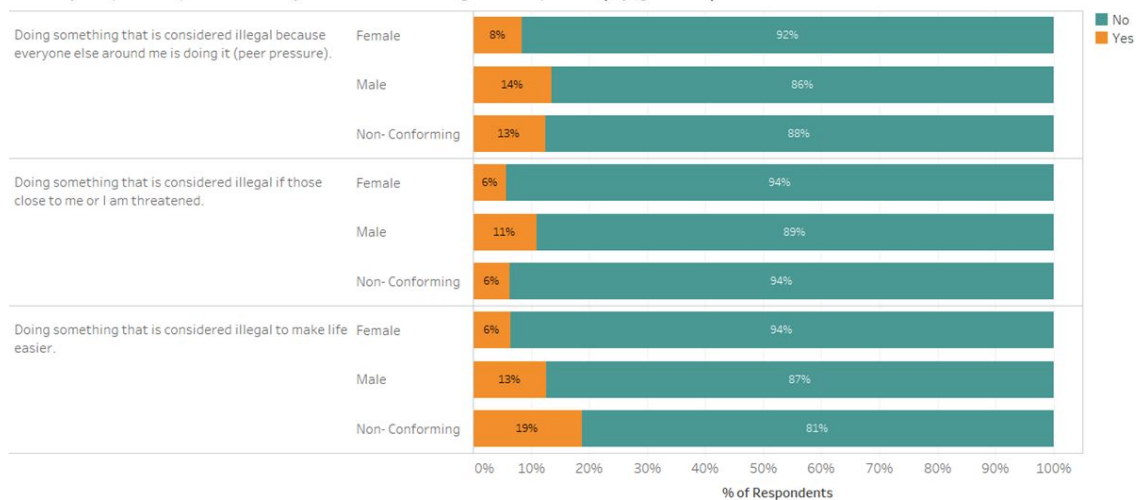
Would you exchange money for any of the following in the future? (by race)



n = 1561

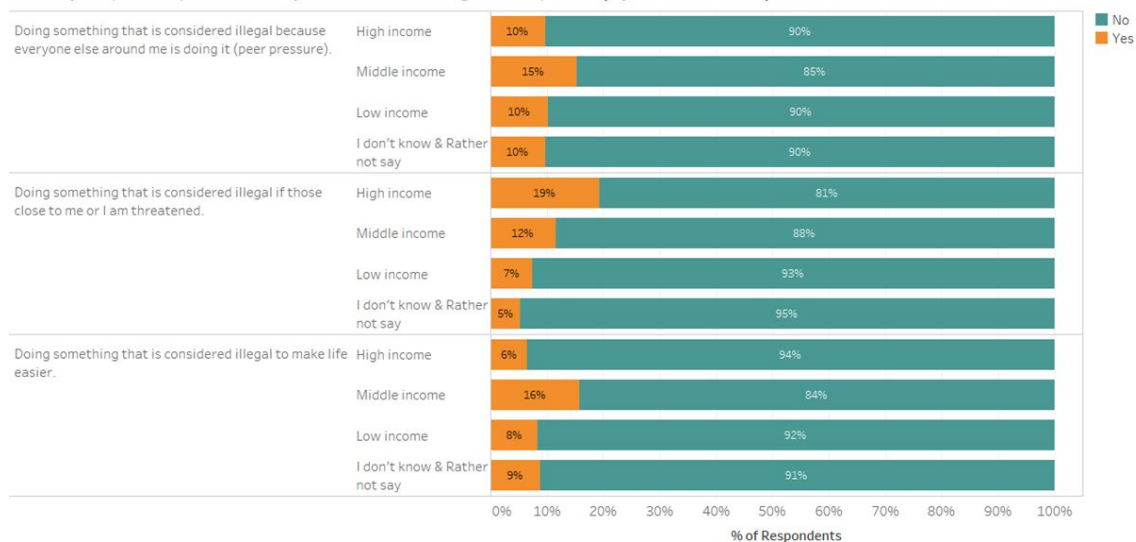
Annexure 5: Illegal activity in the past by gender, income level, race and province

Have you participated in any of the following in the past? (by gender)



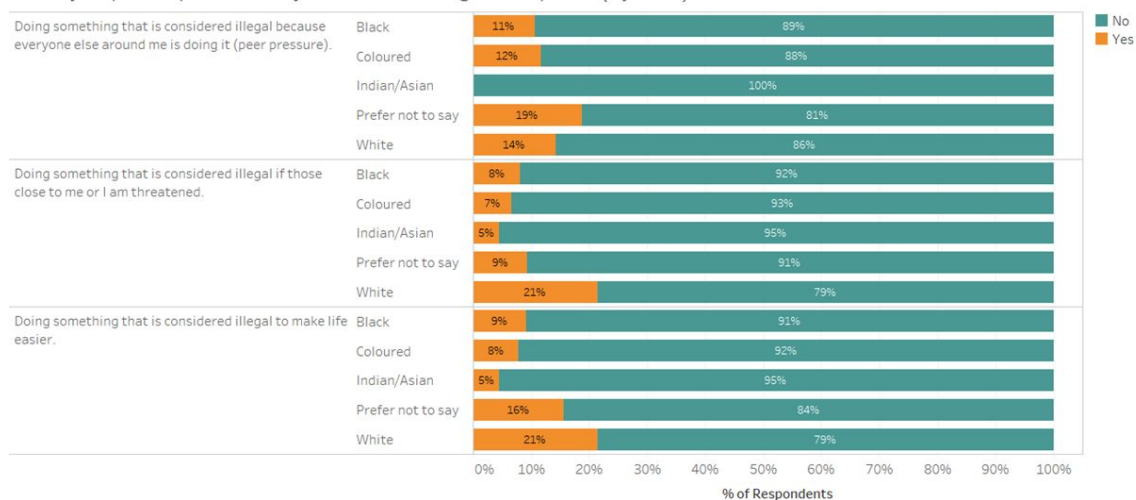
n = 1561

Have you participated in any of the following in the past? (by income level)



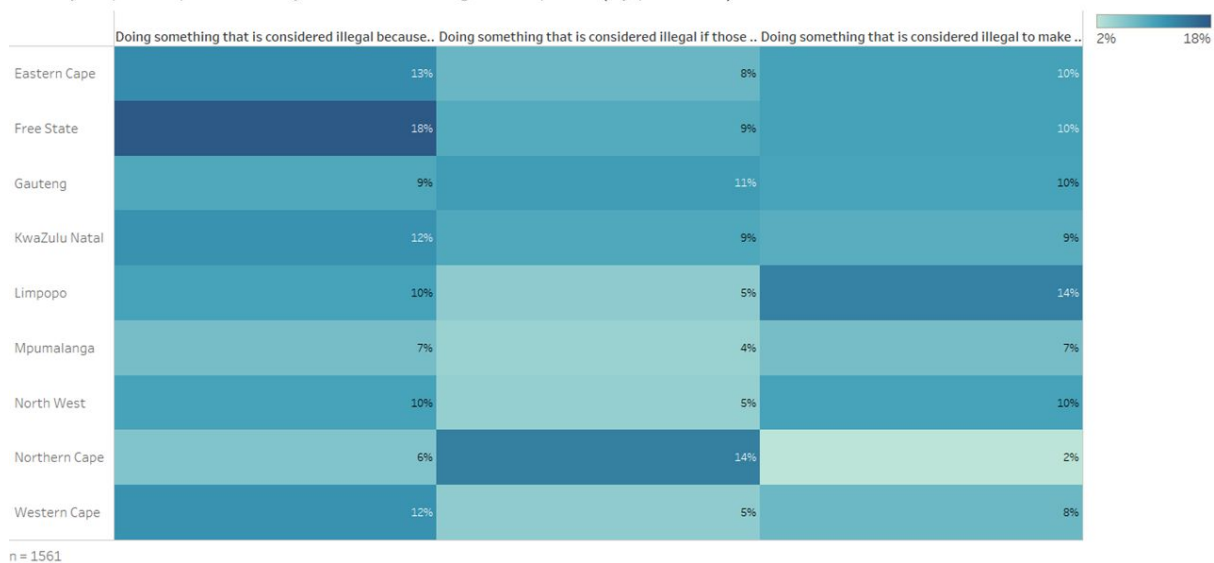
n = 1561

Have you participated in any of the following in the past? (by race)



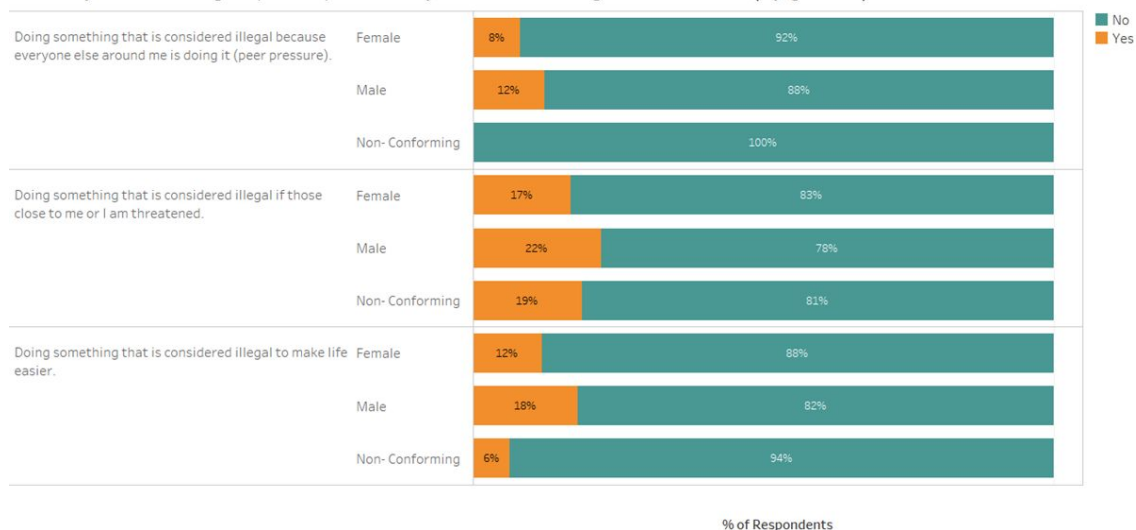
n = 1561

Have you participated in any of the following in the past? (by province)



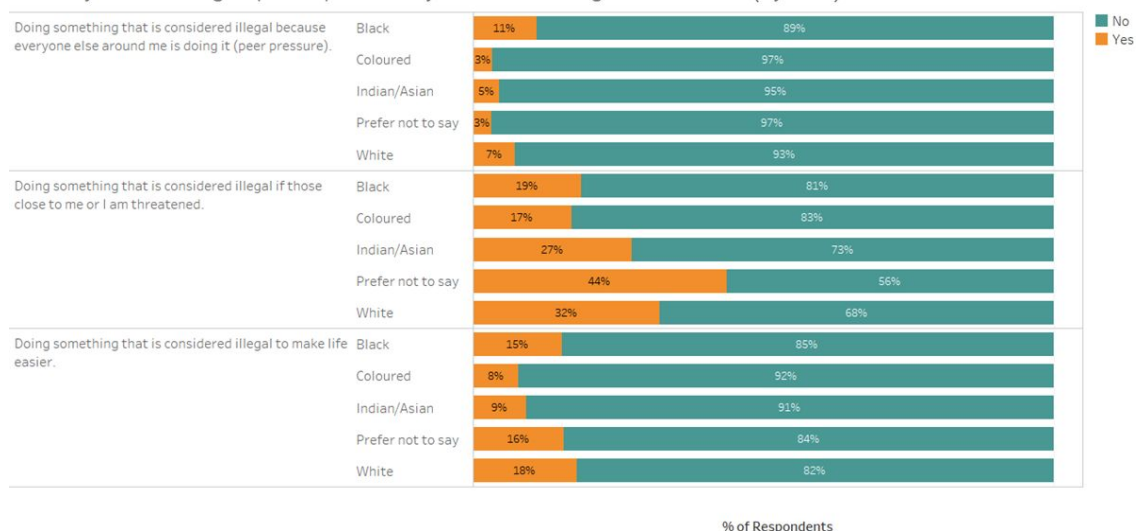
Annexure 6: Illegal activity in the future by gender, income level, race and province

Would you be willing to participate in any of the following in the future? (by gender)



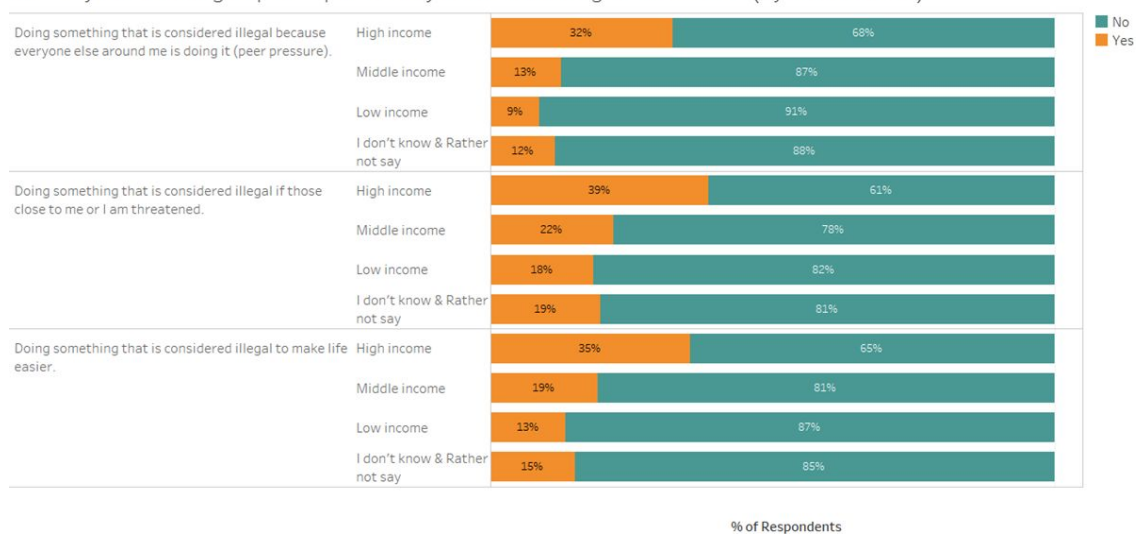
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Would you be willing to participate in any of the following in the future? (by race)



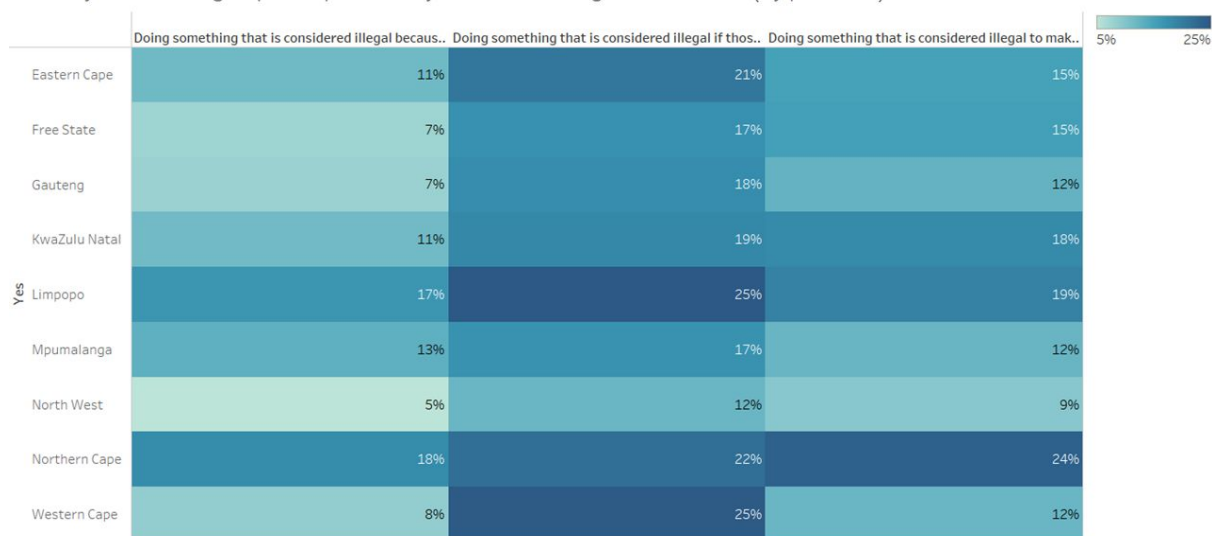
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Would you be willing to participate in any of the following in the future? (by income level)



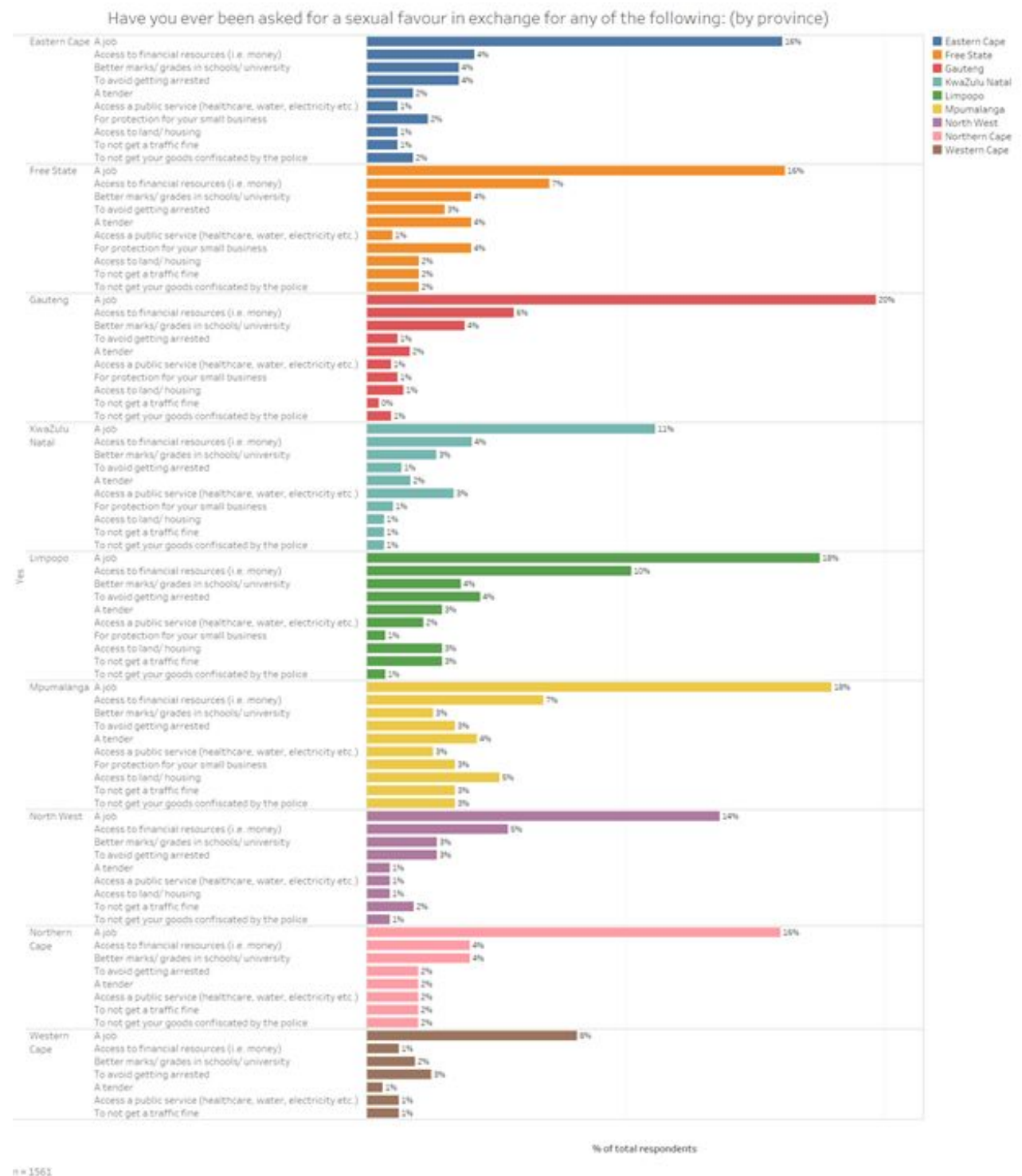
n = 1561

Would you be willing to participate in any of the following in the future? (by province)



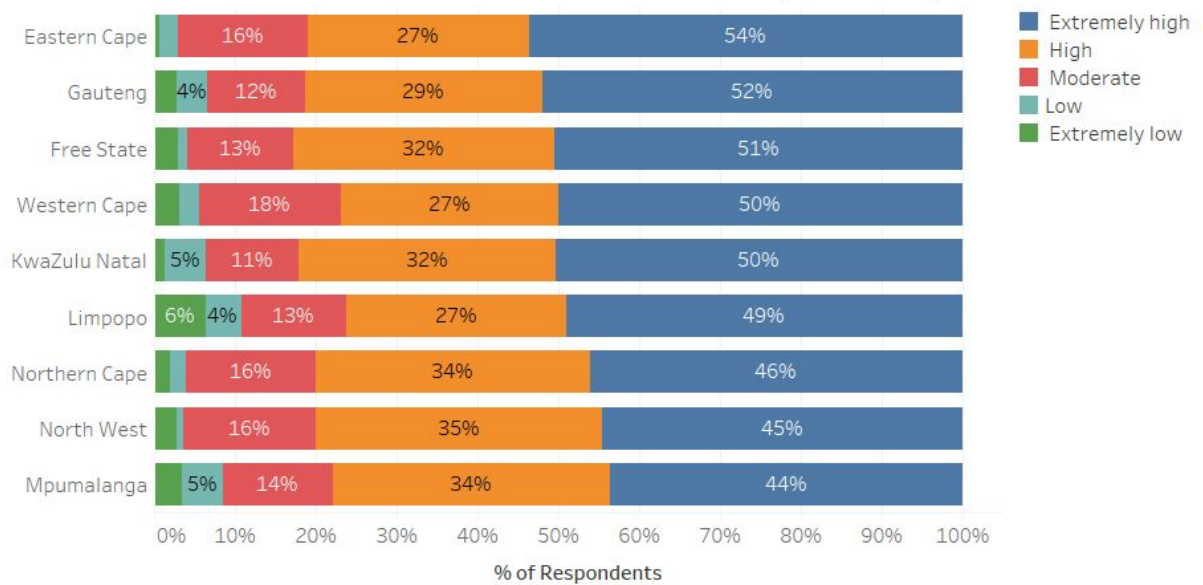
n = 1561

Annexure 7: Being asked for sexual favours by province

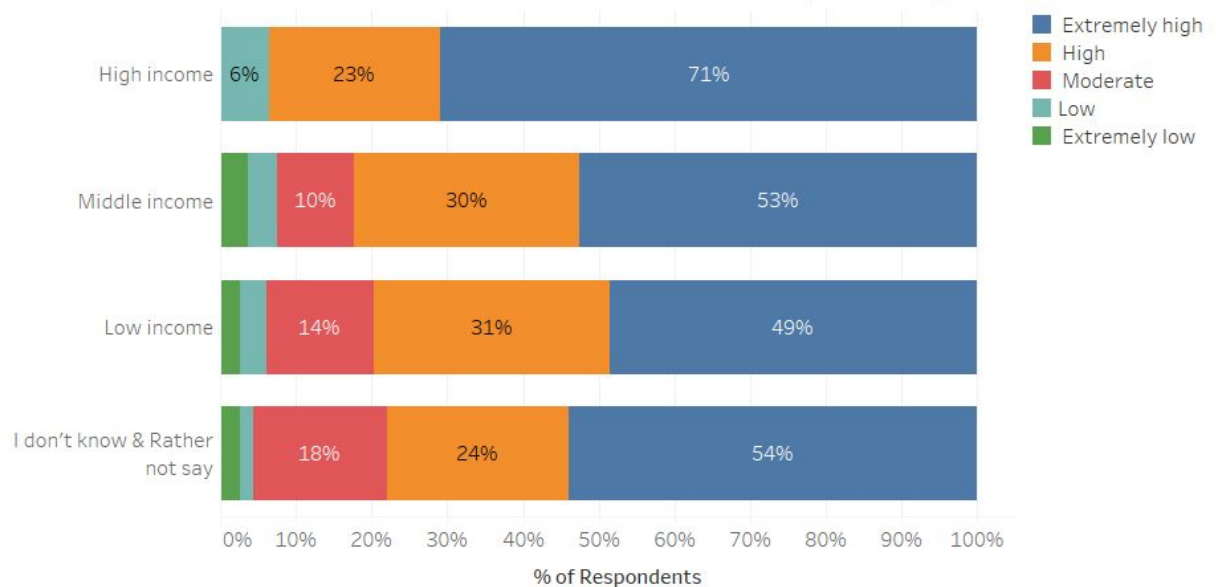


Annexure 8: Perception of the level of corruption in South Africa by province, income and gender

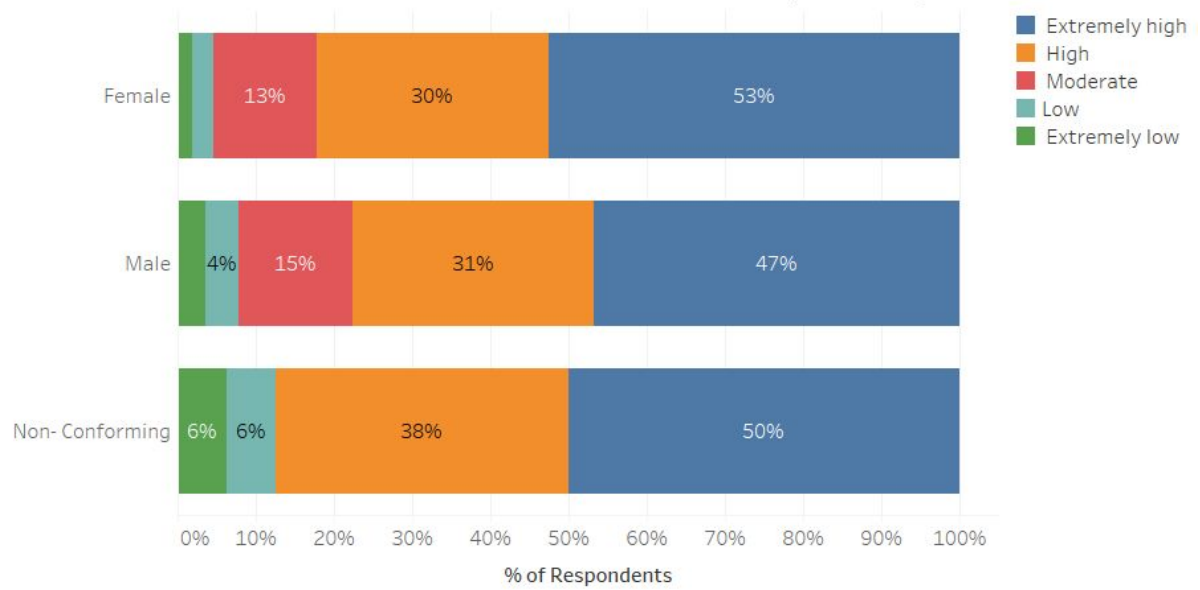
At the moment, the corruption levels in South Africa are... (by province)



At the moment, the corruption levels in South Africa are... (by income)

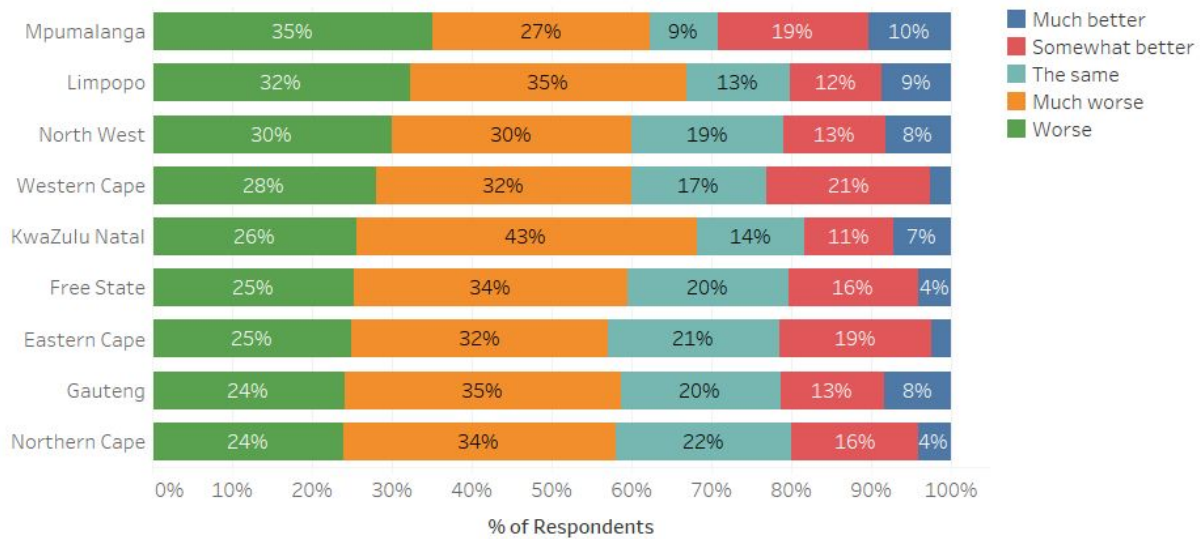


At the moment, the corruption levels in South Africa are... (by gender)



Annexure 9: Perceptions on the level of corruption in South Africa in the past by province, income and gender

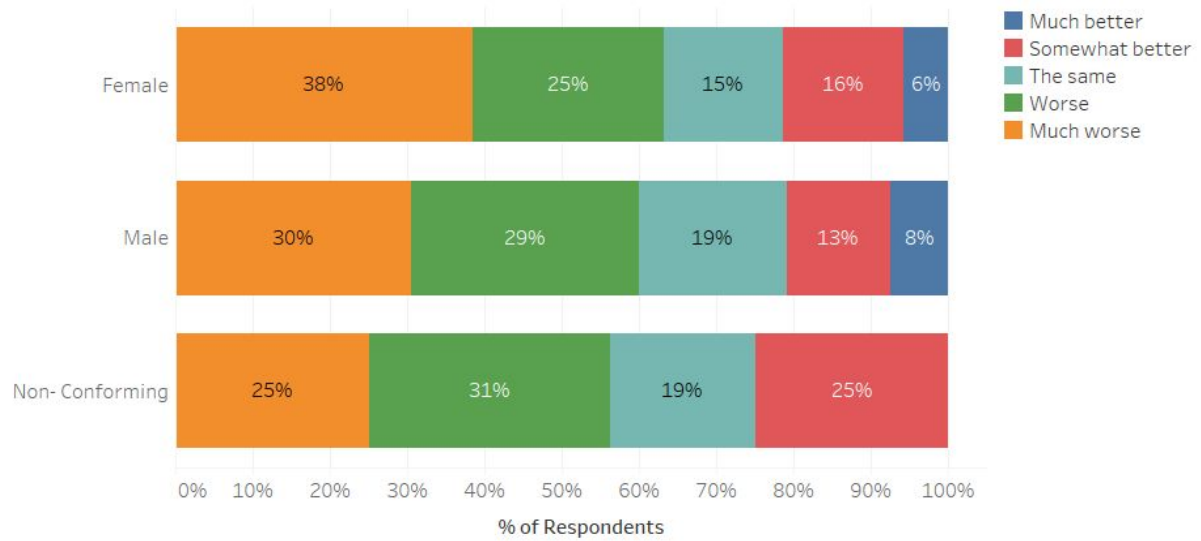
In comparison to the PAST 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa are.. (by province)



In comparison to the PAST 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa are.. (by income)

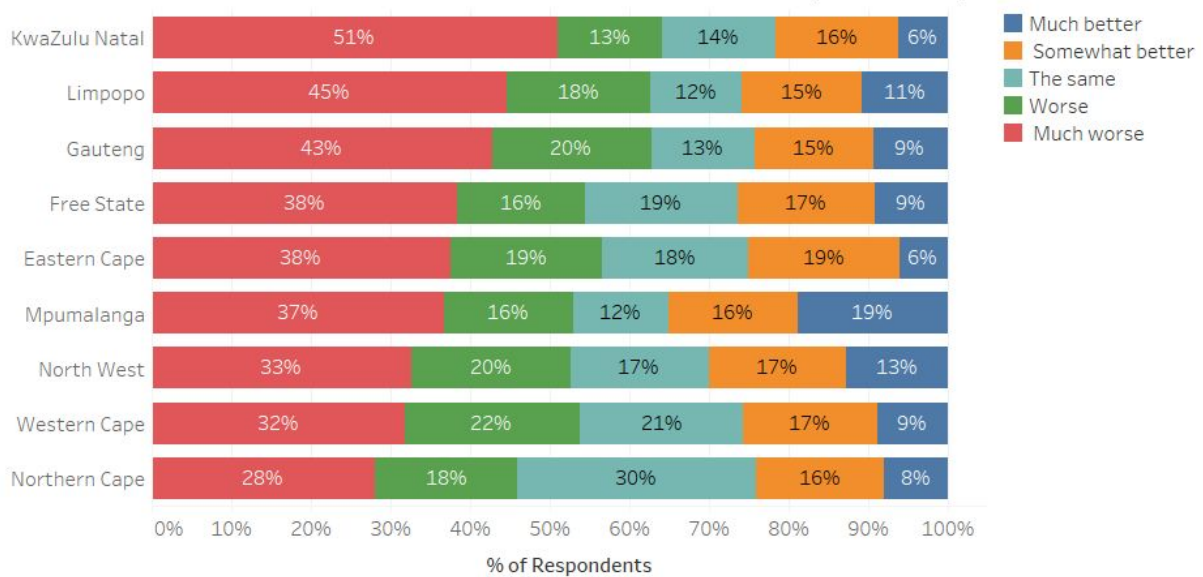


In comparison to the PAST 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa are..(by gender)



Annexure 10: Perceptions on the level of corruption in South Africa in the future by province, income and gender

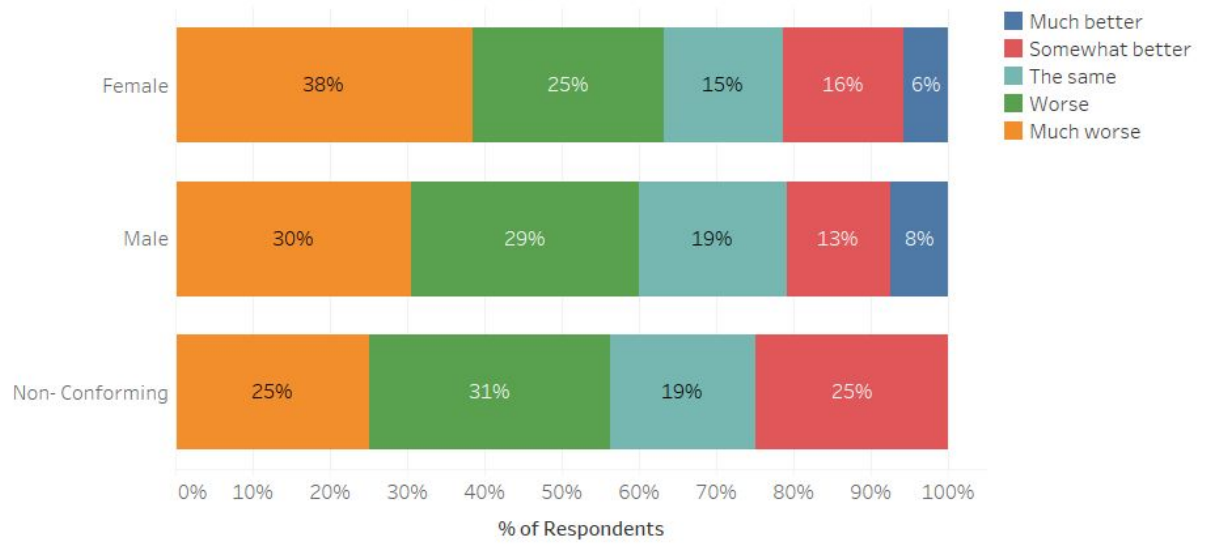
In the NEXT 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa will be.. (by province)



In comparison to the PAST 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa are.. (by income)

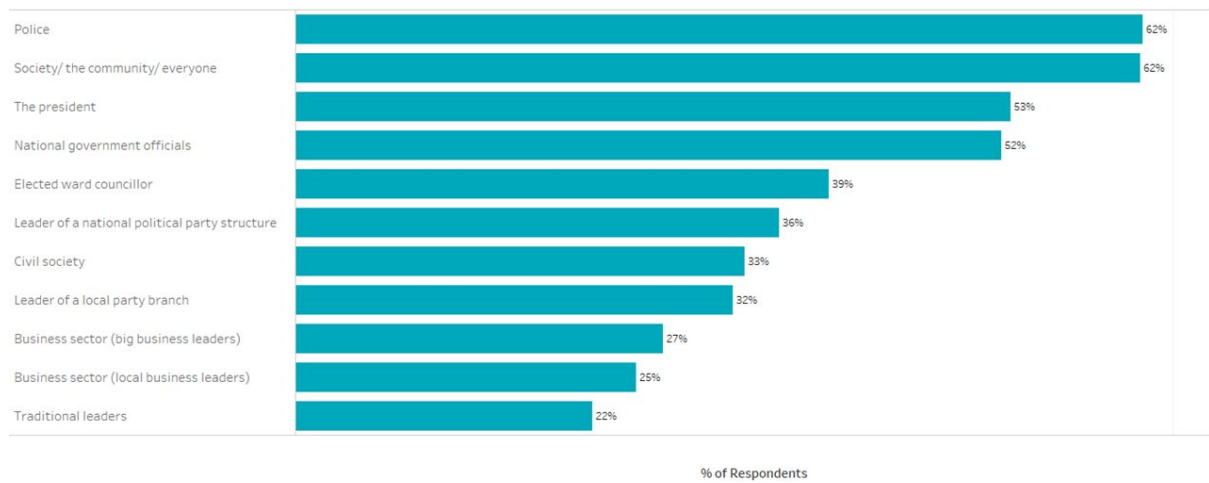


In comparison to the PAST 5 years, the corruption levels in South Africa are..(by gender)



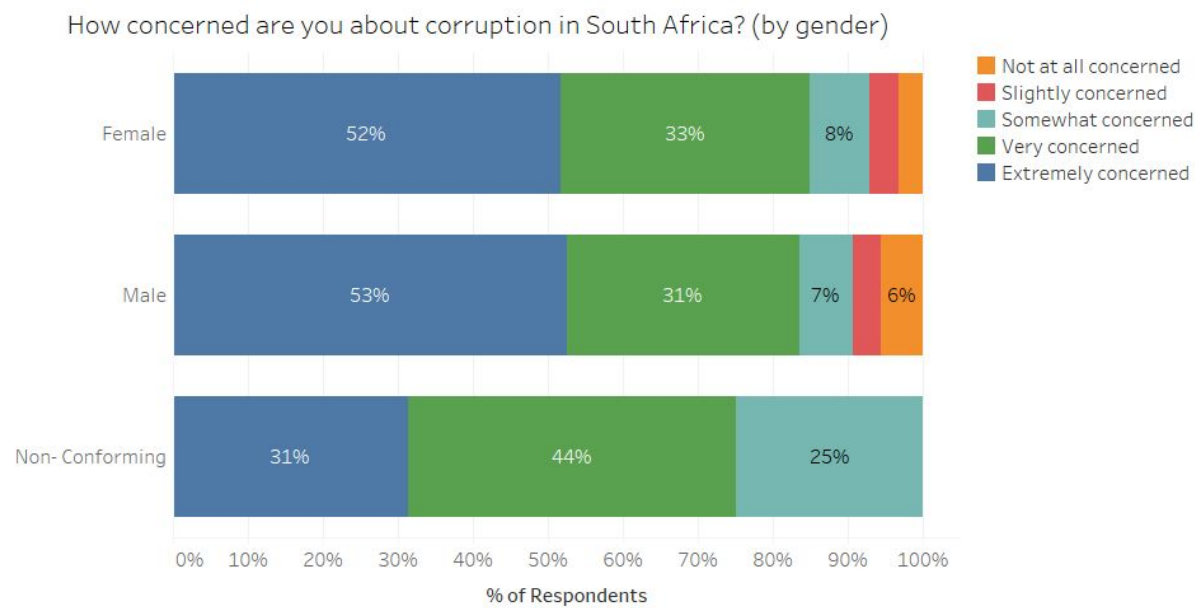
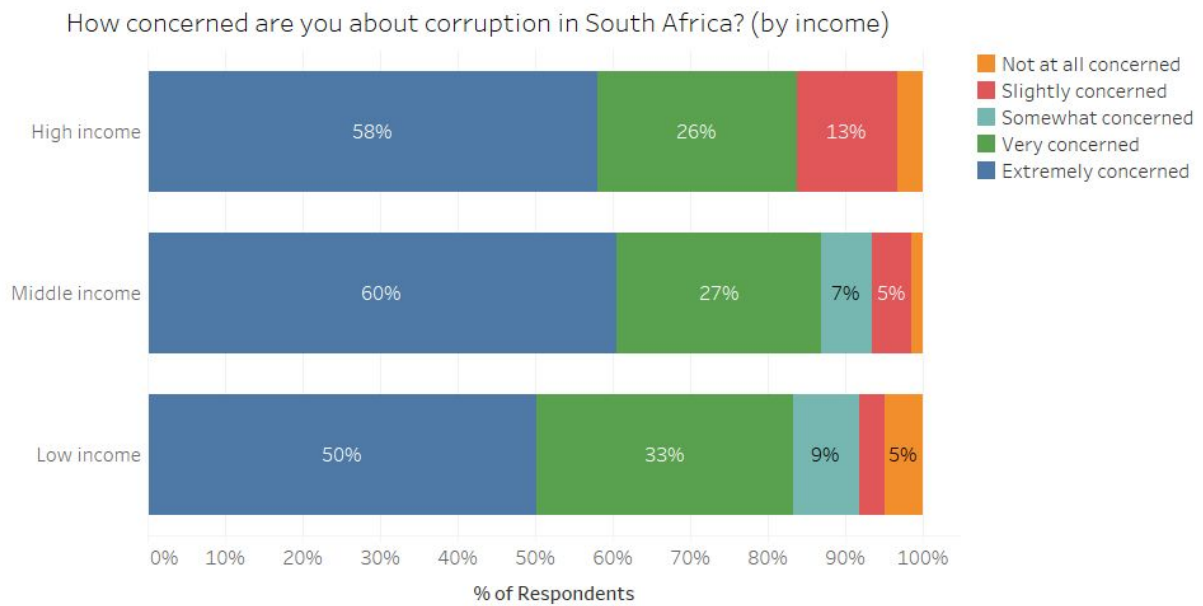
Annexure 11: Parties responsible for fighting corruption

In your view which of the following people, institutions or departments are responsible for fighting corruption in South Africa?



n = 1548

Annexure 12: Concerns over corruption in the country by income level, gender and province



How concerned are you about corruption in South Africa? (by province)

