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## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LENIENCY TOWARDS POLICE MISCONDUCT

*The article explores the differences in leniency between male and female participants on a sample of 95 police officers and 247 students in Slovenia. The participants read eleven hypothetical scenarios of police misconduct and answered the questions measuring their moral judgments, attitudes, and behavioral intentions regarding the described behaviors. The results showed that at least some differences existed in moral reasoning between male and female participants. It was shown that police brutality and preferential treatment of police offenders were more acceptable to the male mentality. The females paid much less attention to social clues in deciding whether to report police misconduct or not than did males. Also, gender interacted with group membership in determining leniency towards police misconduct.*

### INTRODUCTION

According to Zatz (2000), gender was largely ignored by criminologists until the late 1970s and 1980s. Since then, a growing body of research has emerged around the question of gender differences, examining whether gender differences exist, how gender conditions leniency, and why gender differences arise.

The majority of studies on how gender conditions leniency, however, were concerned with the issue of the offender's gender and its influence on sentencing (for a review, see Zatz, 2000). Those studies overlooked a question of the decision-maker's gender and its influence on the leniency of the decision.

By making a decision-maker's gender a focus of our concern, we tap into a broader area of gender differences in moral reasoning. Gilligan (1982, 1987; cit. in Chapman, Page, & Cramer, 2003) claimed that men and women respond to and conceptualize moral dilemmas and problematic situations in terms of different moral orientations. According to Gilligan, men tend to respond to moral dilemmas primarily in terms of a "justice orientation." This orientation is described as characterized primarily by a striving for reason, objectivity, and logic, that is, by attempts to analyze moral situations in terms of a courtroom metaphor—apportioning guilt among the parties involved, deciding blame, methods of punishment, and so on. By contrast, women are believed to respond to moral dilemmas primarily in terms of a "care orientation." In this orientation, women respond to and calibrate moral dilemmas primarily through considerations of empathy and preservation of social relationships, that is, they are concerned primarily with the interpersonal aspects of moral situations, and with giving attention to extenuating circumstances which might have contributed to a moral transgression (Chapman et al., 2003).

Chapman et al. (*ibid.*) tested Gilligan's hypothesis by assessing responses of male and female participants toward hypothetical scenarios describing occurrences of academic cheating. The scenarios presented hypothetical descriptions of cheating situations involving both a male and a female student. The data showed that male and female participants displayed rather similar attitudes and general orientations toward students

portrayed as having cheated. Moreover, participant gender was unrelated to differential use of the care versus the justice orientation. In general, both male and female participants were, in effect, adaptable in their use of the two moral orientations, in that the extent to which one or the other orientation was used was dependent on the type of hypothetical scenario to which participants were asked to respond. The authors concluded that categorical statements about the relationship of gender to moral orientation do not appear well founded.

The present study examines gender differences within an approach, used previously in studying police corruption and integrity (Klockars et al., 1997; Haberfeld et al., 2000; Pagon & Lobnikar, 2004), and not much unlike the approach by Chapman et al. (2003). Although our design did not allow for a direct test of Gilligan's hypothesis, we decided to explore gender differences in responses of male and female participants toward hypothetical scenarios describing occurrences of police misconduct.

## METHOD

### SAMPLE

Data were obtained from 95 police officers and 247 students in Slovenia. The student sample composition was as follows: 122 students of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences (FOS), 60 students of the College of Entrepreneurship (COE), and 65 students of the Faculty of Criminal Justice (FCJ).

The average age of police officers was 34.03 years (min. 21; max. 50). Their average number of years of employment was 13.43 (min. 1; max. 30), while their average time with the current police unit was 7.26 years (min. 1; max. 26). 92.47 percent were male and 7.53 percent were female. 73.03 percent held various police officer ranks, while 26.97 percent held various inspector ranks. 26.92 percent held various managerial or administrative positions, and 73.08 percent held various operative positions. 35.11 percent worked in a large police unit (with more than 81 police officers), 39.36 percent in a medium-sized police unit (with 30 to 80 police officers), and 25.53 percent in a small police unit (with less than 30 police officers).

The average age of students was 22.32 years (min. 20; max. 40). 47.52 percent were male and 52.48 percent were female. 4.98 percent were first-year students, 57.26 percent second-year, 36.1 percent third-year, and 37.76 percent fourth-year students. 86.36 percent were full-time students, while 13.64 percent were part-time students. 8.26 percent were employed, and 91.74 percent were not.

### MEASURES

We employed the survey instrument that has been used previously to measure police integrity in the United States, Croatia, and Poland (Kutnjak Ivkovich & Klockars, 1996; Klockars et al., 1997) and modified by Klockars, Kutnjak Ivkovich, and Haberfeld in 1998 (Kutnjak Ivkovich et al., 2002). For the purpose of this study, the questionnaire was modified to reflect the structure of disciplinary actions in the Slovenian Police.

The questionnaire presented eleven brief scenarios describing a range of corrupt behaviors. The scenarios are summarized in Exhibit 1.

## EXHIBIT 1: CASE SCENARIOS

- Case 1** A police officer is widely liked in the community. Local merchants and restaurant owners regularly show their appreciation for his attention by giving him gifts of food, cigarettes, and other items of small value.
- Case 2** A police officer is aware that there is a felony warrant for a long time friend of his. Although he sees his friend frequently over a period of more than a week and warns his friend of its existence, he does not arrest him.
- Case 3** A police officer discovers a burglary of a hardware store. The display cases are smashed and many items have obviously been taken. While searching the store, he takes an expensive pocket knife and slips it into his pocket. He reports that the knife has been stolen during the burglary.
- Case 4** An officer who was severely beaten by a person resisting arrest, has just returned to duty. On patrol, the officer approaches a person standing in a dimly lit alley. Suddenly, the person throws a gym bag at the officer and begins to run away. The officer fatally shoots the person, striking him in the back. It was later determined that the person was unarmed.
- Case 5** A police officer is scheduled to work during coming holidays. The supervisor offers to give him these days off, if he agrees to run some personal errands for the supervisor. Evaluate the SUPERVISOR'S behavior.
- Case 6** In responding with her male partner to a fight in a bar, a young, female officer receives a black eye from one of the male combatants. The man is arrested, handcuffed, and, as he is led into the cells, the male member of the team punches him very hard in the kidney area saying, "hurts, doesn't it."
- Case 7** A police officer stops a motorist for speeding. As the officer approaches the vehicle, the driver yells, "What the hell are you stopping me for?" The officer replies, "Because today is 'Arrest an Asshole Day.'"
- Case 8** At 2:00 A.M. a police officer, who is on duty, is driving his patrol car on a deserted road. He sees a vehicle that has been driven off the road and is stuck in a ditch. He approaches the vehicle and observes that the driver is not hurt but is obviously intoxicated. He also finds that the driver is a police officer. Instead of reporting this accident and offense, he transports the driver to his home.
- Case 9** A police officer has a private arrangement with a local auto body shop to refer the owners of cars damaged in accidents to the shop. In exchange for each referral, he receives a payment of 5% of the repair bill from the shop owner.
- Case 10** A police officer arrests two drug dealers involved in a street fight. One has a large quantity of heroin on his person. In order to charge them both with serious offenses, the officer falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.
- Case 11** A police sergeant, without intervening, watches officers under his supervision repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse. The man has previous child abuse arrests. Evaluate the SERGEANT'S behavior.

Respondents were asked several questions about each of these scenarios, measuring the following perceptions and intentions:

- *Own perception of the seriousness of corruption.* Measure of this perception was obtained by asking respondents "How serious do you consider this behavior to be?" Answers were provided on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – Not at all serious, 5 – Very serious). In the context of studying police integrity, we used this score as a measure, albeit indirect, of the subjects' moral principles. The reasoning for this approach is that individuals with higher moral principles would perceive corrupt behaviors as more serious than those with lower moral principles.
- *Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption.* Measure of this belief was obtained by asking respondents "How serious, in your opinion, do most police officers consider this behavior to be?" The response format was the same as in the previous question. The purpose for asking this question was twofold. First, we wanted to assess the extent to which respondents perceived themselves as different from the majority of police officers in their moral assessments. Second, we

wanted to be able to assess the impact of what is perceived to be a common attitude about corruption upon the respondents' subsequent behavioral intentions.

- *Violation of official policy.* Measure of the perception of the extent to which a behavior constitutes a violation of official policy of the police organization was obtained by asking respondent "Would this behavior be regarded as a violation of official policy in the agency?" Answers were provided on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – Not at all, 5 – Definitely yes).
- *Appropriate discipline.* Measure of the perception of the appropriate discipline was obtained by asking respondents "If a police officer engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what—if any—discipline do you think should follow?" The possible answers were: (1) None, (2) Verbal reprimand, (3) Written reprimand, (4) Fine, (5) Suspension, (6) Dismissal.
- *Expected discipline.* Measure of beliefs about the actual discipline that would be taken in a particular case was obtained by asking respondents "If a police officer engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what—if any—discipline you think would follow?" The response format was the same as in the previous question.
- *Willingness to report.* Measure of the willingness to report corrupt behaviors was obtained by asking respondents "Do you think you would report a police officer who engaged in this behavior?" Answers were provided on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – Definitely not, 5 – Definitely yes). We took this score as a measure of the respondents' behavioral intention with regard to reporting police corruption.
- *Belief about other police officers' willingness to report.* Measure of this belief was obtained by asking respondents "Do you think most police officers would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?" The response format was the same as in the previous question.

In addition, we collected some demographic data about the respondents and their departments.

## PROCEDURE

The questionnaire was first translated from English into Slovenian by a professional translator and then back translated into English by a member of the project team to ensure the original translation into Slovenian had been correct and the meanings of the items had not been altered. The response scale for the discipline questions was modified to reflect the structure of disciplinary actions in the Slovenian Police.

All data were collected in group administrations supervised by a research assistant during working hours at the police stations. Data from the students were collected in group administrations supervised by a member of the project team during various classes at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, the College of Entrepreneurship, and the Faculty of Criminal Justice. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed and all participation was voluntary. The data collection phase took place in May 2004.

## RESULTS

*Table 1 - Own perception of the seriousness of corruption  
(How serious do YOU consider this behavior to be?)*

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	3.15	1.22	2.86	1.22	<b>4.22</b>	<b>.04</b>
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	4.42	1.03	4.24	1.12	2.42	.12
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	4.52	.99	4.55	.74	.09	.77
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	4.52	.89	4.61	.68	1.06	.30
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	3.94	1.07	3.60	1.15	7.77	<b>.006</b>
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	3.86	1.20	4.18	.89	<b>6.77</b>	<b>.01</b>
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	3.48	1.25	3.52	1.11	.08	.78
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	3.32	1.30	4.10	1.04	<b>33.21</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	4.13	1.13	4.12	0.95	.00	.95
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	4.44	.97	4.60	.78	2.47	.12
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	3.93	1.25	4.13	1.10	2.24	.13
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (OSALL)	3.97	.63	4.05	.51	1.33	.25

As seen from Table 1, there were four cases where women differed significantly from men in judging the seriousness of corrupt behaviors. In two cases (Case 1 – gifts from merchants; Case 5 – days off for personal favors) female participants gauged the behaviors as less serious than did male participants, while in the other two (Case 6 – punching a handcuffed offender; Case 8 – covering up of police DUI accident) the situation was reversed. In other cases there were no differences between male and female participants. The same was true for a composite measure of own perceptions of the seriousness of corruption, calculated as an average of all cases.

*Table 2 - Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption  
(How serious do MOST POLICE OFFICERS consider this behavior to be?)*

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	2.42	1.01	2.38	1.12	.14	.71
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	3.80	1.07	3.66	1.08	1.32	.25
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	3.81	1.18	3.64	1.06	1.69	.19
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	4.10	.93	4.07	1.01	.07	.79
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	3.30	1.26	2.70	1.25	<b>17.92</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	2.57	1.24	2.64	1.21	.28	.60
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	2.60	1.28	2.16	1.10	<b>10.73</b>	<b>.001</b>

8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	2.25	1.05	2.44	1.10	.21	.65
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	3.23	1.24	2.75	1.22	<b>11.97</b>	<b>.0006</b>
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	3.48	1.27	3.38	1.17	.57	.45
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	2.86	1.28	2.87	1.20	.00	.98
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (MSALL)	3.15	.70	2.98	.67	<b>4.79</b>	<b>.03</b>

We can see from Table 2 that in assessing other police officers' perceptions of the seriousness of corruption, male and female participants differed significantly in three cases (Case 5 - days off for personal favors; Case 7 – inappropriate remark; Case 9 – kickbacks from a shop owner). In all three cases, female participants assessed other police officers' perceptions as less serious than did male participants. Also, that was true for a composite measure of police officers' perceptions of the seriousness of corruption.

**Table 3 - Violation of official policy**  
(Would this behavior be regarded as a violation of official policy in the agency?)

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	3.72	1.31	3.34	1.37	<b>3.90</b>	<b>.05</b>
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	4.85	.40	4.81	.54	.61	.43
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	4.88	.40	4.78	.54	3.36	.07
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	4.44	.88	4.35	.97	.82	.37
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	3.92	1.19	3.78	1.24	1.07	.30
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	4.18	1.16	4.20	1.05	.03	.86
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	3.81	1.18	3.68	1.27	.94	.33
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	3.89	1.25	4.34	.94	<b>12.46</b>	<b>.0005</b>
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	4.31	1.14	4.16	1.03	1.44	.23
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	4.60	.78	4.62	.71	.07	.79
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	4.34	1.04	4.47	.85	1.41	.24
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (VIALL)	4.29	.61	4.23	.54	.87	.35

Table 3 shows that males and females significantly differed only in two cases (Case 1 - gifts from merchants; Case 8 – covering up of police DUI accident). In Case 1, women perceived a described behavior as a violation of official policy to a lesser extent than did men, while a situation was reversed in Case 8. There were no significant differences in other cases or in a composite measure of perceptions of violations of official policy.

**Table 4 - Appropriate discipline (If an officer engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what, if any, discipline do YOU think SHOULD follow?)**

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	2.62	1.26	2.52	1.28	.43	.51
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	4.77	1.06	4.87	.97	.72	.40
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	5.06	1.01	4.79	.98	<b>5.69</b>	<b>.02</b>
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	5.05	1.32	5.03	1.24	.01	.91
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	3.38	1.46	2.95	1.37	<b>3.81</b>	<b>.05</b>
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	3.32	1.45	3.53	1.25	1.73	.19
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	2.51	1.05	2.52	.98	.00	.95
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	2.95	1.37	3.65	1.18	<b>22.57</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	4.15	1.45	3.88	1.34	3.01	.08
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	4.41	1.31	4.52	1.22	.56	.46
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	3.70	1.64	3.96	1.60	2.02	.16
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (ADALL)	3.85	.71	3.85	.61	.00	.99

As seen in Table 4, while there were no significant differences between male and female participants in a composite measure of perceptions of the appropriate discipline, there were significant gender differences in three cases (Case 3 – theft on a burglary scene; Case 5 - days off for personal favors; Case 8 – covering up of police DUI accident). In the first two of these cases, women were found to be more lenient than were men. In the third case, however, women were substantially harsher in terms of appropriate discipline. There were no significant differences in other cases.

**Table 5 - Expected discipline (If an officer engaged in this behavior and was discovered doing so, what, if any, discipline do YOU think WOULD follow?)**

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	2.13	1.28	1.59	.78	<b>19.21</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	4.07	1.45	3.72	1.53	<b>4.42</b>	<b>.04</b>
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	4.35	1.56	3.72	1.51	<b>13.40</b>	<b>.0003</b>
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	4.89	1.29	4.44	1.33	<b>9.02</b>	<b>.003</b>
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	2.30	1.51	1.69	1.07	<b>16.24</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	2.53	1.50	2.02	1.21	<b>10.68</b>	<b>.001</b>
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	1.98	.97	1.51	.76	<b>21.95</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	2.32	1.26	2.24	1.20	.31	.58
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	3.37	1.72	2.62	1.54	<b>16.07</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>



10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	3.59	1.61	3.21	1.55	<b>4.55</b>	<b>.03</b>
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	2.82	1.59	2.62	1.48	1.25	.26
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (EDALL)	3.11	.88	2.69	.80	<b>18.66</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>

The area of the biggest gender differences, as shown in Table 5, is the expected discipline for the described violations. There were only two cases where women and men did not differ significantly (Case 8 – covering up of police DUI accident; Case 11 – sergeant’s omission to intervene). In all other cases, as well as a composite measure of discipline expectations, female participants significantly differed from their male counterparts in that they believed that offenders would receive lesser punishment than did men.

**Table 6 - Willingness to report (Do you think YOU would report a police officer who engaged in this behavior?)**

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	2.27	1.33	2.01	1.14	3.57	.06
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	3.73	1.33	3.46	1.27	3.40	.07
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	4.25	1.12	4.13	1.04	.96	.33
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	4.33	.98	4.19	1.06	1.54	.21
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	3.12	1.45	2.83	1.24	3.53	.06
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	3.18	1.45	3.55	1.33	<b>5.59</b>	<b>.02</b>
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	2.79	1.40	3.04	1.35	2.65	.10
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	2.74	1.40	3.28	1.38	<b>11.98</b>	<b>.0006</b>
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	3.45	1.48	3.42	1.23	.04	.84
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	3.82	1.28	3.97	1.18	1.15	.28
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	3.11	1.54	3.48	1.44	<b>3.98</b>	<b>.05</b>
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (ORALL)	3.33	.86	3.39	.81	.39	.53

Table 6 shows that male and female participants significantly differed in only three cases (Case 6 – punching a handcuffed offender; Case 8 – covering up of police DUI accident; Case 11 – sergeant's omission to intervene). In all three, female participants were significantly more willing to report an offender than were male participants. In other cases and in a composite measure of willingness to report, there were no significant gender differences.

**Table 7 - Belief about other police officers' willingness to report (Do you think MOST POLICE OFFICERS would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?)**

Case	Males		Females		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
1. A police officer regularly accepts gifts from the local merchants and restaurant owners.	1.79	.90	1.75	.92	.17	.68
2. A police officer does not arrest a long time friend of his for whom there is a felony warrant.	2.87	1.14	2.74	1.08	1.16	.28
3. A police officer on a burglary scene takes an expensive pocket knife and reports it stolen during the burglary.	3.18	1.29	2.82	1.08	<b>6.89</b>	<b>.01</b>
4. A previously injured police officer fatally shoots an unarmed suspect, striking him in the back.	3.56	1.17	3.41	1.07	1.40	.24
5. A supervisor offers to give a police officer holiday days off, if the officer agrees to run personal errands for him.	2.35	1.25	2.11	1.05	3.25	.07
6. A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer.	1.83	1.03	1.81	.85	.05	.82
7. A police officer stops a motorist for speeding and offends him by an inappropriate remark.	1.69	.97	1.48	.73	<b>4.59</b>	<b>.03</b>
8. A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home.	1.71	.91	1.87	.92	2.30	.13
9. A police officer receives payments from a body shop owner for referring drivers to his shop.	2.59	1.17	2.32	1.09	<b>4.49</b>	<b>.03</b>
10. A police officer arrests two drug dealers and falsely reports that the heroin was found on both men.	2.63	1.19	2.63	1.09	.00	.99
11. A police sergeant does not intervene as officers repeatedly strike and kick a man arrested for child abuse.	1.98	1.15	2.20	1.11	2.90	.09
A COMPOSITE MEASURE (MRALL)	2.37	.75	2.29	.61	.96	.33

As can be seen from Table 7, there were significant gender differences in only three cases (Case 3 – theft on a burglary scene; Case 7 – inappropriate remark; Case 9 – kickbacks from a shop owner). In all three cases, female participants expressed a lesser belief about other police officers' willingness to report than did their male counterparts. There were no significant gender differences in other cases or in a composite measure of beliefs about other police officers' willingness to report.

Next, we examined whether differences in the composite measures among the four groups (police officers, FOS students, COE students, and FCJ students) were different for male and female samples. We conducted a series of analyses of variance separate for the two gender samples. The results are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8 – The analyses of variance results for 'GROUP' as a classification variable (1 – Police; 2 – FOS Students; 3 – COE Students; 4 – FCJ Students) by gender**

Composite measures	Males			Females		
	F	p	Stat. sign. diff. between groups	F	p	Stat. sign. diff. between groups
Own perception of the seriousness of corruption (OSALL)	5.19	.002	1-2	6.49	.0004	1-2, 2-3, 2-4
Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption (MSALL)	24.65	<.0001	1-2, 1-3, 1-4,	2.34	.08	1-4
Violation of official policy (VIALL)	2.89	.04	1-2	5.70	.001	1-2, 2-4
Appropriate discipline (ADALL)	.26	.85	-	2.27	.08	-
Expected discipline (EDALL)	26.79	<.0001	1-2, 1-3, 1-4	9.42	<.0001	1-2, 1-3, 1-4
Willingness to report (ORALL)	1.53	.21	-	3.22	.02	-
Belief about other police officers' willingness to report (MRALL)	31.21	<.0001	1-2, 1-3, 1-4	2.91	.04	1-3

As we can see from the table, there were no significant differences among groups in either sample regarding the appropriate discipline and the willingness to report the violations. For all other composite measures, there were at least marginally significant differences among groups; however, the nature of those differences differed between the two gender samples.

Regarding own perceptions of the seriousness of corruption, male students of the Faculty of Organizational Sciences were significantly different only from police officers. Female students of the same faculty, however, were significantly different from all other groups. The situation was almost identical regarding violations of official policy, except that female students of the FOS were not significantly different from the students of the COE.

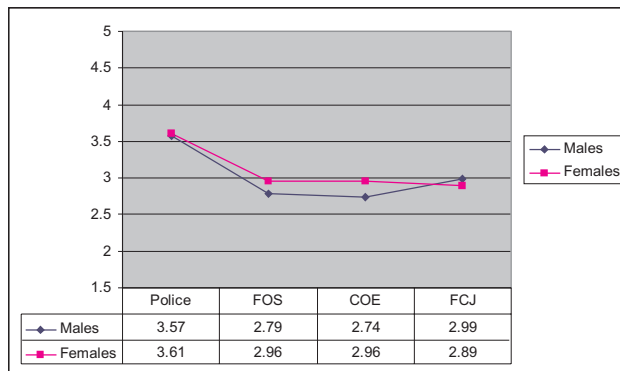
Regarding beliefs about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption, male police officers significantly differed from all the student groups, while female police officers marginally differed only from the students of the Faculty of Criminal Justice. This situation was almost exactly replicated in the case of beliefs about other police officers' willingness to report, except that in female sample the significant difference was between police officers and the students of the COE.

The only composite measure where the differences among groups in male sample completely matched the differences in female sample was the expected discipline. In both samples, police officers significantly differed from the student groups, while there were no significant differences among the students.

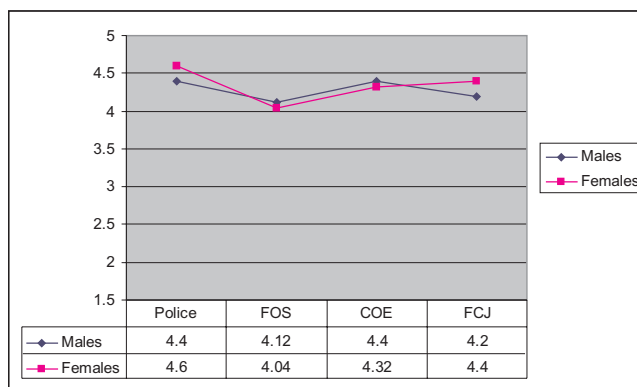
Because those results showed that there were gender differences in the relationships between the composite measures and group membership, we computed and graphically represented average scores for the composite measures for all groups by gender. The results are shown in Graphs 1 to 7.



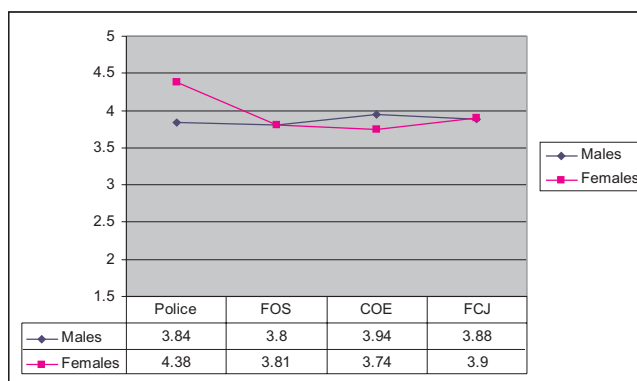
***Graph 1 – The results for a composite measure OSALL (Own perception of the seriousness of corruption) by gender***



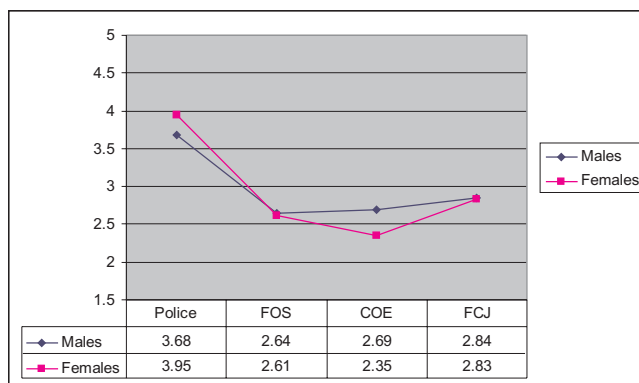
**Graph 2 – The results for a composite measure MSALL (Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption) by gender**



**Graph 3 – The results for a composite measure VIALL (Violation of official policy) by gender**



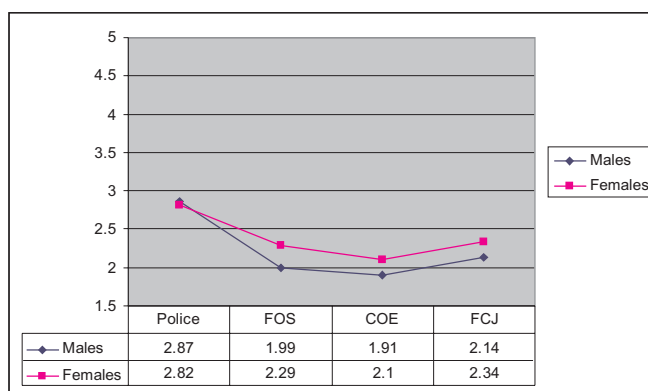
**Graph 4 – The results for a composite measure ADALL (Appropriate discipline) by gender**



**Graph 5 – The results for a composite measure EDALL (Expected discipline) by gender**



**Graph 6 – The results for a composite measure ORALL (Willingness to report) by gender**



**Graph 7 – The results for a composite measure MRALL (Belief about other police officers' willingness to report) by gender**

Because the results, presented in the graphs, suggested interactions, we statistically tested for possible interaction effects of gender and group membership. The results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9 – Main effects and interactions of GENDER and GROUP for the composite measures as dependent variables**

Composite measures	Gender		Group		Gender*group	
	F	p	F	p	F	p
Own perception of the seriousness of corruption (OSALL)	1.35	.25	.37	.54	<b>4.70</b>	<b>.03</b>
Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption (MSALL)	<b>5.26</b>	<b>.02</b>	<b>29.37</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>.04</b>
Violation of official policy (VIALL)	.88	.35	.07	.79	5.57	.02
Appropriate discipline (ADALL)	.00	.99	.01	.92	.40	.52
Expected discipline (EDALL)	<b>20.74</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>	<b>28.90</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>	<b>7.83</b>	<b>.005</b>
Willingness to report (ORALL)	.39	.53	.84	.36	.52	.47
Belief about other police officers' willingness to report (MRALL)	1.10	.29	<b>37.26</b>	<b>&lt;.0001</b>	<b>11.98</b>	<b>.0006</b>

Table 9 shows that in five out of seven composite measures, there was a significant interaction between gender and group membership. In two cases (OSALL and VIALL), the interaction was significant although there were no main effects. In case of beliefs about other police officers' willingness to report, gender significantly interacted with group membership, although only group membership showed a main effect. In two cases (ADALL and ORALL), however, there were neither significant main effects nor interactions of gender and group membership.

Finally, we performed two stepwise regression analyses to determine whether the percentage of the variance in the willingness to report police misconduct, explained by the composite measures and demographic variables, differed between male and female samples. The results are shown in Tables 10 and 11.

**Table 10 – The results of a stepwise regression analysis for a dependent variable ORALL (Willingness to report police misconduct) for MALES**

Variable	Partial R <sup>2</sup>	Model R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
ADALL (Appropriate discipline)	.3465	.3465	88.02	<.0001
MRALL (Belief about other police officers' willingness to report)	.1048	.4513	31.52	<.0001
OSALL (Own perception of the seriousness of corruption)	.0192	.4706	5.96	.0157
MSALL (Belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption)	.0187	.4893	5.97	.0156
GROUP	.0169	.5062	5.55	.0197
AGE	.0186	.5248	6.31	.0130
VIALL (Violation of official policy)	.0068	.5316	2.33	.1292

Table 10 shows that we were able to explain 53 percent of the variance in the dependent variable 'Willingness to report police misconduct' by 7 variables, left in the model. By far, the most influential were the male participants' beliefs of the discipline the offender should receive and their beliefs about other police officers' willingness to report. Much less influential were the participants' own perception of the seriousness of corruption, their belief about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption, as well as their group membership and age. The least influential was the participants' belief whether a behavior in question would constitute a violation of police department's official policy.

**Table 11 – The results of a stepwise regression analysis for a dependent variable ORALL (Willingness to report police misconduct) for FEMALES**

Variable	Partial R <sup>2</sup>	Model R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
OSALL (Own perception of the seriousness of corruption)	.3693	.3693	68.51	<.0001
ADALL (Appropriate discipline)	.0633	.4326	12.93	.0005

The situation for female sample, shown in Table 11, was much more straightforward. We were able to explain 43 percent of the variance in the dependent variable 'Willingness to report police misconduct' by 2 variables, left in the model. The only influencing variables were the female participants' own perceptions of the seriousness of corruption and their beliefs of the discipline the offender should receive.

## DISCUSSION

The results showed at least some differences in moral reasoning between male and female participants. As explained in the method section, we used the participants' beliefs of the seriousness of corruption as an indirect measure of their moral principles. The reasoning for this approach was that individuals with higher moral principles would perceive corrupt behaviors as more serious than would those with lower moral principles. If that is the case, the conclusion we could make based on our results, is that women subscribe to somewhat different moral principles than do men. The most illustrative examples are the participants' own perceptions of the seriousness of two cases: Case 6 (A police officer punches a handcuffed offender, who previously gave a black eye to a female police officer) and Case 8 (A police officer does not report an off-duty police officer's traffic accident, but transports him to his home). The males found both cases less serious than did the females, showing that police brutality and a preferential treatment of police offenders are more acceptable in the male mentality. In Case 8, women were also substantially harsher in terms of the appropriate punishment.

Also, male participants had a somewhat higher level of trust in police officers' moral standards than did female participants, as shown by three individual cases and a composite measure of beliefs about other officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption. Therefore, no wonder that female participants believed that offenders would actually receive lesser punishment than did men.

Gender interacted with group membership in determining leniency towards police misconduct. How gender influenced leniency, in the majority of cases, differed in different groups (i.e., police and three student samples).

The most important outcome variable measured in this study was the participants' willingness to report. As explained in the method section, we took this score as a measure of the respondents' behavioral intention with regard to reporting police corruption. That, in our opinion, is what really matters. The willingness to report police misconduct and, subsequently, the actual reporting, determine whether our efforts to combat police corruption will be successful or not. Gender, in the majority of analyses, did not turn out to be a determinant of this willingness to report. There were, however, three exceptions, where female participants were significantly more willing to report an offender than were male participants. Two of them had to do with police brutality, and the third one with a preferential treatment of a police offender. Of all groups, female police officers were the least tolerant of this kind of behavior, as shown by their willingness to report it.

In this study, however, we were particularly interested not just in the willingness to report misconduct, but also in the moral reasoning preceding this type of decision. Based on the limitations of this study, we were only able to assess the process of moral reasoning in terms of the variables that explained the variance in the 'willingness to report' score. The results showed an interesting picture.

For the males, the process of the reasoning was: "If they deserve to be punished, and other officers would report it, and I believe that this is a serious offence, and other officers believe that this is a serious offense, and I think it is a violation of official policy, then I'll report it." In addition, their willingness to report was influenced by their age and group membership (the most willing to report were older participants and students of the Faculty of Criminal Justice).

For the females, the process of reasoning was much simpler: "If I believe that this is a serious offence, and if they deserve to be punished, then I'll report it." No other variables significantly influenced their willingness to report police misconduct.

Females, therefore, paid much less attention to social clues in deciding whether to report police misconduct or not than did males. Furthermore, this seemed to be true for all females, regardless of their age or group membership. Males, as the results showed, were much more influenced by their beliefs about other police officers' perception of the seriousness of corruption and other officers' willingness to report misconduct, plus they differed based on their age and group membership.

Some limitations of this study need to be mentioned. First, being a part of a broader study of police integrity and attitudes towards corruption, this study was not specifically designed to address gender differences in leniency and moral reasoning. Therefore, we were limited in our ability to test these differences, especially in terms of Gilligan's hypothesis. Second, the police sample was relatively small, with female police officers representing less than eight percent of the sample. Third, we only used self-reported measures of attitudes and beliefs regarding hypothetical scenarios. Actual behavior of the participants might differ from their self-reported intentions.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the study showed some interesting results that warrant further investigation. Future research should use a larger police sample, and compare the results for that sample with a more age- and education-comparable non-police sample. Also, some other methods should be employed, allowing the researchers to observe the participants' actual behavior.

A practical implication of this study is that—in trying to combat police corruption and a subculture supportive of corrupt behaviors, to increase police integrity, and to include the public in such endeavors—the police scholars and practitioners should take into account the differences both in leniency and moral reasoning between men and women.

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