

**Can Corruption Connect You to Politics?**  
**The Effects of Corruption Scandals on Blaming the Government for Personal Concerns**

Deanna Kolberg-Shah<sup>1</sup> and Hwayong Shin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Independent researcher, Washington, DC, USA

<sup>2</sup> Department of Political Science, University of Michigan

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Hwayong Shin, Department of Political Science, University of Michigan, 505 S State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, Email: hwayong@umich.edu.

## **Abstract**

When do corruption scandals trigger citizens to punish a poor-performing government? Prior research suggests that citizens often fail to punish governments with subpar policy outcomes because they tend to isolate politics from their personal life and avoid blaming one's own party. Challenging these popular beliefs, our findings from a survey experiment in South Korea indicate that elite corruption scandals relevant to everyday concerns (education, employment, and retirement) trigger people to blame the government as the cause of their personal concerns. This effect is prominent among individuals who are highly worried about their personal struggles on education, employment, and retirement, implying the importance of anxiety as a driving factor. We also find that corruption scandals can cause partisans whose party is in power, who are otherwise less likely to blame the incumbent government, to attribute greater blame to the government. This result implies that corruption scandals can increase the likelihood of bipartisan punishment of poor-performing politicians. This study shows corruption scandals that imply unequal opportunities to the general public can serve as a watershed moment that motivates citizens to connect government performance to their personal concerns and achieve democratic accountability.

**Keywords:** corruption, blame, anxiety, sociotropic politics, personal stake

## 1 **Can Corruption Connect You to Politics?**

### 2 **The Effects of Corruption Scandals on Blaming the Government for Personal Concerns**

3 Corruption has two competing implications for democratic accountability. On the  
4 negative side, corruption is undesirable, because it undermines trust and legitimacy in political  
5 institutions (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012; Obydenkova & Arpino, 2018; Ares & Hernández,  
6 2017), depresses electoral turnout (Chong et al., 2015; Dahlberg & Solevid, 2016), and  
7 deteriorates equality, wealth, and subjective well-being (Gupta et al., 2002; Tay et al., 2014; You  
8 & Khagram, 2005). However, on the positive side, corruption can serve as a watershed moment  
9 for enhancing democratic accountability by triggering citizens to withdraw their support for the  
10 incumbent government (Klašnja & Tucker, 2013; Ferraz & Finan, 2011). Between the two  
11 possible consequences, when can corruption scandals set the stage for citizens to hold the poor-  
12 performing government accountable?

13 The key to clarifying conditions under which corruption can enhance democratic  
14 accountability is to understand when citizens can overcome two obstacles to holding the  
15 government accountable: limited information and in-group favoritism. Previous research has  
16 found that limited information obstructs accountability, particularly when citizens do not fully  
17 understand the causes or consequences of major political events such as economic downturns  
18 (De Vries & Solaz, 2017; Ferraz & Finan, 2011; Chong et al., 2015). Even when citizens have  
19 sufficient information, in-group favoritism still can cause voters to diverge on whom to blame  
20 for poor performance, largely consistent with the political party they support (Bisgaard 2019;  
21 Kuo et al., 2017; Rico & Liñeira, 2018; Tilley & Hobolt, 2011). Existing literature lacks an  
22 explanation for extraordinary moments where citizens overcome these obstacles and successfully  
23 hold politicians accountable for poor performance. This gap in the literature stems from previous

24 studies focusing on elections, for instance whether voters reelect corrupt actors (Klašnja &  
25 Tucker, 2013; Ferraz & Finan, 2011), and national-level events such as electoral downturns  
26 (Bisgaard, 2015).

27         In search of conditions under which corruption can effectively inform and motivate  
28 people to punish the incumbent government, we investigate how national-level corruption  
29 scandals relevant to everyday concerns can affect the degree to which people blame the  
30 government for personal grievances. Corruption scandals can help citizens overcome the  
31 obstacles of limited information and in-group favoritism in two ways. First, corruption scandals  
32 are easier to comprehend and straightforwardly identify wrongdoers compared to national  
33 economic issues that are often complex and abstract. Second, when corruption scandals pertain  
34 to everyday concerns, citizens' in-group favoritism and tendencies to distance politics from their  
35 personal lives weaken, increasing their proclivity to see the government as responsible for their  
36 personal grievances. Thus, we expect national corruption scandals that indicate unequal  
37 opportunities to the public in education, employment, and retirement will trigger citizens to  
38 blame the government rather than themselves as the cause of personal grievances. Because  
39 anxiety triggers individuals to be more responsive to new information (Brader & Marcus, 2013;  
40 Gadarian & Albertson, 2014), we expect these effects will be especially strong among  
41 individuals who are highly worried about their personal circumstances on these issues.

42         We tested our theoretical expectations through a survey experiment in South Korea in  
43 2018 with three major findings. First, the open-ended responses about personal concerns reveal  
44 that many South Koreans face challenges about education, employment, and retirement. Second,  
45 the results from our experiment indicate that corruption scandals in college admission, nepotism,  
46 and elderly care motivate people to attribute greater blame to the government as the cause of

47 their personal grievances, particularly among individuals who are highly worried about these  
48 issues. Third, corruption scandals increased blame attribution to the government among  
49 incumbent partisans, who are believed to hesitate to punish their own party. Overall, corruption  
50 scandals relevant to issues of critical wellbeing can prompt people to blame their personal  
51 concerns on the incumbent government, thereby setting the stage for holding those in power  
52 accountable for policy failures.

53 We conducted our study in South Korea, because a successful presidential impeachment  
54 in South Korea in 2016-2017 informed our theoretical expectations and study design. This  
55 impeachment was preceded by widespread public discussions that blamed the government for  
56 personal hardships and followed by devastating election losses for the former president's party  
57 (Fifield & Seo, 2016; Park & Kim, 2016). South Korea offers an ideal context to test our  
58 expectations about how elite corruption scandals affect citizens' government perceptions.

59 Our study makes three important contributions. First, while prior research has focused on  
60 electoral consequences of corruption, such as vote choices in elections (Boas et al., 2019;  
61 Klačnja & Tucker, 2013; Ferraz & Finan, 2011), we examine non-electoral consequences of  
62 corruption, namely blame attribution on government for personal hardships, which can motivate  
63 citizens to act and punish the incumbent government even without elections. Second, we identify  
64 a context where citizens are less likely to isolate their personal life from political events  
65 (sociotropic tendencies; Kinder & Kewiet, 1981). Our study demonstrates the powerful role of  
66 anxiety in bringing pocketbook concerns to the foreground of citizen's minds when assessing  
67 government performance. This finding challenges the prior literature that has assumed  
68 sociotropic and pocketbook considerations are independent of each other. Third, while blame  
69 attribution has received less attention in the corruption literature (De Vries & Solaz, 2017), we

70 examine how corruption scandals affect the public's blame attribution on government, which is  
71 important as a potential first step toward democratic accountability. Furthermore, we extend  
72 prior research on blame attribution, which focused on national economic conditions (Anderson &  
73 Hecht, 2012; Marsh & Tilley, 2009), to the case of corruption. Because corruption scandals are  
74 extraordinary yet recurring events in democracies around the world, this study offers important  
75 insights into when corruption scandals can enable the public to achieve democratic  
76 accountability.

### 77 **Corruption and Democratic Accountability**

78 Democracies produce policy that benefits most of society when voters can effectively  
79 sanction poor-performing office holders (Fearon, 1999). In this sanctioning model of democratic  
80 accountability, voters rely on retrospective evaluations of an incumbent's performance to decide  
81 whether to reward or punish politicians in elections (Fearon, 1999). Thus, the public's evaluation  
82 of elected officials constrains policymakers through elections. However, voters face numerous  
83 challenges in evaluating and sanctioning the incumbent government.

84 Among many obstacles to effective sanctioning, one challenge is that people tend to  
85 isolate personal concerns from their assessments about politics and the government. The  
86 sociotropic literature posits that people tend to evaluate the government performance based on  
87 abstract national economic conditions, rather than their concrete personal circumstances (Kinder  
88 & Kiewiet, 1981; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000). Sociotropic voters rely on national-level  
89 indicators such as the unemployment rate or GDP, rather than their personal pocketbook, to  
90 decide whether to reelect incumbents. While the national economy may serve as an important  
91 criterion, these voters fail to punish the government for personal grievances that poor  
92 government performance might have affected. For instance, when citizens see personal

93 hardships, such as disaster risks on their households, as personal problems rather than structural  
94 inequalities that government needs to address, they fail to hold the government accountable for  
95 policy failures (Sou, 2019).

96 National crises that highlight the government's wrongdoing or incompetence can clarify  
97 the blurred linkage between personal hardships and government performance. Despite  
98 sociotropic tendencies, individuals come to assess and judge politics based on personal  
99 grievances when personal stakes are salient and large (Sears & Funk, 1991; Gerber et al., 2017).  
100 For example, individuals who lost income or jobs during the national financial crisis likely  
101 disapprove of and punish the incumbent government by voting for opposition parties (Anderson  
102 & Hechtm 2012; Lewis-Beck & Paldam, 2000; Singer, 2018). While prior studies have focused  
103 on economic crises as a trigger linking personal pocketbooks to political decisions, corruption  
104 scandals are another type of national crisis that can highlight the link between government  
105 wrongdoing and personal hardships. We propose that corruption scandals relevant to issues  
106 critical to personal wellbeing (e.g., employment, education) can trigger people to blame the  
107 government for their personal hardships.

108 Even when national crises help clarify the link between government performance and  
109 personal life, a second obstacle can still disrupt effective sanctioning: partisan reasoning  
110 tendencies. Partisan in-group favoritism, which refers to partisan tendencies not to blame one's  
111 own party while blaming the opposition party, can obstruct individuals from properly assigning  
112 responsibilities for various political events, including corruption (Kuo et al., 2017, Rico &  
113 Liñeira, 2018), economic crises (Tilley & Hobolt, 2011; Marsh & Tilley, 2010; Rudolph, 2006)  
114 and even wartime casualties (Gaines et al., 2007). For instance, when judging the national

115 economy, partisans often assess the same economic conditions differently depending on whether  
116 their party is in power (Evans & Pickup, 2010).

117         The partisan divide in government sanctioning can be mitigated when partisans converge  
118 on their assessment of government. Valence issues have unified preferences among voters across  
119 party lines, such as less corruption, economic prosperity, or peace (Stokes, 1963). Although  
120 economic welfare is a valence issue, partisans still diverge on their assessment of government  
121 responsibility even when they converge on their perception of extreme economic downturns  
122 (Bisgaard, 2015). By focusing on corruption, an understudied issue in the context of mitigating  
123 partisan biases, we propose that corruption scandals are more likely than economic crises to help  
124 partisans set free from their in-group favoritism for two reasons. First, the national economy is  
125 quite abstract and complex for most ordinary citizens to fully comprehend. It is often hard to  
126 identify whom to blame for the economy, because economic processes are complex with  
127 competing causes and consequences (Powell & Whitten, 1993; Anderson, 2000). Second, in  
128 contrast, corruption scandals are more straightforward and comprehensible. Parties are more  
129 unified in how they propose to deal with corruption, and voters have greater clarity on whom to  
130 blame in a widely publicized corruption scandal (Ecker, Glinitzer & Meyer, 2016)

131         We assess the role of corruption scandals in enhancing citizens' ability to hold the  
132 government accountable with a focus on blame attribution. Blame attribution is critical to  
133 understanding democratic accountability because personal grievances relevant to major  
134 government policies will not translate to changes in voting behavior if individuals choose to  
135 blame themselves (e.g., lack of effort), rather than the government (e.g., Baird & Wolak, 2021;  
136 Sou, 2019). We propose that priming an issue that is critical to personal wellbeing (e.g.,  
137 employment, education, retirement) in a corruption scandal story can trigger people to attribute

138 greater blame on the government for their personal hardships, laying out the first step toward  
139 punishing the government for perceived poor performance.

#### 140 **Corruption and Blame Attribution: The Role of Anxiety and Partisanship**

141 When politics remains abstract and distant from personal lives, individuals tend to engage  
142 in sociotropic ways of assessing politics and do not connect personal lives to national politics  
143 (Lau & Heldman, 2009; Kinder & Kiewiet, 1981). According to Mutz (1998), people usually  
144 perceive politics at the level of mass collectives not at the private level, because the media  
145 portray politics as impersonal and abstract. However, when personal costs and benefits regarding  
146 a policy become salient, individuals come to make political decisions based on personal concerns  
147 (e.g., pocketbook economy) rather than sociotropic considerations (e.g., national economy)  
148 (Chong et al., 2001; Gerber et al., 2017; Compton & Lipsmeyer, 2019). Thus, personal  
149 consequences of politics can become salient when corruption scandals touch on areas of personal  
150 grievance. We expect that such corruption scandals will trigger citizens to blame the government  
151 rather than themselves as the cause of their personal hardships. We specifically consider three  
152 topics that most people worry about at various points of their life: education, employment, and  
153 retirement.

154 **H1:** Individuals will blame the government more as the cause of their personal concerns when  
155 exposed to corruption scandals in personally relevant topics, relative to those who receive no  
156 information.

157 We also examine whether preexisting anxiety moderates the degree to which corruption  
158 scandals prompt individuals to blame the government. We expect individuals who are more  
159 worried about their personal hardships with respect to education, employment, or retirement will  
160 be more responsive to corruption scandals and attribute greater blame to the government. This is

161 because more worried individuals will perceive a greater personal stake from corruption scandals  
162 that highlight unequal opportunities in college admission, employment, or elderly care.  
163 Moreover, anxiety triggers individuals to be more responsive to the new information in decision  
164 making (Brader & Marcus, 2013). When individuals feel worried, they tend to seek out more  
165 information, be less tied to their prior attitudes when considering new information, and even  
166 update their political decisions in the face of countervailing information (Gadarian & Albertson,  
167 2013; Redlawsk et al., 2010; Valentino et al., 2008). Thus, more worried individuals are likely to  
168 set aside their habitual tendency to evaluate politics based on sociotropic considerations,  
169 compared to less worried individuals. At the same time, more worried individuals will more  
170 actively incorporate the new information about corruption scandals in their evaluations of the  
171 government. Because salient personal stakes and anxiety can weaken the habitual sociotropic  
172 tendencies, we expect that exposure to corruption stories will increase government blame to a  
173 greater extent among more worried individuals.

174 **H2:** Exposure to corruption scandals will increase blame attribution to the government as the  
175 cause of personal grievances to a greater extent among more worried individuals than less  
176 worried individuals.

177 We further explore how political predispositions, such as ideology or partisan identity,  
178 moderate the effects of corruption scandal on blame attribution. These political predispositions  
179 often prevent people from holding their own party accountable for inferior performance (Evans  
180 & Pickup, 2010). Thus, one possibility is that corruption scandals increase government blame to  
181 a greater extent among partisans whose party is out of power. However, given the unique  
182 property of corruption as a political event that voters across party lines dislike (Ecker, Glinitzer  
183 & Meyer, 2016; Ares & Hernández, 2017), it is possible that elite corruption leads partisans

184 whose party is in power to blame the government as the cause of their personal concerns. We  
185 thus explore whether corruption scandals influence government blame to a different extent  
186 depending on individuals' ideology or partisanship.

187 **RQ1:** Do corruption scandals increase government blame to a greater extent among partisans  
188 whose party is out of power than partisans whose party is in power?

### 189 **Case Selection: South Korea**

190 We examine the effects of corruption scandals on government blame attributions in the  
191 context of South Korean politics. South Korea has a long history of corruption among political  
192 elites, especially in the form of collusion between government and business (Choi, 2018; Kong,  
193 1996). While studies suggest that electoral punishment of the incumbent is less likely to take  
194 place in countries where corruption is common than countries where corruption is rare (Klašnja  
195 & Tucker, 2013), in 2016-2017, the South Korean public engaged in a series of nation-wide  
196 protests that succeeded at impeaching former president Park Geun-hye for corruption (Campbell,  
197 2016). Nation-wide protests lasted throughout the impeachment process from November 2016 to  
198 March 2017 and Park's approval ratings plummeted to around 4% (Klug et al., 2016), with  
199 people across party and ideological lines supporting her impeachment (Jeong, 2017). During the  
200 protests, many Koreans blamed their government for personal life matters such as unequal  
201 education opportunities and employment instability (Kim, 2016; Park, 2016). This ran counter to  
202 the expectations that citizens tend not to connect their personal concerns to national politics (Lau  
203 & Heldman, 2009; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000; Kinder & Kiewiet, 1981). The Korean  
204 public's broad reaction was also surprising considering prior findings that corruption scandals  
205 often fail to induce the incumbent supporters to punish the incumbent government (Anduiza et  
206 al., 2013; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Chong et al., 2015; Klašnja, 2017).

207           The 2016-2017 South Korean corruption scandal and the subsequent impeachment of the  
208 president hint at two important conditions that allow corruption to change the way people relate  
209 their personal concerns to the government. First, news coverage must clarify who is responsible  
210 for wrongdoings. For instance, the media clearly portrayed the role of President Park and core  
211 members of her inner circle extracting bribes from major corporations for private gain (Kwon,  
212 2016). Second, the narratives in the news and public discourse illuminate the consequences of  
213 corruption on the matters of primary importance for personal wellbeing, such as educational and  
214 job opportunities. A prominent feature of Park's scandal was that her confidant, Choi, used her  
215 influence to change the college admissions criteria at the Ewha Women's University to have her  
216 daughter admitted (Ahn, 2016; Ock, 2016). The clear personal consequences of corruption  
217 prompted students to protest with signs such as "Can I also get into a good university if I buy a  
218 horse." (Lee, 2017; Park, 2016). Another prominent issue was that Choi used her influence to  
219 force donations from major conglomerates and appoint her relatives and close aids to major  
220 positions in the government (Jeong & Lee, 2016). These issues around college admissions and  
221 nepotism further prompted citizens across the country to blame the government for aggravating  
222 hardships in their lives (Hancocks & Bonner, 2016). The Korean corruption scandal and  
223 consequent presidential impeachment are distinct from many prior findings that corruption  
224 incidents have limited impact on opinion and participation among co-partisans or decrease  
225 political participation overall (Anduiza et al., 2013; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Chong et al.,  
226 2013; Winters & Weitz-Shapiro, 2013).

227           By focusing on South Korea, our study has broad implications for other developed  
228 countries around the world because South Korea is a typical, rather than an outlier, in terms of  
229 how the public perceives corruption and the role of government. To illustrate, according to the

230 World Values Survey, South Koreans perceived a similar level of elite corruption or social  
231 inequality compared to other OECD countries (de Vries & Solaz, 2017; Haerpfer et al., 2022)<sup>1</sup>.  
232 Moreover, at the time our study was conducted, South Korea ranked 51st out of 180 countries  
233 according to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index in 2017 (Transparency  
234 International, 2017).<sup>2</sup> While some might assume that Koreans particularly lean toward holding  
235 collectivist views (Cha, 1994), South Korea was like other OECD countries in the degree to  
236 which they believe government was responsible for social welfare (Haerpfer et al., 2022). These  
237 data (more details available in supplementary materials) indicate that South Korea is not an  
238 outlier on the degree of individualistic views. Therefore, we expect that our findings will be  
239 applicable and meaningful to a wide range of other democracies around the world.

#### 240 **Study Design**

241 To test how corruption scandals affect the blame attribution to the government for  
242 personal grievances, we conducted a survey experiment among an online sample of 1,185 adults  
243 in South Korea. Participants were recruited through the Macromill Embrain, a diverse online  
244 panel of South Koreans used in numerous academic studies (e.g., Lee et al., 2018; Jeong et al.,  
245 2018; Kim et al., 2018). The study was conducted between November 21-23, 2018. Despite not  
246 being a nationally representative sample, our sample quite diverse, including various  
247 demographic groups (more details in supplementary materials).

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<sup>1</sup> The World Values Survey Wave 7 spans 2017 through 2022. The survey in South Korea was fielded in 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Corruption in South Korea is more focused on the elite level rather than at the mass level (Corruption Perceptions Index, 2017). This puts the South Korean experience in contrast with countries where first-hand experiences of bribery are more common (Pande, 2007; Klačnja et al., 2016).

248 **Experimental Treatments**

249 Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions, which consisted of a  
 250 baseline condition and three treatment conditions. In the treatment conditions, participants were  
 251 exposed to text that reported a recent corruption scandal by Congresspeople who gained an  
 252 advantage on issues highly relevant to personal life—college admission, employment, or elderly  
 253 care benefits. We drafted the stimuli texts in a way that they reflect actual corruption scandals in  
 254 South Korea in recent years, such as those relevant to college admission frauds, nepotism in  
 255 employment, and embezzlement in elderly care institutes (Denyer & Kim, 2018; Hong, 2018;  
 256 Lee, 2018, Yoon, 2018). We adjusted the content to be parallel across treatment conditions.  
 257 Participants assigned to the baseline condition did not receive any text, allowing us to estimate  
 258 the base level of blame attribution to government or self as the cause of personal concerns.

259 **Table 1**260 *Content of Experimental Stimuli*

Area of Corruption	Content
College Admission	In October 2017, ten congresspeople were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the admission process of universities</b> . It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were admitted to prestigious universities without going through the appropriate process.
Nepotism	In October 2017, ten congresspeople were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the employment process of companies</b> . It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were employed at large companies without going through the appropriate process.
Elderly Care	In October 2017, ten congresspeople were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the selection process for beneficiaries of a new national elderly care center</b> . It was found that elderly parents of politicians and high government officials were admitted to the institute without going through the appropriate process.

261 *Note.* None of the text was bolded in the actual study. In each condition, half of the participants  
 262 were randomly assigned to the text above, with the added sentence, “In consequence, many

263 applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.” This variation was implemented for  
264 another dimension of experimental design (competition cue), which was collapsed into the  
265 corruption area conditions in the main analyses (more details in supplementary materials).

## 266 **Measurement**

267         The main outcome variable is the degree to which individuals blame government as the  
268 cause of their personal concerns. After experimental treatment, participants indicated the degree  
269 to which either the government or themselves was responsible as the cause of their personal  
270 concerns in education, employment, and retirement. They expressed their perception of blame on  
271 a five-point scale that ranged from “the government is completely responsible,” “the government  
272 is somewhat responsible,” “equally responsible,” “I myself am somewhat responsible,” to “I  
273 myself am completely responsible.” The key outcome variable is the composite score, averaging  
274 blame attribution to government over self on the three topics.

275         Prior to the experimental treatment, we measure the degree of anxiety about personal  
276 hardships by asking respondents to indicate how much they were worried, on a five-point scale  
277 ranging from “not at all worried” to “extremely worried,” about themselves, their spouse, parent,  
278 and children on three areas of their personal life: education, employment, and retirement/aging.  
279 The key measure of anxiety is the composite score, constructed as an average, of anxiety about  
280 *self* across the three topics. Because individuals may conflate their anxiety about themselves and  
281 their family members, our goal was to measure the degree of anxiety about personal life concerns  
282 in a manner that was comparable across respondents with different family backgrounds, despite  
283 expanding the length of the survey. While anxiety can be measured with a multi-item battery  
284 with cognate terms (e.g., “scared,” “worried,” “afraid”; Marcus et al. 2017), for efficiency and to

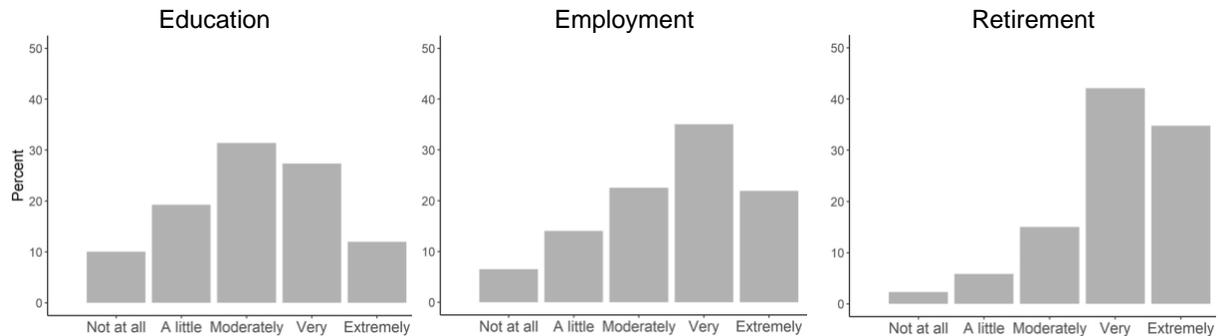
285 prevent respondent fatigue, our measure focused on “worried,” the anxiety term most relevant to  
286 the context of our study.

287 To measure partisan identity, we used a two-step questionnaire that first asked whether  
288 respondents identified with a specific party, and the second question asking either the strength or  
289 a preferred party. Because South Korea has a multi-party system, the list of parties included five  
290 major parties at the time of our study (Democratic Party of Korea (“DPK” hereafter), Liberty  
291 Korea Party, Justice Party, Bareun Party, Party for Democracy and Peace). In our analysis, we  
292 consider partisan leaners as partisans following a widely adopted approach in survey research  
293 (Petrocik, 2009). For liberal-conservative ideology, respondents indicated where they place  
294 themselves on a seven-point scale from “very conservative” to “very liberal.”

## 295 **Results**

### 296 **Descriptive Results: Anxiety about Everyday Life**

297 The distribution of anxiety about education, employment, and retirement, in addition to  
298 our qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses confirm our assumption that the areas of  
299 education, employment and retirement are of serious and widespread concern in South Korea  
300 today. When asked to indicate how much respondents were worried about the challenges in their  
301 own life, many respondents expressed anxiety about multiple aspects of their lives, as shown in  
302 Figure 1. More than half of the participants expressed more than a moderate amount of anxiety  
303 (“moderately,” “very,” and “extremely” worried) for all three areas (Education: 70%,  
304 Employment: 79%, Retirement: 92%). Among the three areas, respondents were the most  
305 worried about retirement (77% indicated “very” or “extremely” worried) and less worried about  
306 education (only 39% indicated “very” or “extremely” worried).

307 **Figure 1**308 *Degree of Anxiety about Education, Employment, and Retirement*

309 After indicating the level anxiety on a five-point scale, participants described their  
 310 concerns about each topic. These open-ended responses further reveal that individuals have very  
 311 extensive and substantive personal concerns across all three of these topics. Further details are  
 312 provided in supplementary materials with additional examples of open-ended responses and the  
 313 word clouds for each concern category.

314 **Table 2**315 *Examples of Open-ended Descriptions of Personal Concerns**Education costs and competitions*

- Heavy costs of private education and expensive tuition. (ID55)
- I am worried about my children's education and which universities they would attend. (ID953)
- As a working mother who has to send my children to day cares, I am most worried about the lack of kindergarten and private day cares. (ID388)

*Additional educational needs*

## Education

- It is very concerning and unrealistic that I need to additionally study for job seeking, separate from school education and building career. (ID397)
- I am worried if I need to get additional education to keep up with the rapidly changing environments (ID908)

*Unequal educational opportunities*

- Lack of education programs and the low quality of those programs in the regions outside Seoul. (ID1052)
- Economic inequalities are resulting in the unequal opportunities in educational benefits. I am worried if I can properly educate my future child without discrimination. (ID916)

*Threat of unemployment due to bad economy*

- Whether my company would fire me or impose any disadvantages due to the bad economy (ID933)
- I need to get a job, but there are not many jobs these days. I am worried whether I'd be able to get a new job after quitting my current job and have satisfactory income. (ID599)

*Unstable employment for at-will limited-term employees*

- Employment
- Anxiety about stable employment because I'm an at-will limited-term employee. (ID108)
  - There is so much corruption about employment, so it is very difficult to be released from the fate of being an at-will limited term employee. (ID368)

*Decreasing retirement age, Mid-age job seeking*

- I am worried that my company would force me to resign. (ID923)
- I am concerned whether I'll be able to have a job even after 60 and continue to live an economically stable life. (ID1007)

*Lack of retirement funds & Increasing average life expectancy*

- I am worried about the lack of retirement funds after my retirement (ID911)
- Given the increasing average life expectancy... I am worried about the retirement funds that aren't completely ready for the years after my retirement. (ID81)

*Insufficient national pension system*

- A lot of living expenses are required after retirement, but in reality the national pension system is not satisfactory enough to support the need. (ID1205)
- Worried that the national pension system will be depleted and the quality of living isn't getting better. (ID508)

## Retirement

*Cost of health care*

- Anxiety about the cost of living after retirement and the burden of increasing living and medical expenses due to aging. (ID382)
- I'm most concerned about health care costs and health care services that might incur due to dementia or surgery due to sudden illness. (ID1085)

*Uncertainties about the life after retirement*

- I am worried how I should concretely plan for my life after retirement, and how I could live a long, healthy life. (ID1319)
- Although I'm still young, the retirement is coming up soon, and I haven't been able to think about my plan after then. (ID1258)

316           When asked about concerns related to *education*, many respondents with children  
 317 mentioned the costs associated with education and private tutoring, increasing competitions  
 318 around private education, their children's college admissions, and the lack of day cares and  
 319 kindergartens. Other recurring themes were concerns about whether they would pursue a higher  
 320 degree, get additional training for job seeking or lifelong education, and unequal learning

321 opportunities due to income or regional differences. Of the three categories, education had the  
322 highest rate of non-response, where 14% of respondents did not express their concerns in open-  
323 ended responses.

324       Regarding *employment*, respondents were primarily concerned with the current state of  
325 the labor market, the ability to work in their old age, and the stability and working conditions  
326 under their current employment (e.g., at-will limited-term employment, pressured early  
327 retirement). Concerns about working in old age are centered around involuntary early retirement  
328 and decreasing retirement age, leading many of the respondents to be worried about the growing  
329 number of middle-aged job seekers in a tight labor market. Only 7% of respondents did not  
330 elaborate any concerns.

331       When thinking about *retirement and aging*, respondents were primarily concerned about  
332 not having enough funds during retirement and the health care costs. Many respondents believed  
333 Korea's pension system would be insufficient for their needs or run out of funds before they  
334 reached retirement age. Other recurring themes included concerns about the need to prepare for  
335 increasing life expectancy and a lack of specific plans for life after retirement. Of the three  
336 topics, respondents were most concerned about retirement and aging: only 2% of respondents did  
337 not describe their concerns.

### 338 **Experimental Results: The Effects of Exposure to Corruption Stories**

339       The results from our experiment shed light on the conditions under which corruption  
340 scandals increase the degree to which individuals blame the government for personal grievances.  
341 Table 2 presents the effects of corruption scandals on the degree of blame attribution to  
342 government rather than self. The outcome variable is the composite score of blame attributions  
343 on three areas of life, education, employment, and retirement (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.74$ ), where

344 higher values indicate greater blame attribution to government whereas lower values indicate  
 345 greater blame on self as the cause of personal grievances. The OLS models estimate the average  
 346 treatment effects of each experimental treatment—exposure to a story about corruption scandal  
 347 regarding college admission, nepotism, and elderly care respectively—compared to no exposure  
 348 to such information (baseline condition).

349 The first model of Table 3 provides partial support for Hypothesis 1, which predicted that  
 350 the exposure to corruption scandals will increase blame attribution to government, compared to  
 351 the baseline condition. Exposure to corruption scandal stories increased blame attribution to  
 352 government rather than self, compared to the baseline condition, especially when the corruption  
 353 story was about college admission (0.04,  $p < .05$ ) or elderly care (0.03,  $p < .10$ ). Exposure to  
 354 corruption on nepotism had a weaker impact on perceived blame attribution (0.02, *ns*).

355 **Table 3**

356 *Corruption Scandal Effects on Blame Attribution: All Respondents and by Degree of Anxiety*

	<i>Government-Self Blame</i>		
	All Respondents	More Worried	Less Worried
College admission	0.041** (0.018)	0.066*** (0.022)	0.008 (0.028)
Nepotism	0.023 (0.018)	0.057** (0.024)	-0.007 (0.027)
Elderly care	0.032* (0.018)	0.043* (0.024)	0.020 (0.027)
Constant	0.607*** (0.015)	0.625*** (0.019)	0.582*** (0.023)
<i>N</i>	1,185	658	527

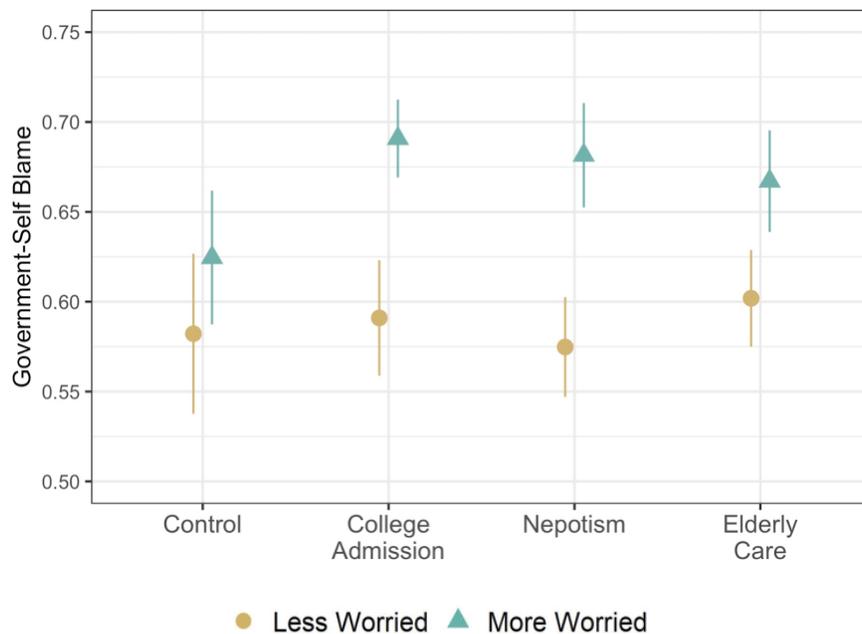
357 *Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard  
 358 errors in parentheses. *College admission* = 1 if college entrance corruption, 0 otherwise;  
 359 *Nepotism* = 1 if nepotism corruption =, 0 otherwise; *Elderly care* = 1 if elderly care corruption =,  
 360 0 otherwise. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of blaming the government or oneself

361 as the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (greater government-blame) to 0 (greater self-  
 362 blame).  $*p < .1$ ;  $**p < .05$ ;  $***p < .01$ .

363 Next, we examine H2, which expected that exposure to corruption scandal would prompt  
 364 more worried individuals to blame government to a greater extent compared to less worried ones.  
 365 We examine H2 by estimating the treatment effects by subgroups of low versus high levels of  
 366 preexisting anxiety (the second and third models in Table 2). To categorize individuals into low  
 367 and high levels of anxiety, we used the median split of the composite score of anxiety on the  
 368 three areas of life, education, employment, and retirement/aging ( $\alpha = .71$ , median = 0.67).  
 369 Considering Iacobucci et al., (2015), the median split approach is acceptable for our study  
 370 because the median split variable (anxiety) and the experimental treatments are orthogonal to  
 371 each other and because our key purpose is to investigate group differences rather than individual  
 372 heterogeneity.

373 **Figure 2.**

374 *Corruption Scandal Effects on Blame Attribution by Degree of Anxiety*



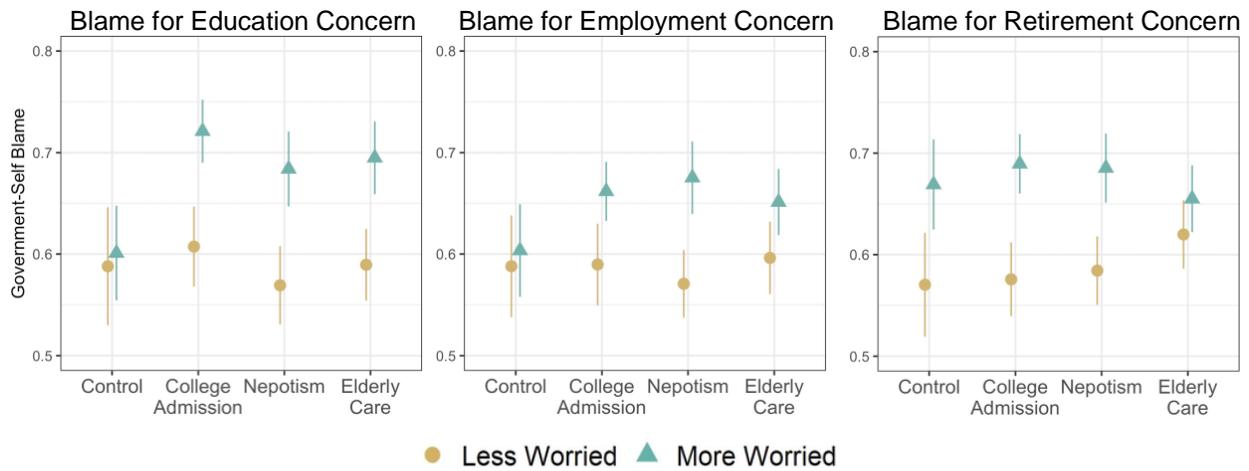
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376

377 *Note:* Mean and 95% confidence interval of government-self blame by experimental conditions.  
378 Horizontal axis indicates experimental conditions. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of  
379 blaming the government or oneself as the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (greater  
380 government-blame) to 0 (greater self-blame).

381 Consistent with H2, the effects of corruption scandals on blame attribution were greater  
382 among more worried individuals. Among more worried individuals, exposure to corruption  
383 scandal stories significantly increased blame attribution on government as the cause of personal  
384 concerns across all topics. However, the treatment effects of corruption scandals were minimal  
385 among less worried individuals across all topics: college admission (0.01, *ns*), nepotism (-0.01,  
386 *ns*), elderly care (0.02, *ns*).

387 Because each treatment condition involved corruption scandals where politicians used  
388 their political power on three distinct topics—college admission, nepotism in employment, and  
389 elderly care benefits, we further examined topic-specific blame attributions. While our major  
390 outcome variable used in Figure 2 was the composite score of three area-specific blame  
391 attributions, Figure 3 shows treatment effects on blaming the government as the cause of  
392 concerns *on each topic* separately.

393 **Figure 3.**394 *Corruption Scandal Effects on Area-specific Blame Attribution by Degree of Preexisting Anxiety*

395 *Note:* Mean and 95% confidence interval of government-self blame attribution by experimental  
 396 conditions. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of blaming the government or oneself as  
 397 the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (greater government-blame) to 0 (greater self-  
 398 blame). Tables S6-S8 in supplementary materials present these results in tabular form.

399 In Figure 3, the moderating role of anxiety is most pronounced for blame attribution on  
 400 education. Among more worried individuals, exposure to a corruption story significantly  
 401 increased blame towards government as the cause of education-related personal concerns  
 402 (college admission: 0.12,  $p < .01$ , nepotism: 0.9,  $p < .01$ , elderly care: 0.9,  $p < .01$ ), but had  
 403 minimal impact among less worried individuals. Blame perceptions for employment concerns  
 404 (the second graph) indicates that exposure to corruption scandals also prompt more worried  
 405 individuals to blame the government more as the cause of their employment-related concerns  
 406 (college admission: 0.06,  $p < .05$ ; nepotism: 0.07,  $p < .05$ ; elderly care: 0.05,  $p < .10$ ), but had  
 407 minimal impacts on less worried individuals.

408 Among more worried individuals, the topic-specific government blame increased the  
 409 most when the corruption story was on a relevant topic. For instance, education-specific

410 government blame increased the most under the college admission corruption treatment,  
411 compared to other corruption topics. Employment-specific government blame increased the most  
412 under the nepotism corruption treatment, compared to other corruption cases. While this topic-  
413 specific effect is noteworthy, another interesting finding is that corruption scandals on a specific  
414 topic can spill over to blaming the government for the other concern areas (e.g., *nepotism*  
415 corruption leads people to blame the government as the cause of their *education* concerns,  
416 *college admission* corruption leads people to blame the government as the cause of their  
417 *retirement* concerns).

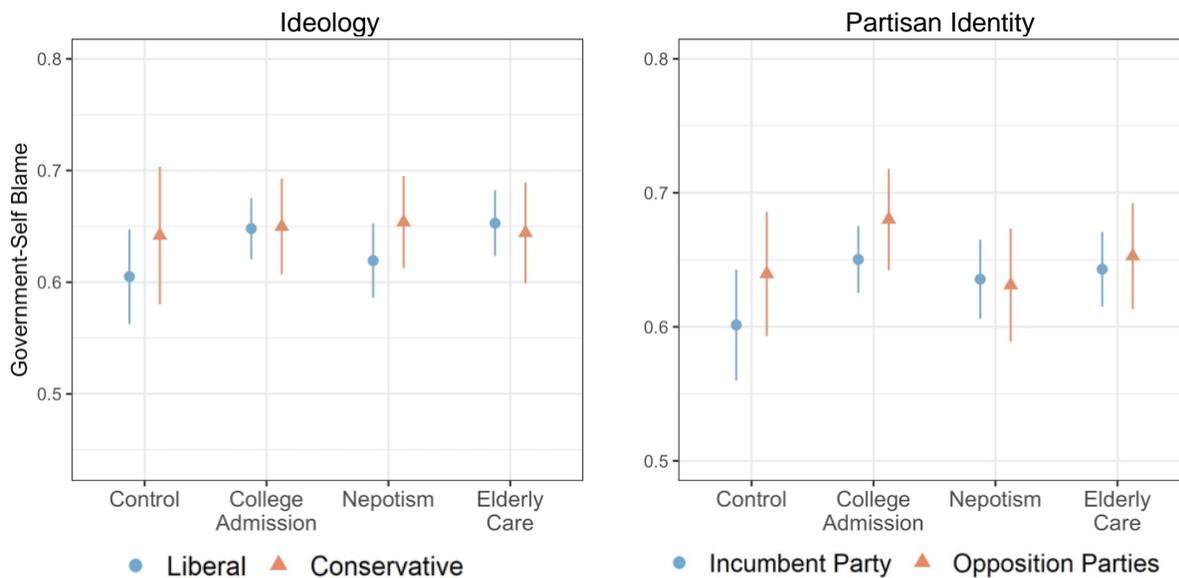
418         The effects of corruption scandals were prominent on education- and employment-  
419 specific blame attributions, but weaker on retirement-specific blame attribution. This could be  
420 due to the already high level of retirement-specific government blame on the baseline. While the  
421 baseline government blame (control condition) for education and employment were similar  
422 between more and less worried individuals (first and second graphs), more worried people  
423 already blamed the government to a greater extent for retirement concerns than less worried  
424 people (third graph). Partly due to this baseline difference, treatment effects of elderly care  
425 corruption were minimal among both anxiety levels. The results on topic-specific government  
426 blame suggest that blame among more worried people for education- and employment-related  
427 concerns are largely driving the findings in Figure 2.

428         We also examined whether exposure to corruption scandals would increase government  
429 blame to a lesser extent among partisans who support the incumbent government compared to  
430 opposing partisans (RQ1). Our findings challenge the popular belief that incumbent partisans are  
431 less likely to blame the government out of their in-group favoritism. At the time of our study, a  
432 liberal party was in power. As shown in Figure 4, conservatives and liberals were quite similar in

433 the degree of blame absent corruption scandals (baseline). However, exposure to corruption  
 434 scandals prompted liberals to blame to the government to a greater extent, particularly when  
 435 corruption scandals were about college admission (0.04,  $p < .10$ ) or elderly care benefits (0.05,  $p$   
 436  $< .10$ ). Conservatives, whose party was out of power, were unaffected by exposure to corruption  
 437 scandals. This result implies that corruption scandals more strongly prompted supporters, rather  
 438 than opponents, of the incumbent government to attribute greater blame to the government.

439 **Figure 4.**

440 *Corruption Scandal Effects on Blame Attribution by Ideology and Partisanship*



441 *Note:* Mean and 95% confidence interval of government-self blame attribution by  
 442 experimental conditions. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of blaming the government  
 443 or oneself as the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (greater government-blame) to 0  
 444 (greater self-blame). Table S9 in supplementary materials presents these results in tabular form.

445 We find a similar pattern with respect to partisan identity. Absent corruption scandals  
 446 (baseline), partisans who identify with the incumbent party (DPK) blamed the government  
 447 slightly less than opposition partisans (Liberty, Bareun (conservative), Justice (progressive),

448 Peace (liberal)). When exposed to corruption scandals, incumbent party identifiers reacted with a  
449 greater blame attribution to the government especially when the corruption involved college  
450 admission ( $0.05, p < .05$ ), whereas opposition partisans were minimally affected. This limited  
451 effect among opposition partisans is partly due to their already prominent levels of government  
452 blame in the baseline, suggesting a potential ceiling effect.

453         These findings are surprising considering prior studies that highlight in-group favoritism  
454 as an obstacle to properly holding the government accountable. Most literature suggests that  
455 partisans support their own party despite poor performance and instead blame opposition  
456 administrations (e.g., Kuo et al, 2017; Tilley & Hobolt, 2011). Our findings challenge this  
457 conventional wisdom by showing that corruption scandals trigger partisans whose party is in  
458 power—who are otherwise unlikely to blame the incumbent government—to blame the  
459 government more.

460         Overall, by triggering incumbent partisans to blame the government more, corruption  
461 scandal stories increase the chance of bipartisan punishment of poor-performing politicians.  
462 These results also highlight that corruption scandals on college admission can be particularly  
463 powerful in causing more worried individuals and incumbent partisans to blame the government  
464 as the cause of their grievances. These findings are meaningful in explaining why the 2016  
465 corruption scandal led to a nation-wide protests and bipartisan support for the presidential  
466 impeachment in South Korea. This corruption scandal involved many issues related to college  
467 admissions and nepotism (Ahn, 2017; Jeong & Lee, 2016; Park, 2016), which are the types of  
468 corruption that powerfully increased government blame in this study. During the months  
469 culminating to the presidential impeachment in 2017, even Koreans who previously supported  
470 the incumbent government supported presidential impeachment (e.g., eight out ten Koreans

471 supported the presidential impeachment between December 2016 and February 2017; 58% of  
472 Koreans living in the Park's stronghold regions supported her impeachment; Koh, 2017; Jeong,  
473 2017). Our findings suggest that corruption scandals can weaken partisan in-group favoritism  
474 and trigger incumbent partisans to reconsider their own party's performance.

#### 475 **Discussion**

476 Through a survey experiment among South Koreans, our study demonstrates that  
477 corruption scandals can motivate people to attribute greater blame on the government as the  
478 cause of their personal grievances, particularly among highly worried individuals and partisans  
479 whose party is in power. These findings deepen our understanding of how people connect  
480 national political events to their personal life and when corruption facilitates or obstructs  
481 democratic accountability. First, our findings indicate that corruption scandals can prompt people  
482 to deviate from sociotropic tendencies and blame government as the cause of their personal  
483 concerns. Second, anxiety can reinforce the effect because corruption scandals more strongly  
484 affect highly worried individuals to blame the government more for personal hardships. Third,  
485 corruption can lead partisans to blame government more even when their own party is in power.  
486 These findings illuminate when corruption scandals can weaken sociotropic tendencies and  
487 partisan in-group favoritism in government evaluations and increase the likelihood of bipartisan  
488 punishment of corrupt politicians.

489 This paper contributes to the study of democratic accountability and corruption. First,  
490 corruption scandals can have larger impacts than just on whether the individual implicated in the  
491 scandal is re-elected. Findings from our study show that corruption scandals may change the way  
492 that individuals relate their personal issues with government and affect politics far beyond the re-  
493 election of a single person or party, which has been the focus of much of the corruption

494 literature. Second, this study bridges the sociotropic politics literature with pocketbook voting  
495 literature by demonstrating that major national events (like corruption scandals) can prompt  
496 citizens to connect their personal concerns to national politics. Our findings demonstrate a  
497 potential mechanism by which national political events can influence individual political opinion  
498 and behavior through blaming government as the cause of personal concerns. Finally, while  
499 existing studies have explored how economic crises influence the degree to which individuals  
500 blame the government for policy failures, we explore another type of extraordinary time in  
501 politics: corruption scandals. Corruption scandals, like economic downturns, are valence issues  
502 (e.g., Klačnja et al., 2021) but are far easier to comprehend and therefore have a clearer pathway  
503 for blame attribution.

504         Like any other studies, ours has several limitations. First, the sample for this study was  
505 recruited via an online survey platform and tends to be younger and more educated than the  
506 general Korean population. Future research could test the extent to which our findings generalize  
507 to broader populations. Second, there was another dimension in our experimental design—  
508 competition cue (i.e., explicit mention of loss of opportunities due to corruption)—that did not  
509 yield strong treatment effects. As discussed in supplementary materials, it may be the case that  
510 the treatment for this dimension was too subtle to capture its effect, which requires further  
511 investigation. Third, our experiment lacked partisan labels for the wrongdoers, which future  
512 studies may investigate. Finally, future studies could explore how corruption scandals further  
513 affect behavioral implications on vote-choice and protest participation.

514         The study has several implications for our understanding of politics. We find corruption  
515 scandals are powerful motivators for people to punish their government for poor performance.  
516 Political entrepreneurs and opposition groups may successfully capitalize on corruption scandals

517 by making the connection between high profile corruption and the everyday personal concerns  
518 that people care about.<sup>3</sup> Our findings suggest that these appeals will be the most potent when  
519 oriented at individuals who have higher levels of anxiety and incumbent supporters. This can  
520 enable widespread bipartisan opposition to the incumbent government, like the 2016-2017  
521 protest movement against the presidential corruption scandal in South Korea.

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<sup>3</sup> Alexei Navalny, an opposition leader in Russia, was credited with using corruption scandals to motivate people to blame Russian authoritarians for their day-to-day difficulties and personal concerns. (Navalny, 2021)

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**Supplementary Materials**

*for*

**Can Corruption Connect You to Politics?**

**The Effects of Corruption Scandals on Blaming the Government for Personal Concerns**

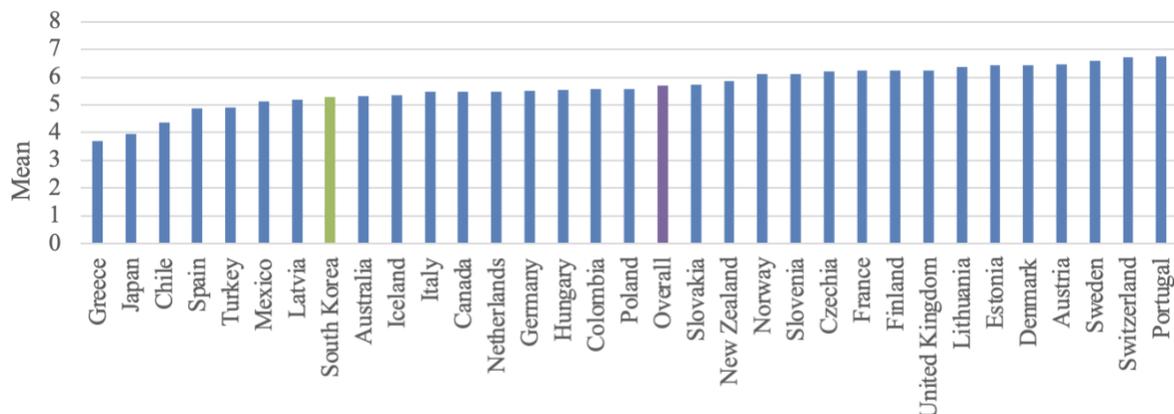
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## South Korea in Perspective: Perception of Corruption and Government Responsibility

Figures S1-S2 illustrate public perception of corruption and the role of government among the South Korean public in context with other OECD countries featured in the World Values Survey wave 7.

**Figure S1**

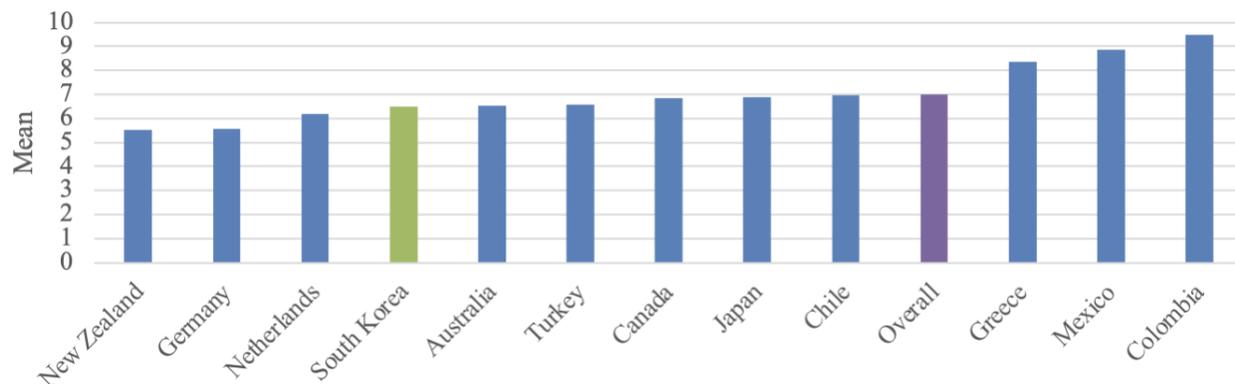
*Perception of the responsibility of government versus individual*



*Note:* This figure is based on Q108 of the World Values Survey: “Now I’d like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the left [The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for]; 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the right [People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves]; and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.”

**Figure S2**

*Perception of corruption*



*Note:* This figure is based on Q112 of the World Values Survey: “Now I’d like you to tell me your views on corruption – when people pay a bribe, give a gift or do a favor to other people in order to get the things they need done or the services they need. How would you place your views on corruption in [your country] on a 10-point scale where “1” means “there is no

corruption in [my country]” and “10” means “there is abundant corruption in [my country].” If your views are somewhat mixed, choose the appropriate number in between.”

### Distribution of Demographic across Experimental Conditions

**Table S1**

*Distribution of demographics by experimental conditions (%)*

	Experimental Conditions							Total
	Baseline	Education + Explicit	Education + Implicit	Employment + Explicit	Employment + Implicit	Retirement + Explicit	Retirement + Implicit	
<b>Age</b>								
20-29	26	21	27	22	18	18	26	23
30-39	20	22	24	26	25	25	21	23
40-49	27	28	27	21	28	33	26	27
50-59	27	28	23	31	29	25	27	27
<b>Gender</b>								
Female	48	55	52	50	49	56	52	52
Male	52	45	48	50	51	44	48	48
<b>Education</b>								
No college	22	21	22	19	22	21	23	21.5
College	78	79	78	81	78	79	77	78.5
<b>Ideology</b>								
Conservative	22	25	19	24	18	20	23	22
Moderate	35	30	37	34	39	34	41	36
Liberal	43	45	43	42	43	46	36	42
<b>Anxiety</b>								
Less worried	42	43	42	49	48	42	44	44.5
More worried	58	57	58	51	52	58	56	55.5
<b>N</b>	170	166	166	172	168	167	176	1,185

### Further Details about the Open-ended Descriptions of Personal Concerns

**Table S2**

*Original open-ended responses in Korean (original) and English (translation)*

Area of Anxiety	ID	Korean	English
Education	55	부담되는 사교육비 비싼 등록금	Heavy costs of private education and expensive tuition
	138	사교육 심화와 자녀의 대학 입시에 대한 걱정	Worried about the increasing need for private education and my children's college admissions

- 224 아이가 없어서 걱정거리가 현재는 없는 편이나, 현재의 유치원 사태나 대학입시 같은 문제가 향후에도 지속될지 걱정임  
Because I don't have children, I don't have much to worry about at the moment, but I'm worried whether the current kindergarten crisis and college admission problems would continue in the future.
- 388 유치원 대란으로 인해 피해보고 있는 아이들과 직장맘으로서 아이를 맡겨야하는데 유치원과 민간어린이집이 너무 적어 걱정이 가장 큼니다.  
I am worried about kids who are disadvantaged due to the lack of kindergarten. As a working mother who has to send my children to day cares, I am most worried because there are so few kindergarten and private day cares.
- 389 적성에 맞고 취업걱정없는 학과를 선택하기를 바라지만 조율하기 힘들  
I want to choose a major that suits my aptitude and ensures me a job, but it is hard to reconcile the two
- 397 학교교육과 사회생활은 별개로 취업공부를 다시 해야하는 실정이 안타깝고 비현실적이다  
It is very concerning and unrealistic that I need to additionally study for job seeking, separate from school education and building career.
- 616 너무 경쟁적이고 사교육이 심하다.. 공교육 위주의 교육이 필요 하다  
It is too competitive and there is too much private education. We need to focus more on public education.
- 821 평생 교육으로서 근처에서 마땅히 배울게 없고 비용 또한 비싸다.  
There are not many things to learn for lifelong education around me and they cost a lot of money.
- 908 급변하는 시대에 맞춰서 다양한 추가교육을 받아야 하지 않을까 하는 걱정  
I am worried if I need to get additional education to keep up with the rapidly changing environments
- 909 대학원 진학을 고려해야 하는지에 관한 고민  
I am concerned whether I should consider studying for a graduate degree
- 916 경제적 불균형이 교육 혜택의 불균형으로 이어지고 있다. 과연 아이를 낳아 차별없이 올바르게 교육할 수 있을지 걱정이다.  
Economic inequalities are resulting in the unequal opportunities in educational benefits. I am worried if I can properly educate my future child without discrimination.
- 953 자녀교육문제로 대학진로 문제로 걱정  
I am worried about my children's education and which universities they would attend
- 970 자격증 및 영어등으로 고민을하고있다  
I am concerned about getting more licenses and my English ability
- 998 교육을 조금 더 받고 싶은데, 형편상 그렇지 못해 아쉽습니다  
I wish to get more education, but I regret that I cannot due to personal circumstances
- 1052 지방의 교육프로그램 부족 및 수준미달  
Lack of education programs and the low quality of those programs in the regions outside Seoul
- 1079 교육비는 많이 들고 아이들도 공부하느라 고생하는데 대학 들어가기 점점 힘들고... 걱정이 많다  
It costs a lot of money for my children's education, and my kids are struggling with learning, yet it's getting even more difficult to get into college, so I am worried a lot.

Employment	108	계약직의 고용불안. 결혼 후 구직활동	Anxiety about stable employment because I'm a contract worker. Also worried about job seeking after getting married.
	368	정규직의 자리는 점점 줄어가고, 계약직으로 돌리고 돌리는 자리에 있다가 정규직으로 변경 되는건 하늘에 별따기인 요즘.. 취업비리도 너무 많고 일하고 싶어도 계약직이라는 굴레에서 벗어나기가 정말 힘들다고 생각합니다. 거기에 여성으로서 출산과 육아에 치이다 보면 자기 개발을 할 시간은 꿈꾸기도 어렵습니다.	There are fewer and fewer regular/permanent jobs, I've been at a position that continuously rotated being a contract worker, so it's extremely rare to get a regular position these days. Also there are so much corruption about employment, so it is very difficult to be released from the fate of being a contract worker. Moreover, as a female worker, I am bound by childbirth and childcare, so it is beyond my dream to find time for self-development.
	599	취업해서 일해야 하는데 요즘 일자리가 많이 없는편이다. 만약 지금 다니는 직장에서 퇴사하면 다시 일자리를 구할수 있을지. 급여는 만족하게 받을수 있을지가 걱정입니다.	I need to get a job, but there are not many jobs these days. I am worried whether I'd be able to get a new job after quitting my current job and whether I'd be able to have satisfactory income.
	637	경력단절로 인한 재취업	Getting a new job after career interruption
	648	남은 수명에 비해 수입이 언제까지 일정하게 들어올수 있는지가 걱정이다	I am worried about how long I will be able to have consistent income throughout the rest of my life.
	888	요즘 은퇴시기가 빨라지면서 언제 회사를 관둬야 할지 모른다는 불안감. 퇴사후 다른곳으로 취업이 가능할까하는 불안감. 늦게 아이를 낳은만큼 아이가 성인이 될때까지 고용유지가 될까하는 불안감.	Anxiety about the possibility that I might need resign my current job because the retirement age is decreasing these days. Worried whether I could get a new job after the resignation. I had my child late, so I am worried if I could have a stable job until my child becomes an adult.
	923	명예퇴직 당하지 않을까 걱정된다	I am worried that my company would force me to resign (voluntary resignation)
	933	경제가 안좋아서 직장에서 해고당하거나 그 밖에 불이익 등	Whether my company would fire me or impose any disadvantages due to the bad economy
	1007	60 세 이후 까지 계속 직업을 갖고 경제적으로 안정되게 살 수 있을지 염려가 된다	I am concerned whether I'll be able to have a job even after 60 and continue to live an economically stable life.
Retirement	81	평균수명은 늘어나는 현실에...은퇴후에 제대로 갖춰지지않은 노후자금에 고민이다	In the reality where the average life expectancy is increasing... I am worried about the retirement funds that aren't completely ready for the years after my retirement.
	138	은퇴에 따른 노후 대책화 고령화로 인한 건강 문제 등	Making plans for my old age after retirement, health concerns due to aging, etc.

- 382 은퇴 후 생활비에 대한 걱정과 고령화에 따른 생활비 및 의료비 지출 증가에 따른 부담  
Anxiety about the cost of living after retirement and the burden of increasing living and medical expenses due to aging
- 384 물가는 너무높고 국민연금에 의존해서는 생활이 안되지않나...  
좋은자식 좋은부모가 되기위해 나의 은퇴후의 모습은 상상도 할수없다  
Cost of living is too high and it wouldn't be feasible to afford living expenses only by relying on the national pension. To be a good child and good parent, I can't even imagine my life after retirement.
- 508 국민연금 고갈 될거라는 불안감과 그다지개선되지 않는 생활수준 가파르게 오르는 물가 점점 벌어지는 빈부격차로 인한 상대적인 박탈감으로 점점더 불안해지는 노령 시기이다  
Anxiety that the national pension system will be depleted and the status of living that isn't getting better. I am getting even more worried in my old age due to the sense of relative deprivation coming from the steep inflation and increasing gap between the rich and the poor.
- 911 은퇴 후 노후자금 부족 등을 겪지 않을까 걱정임  
I am worried about the lack of retirement funds after my retirement
- 1085 본인과 배우자의 경우는 점점 나이가 들면서 나빠지는 건강문제와 더불어 은퇴후 노후생활의 안정여부문제, 노후 의료자금문제등이 가장 걱정거리이며, 부모님의 경우 노인 치매나 갑작스런 질병등으로 인한 입원 수술로 의료비와 간병문제가 가장 걱정이 된다  
For myself and my spouse, I'm worried about the health that is getting worse as we get older and the stability of our life and health care costs after retirement. For our parents, I'm most concerned about health care costs and health care services that might incur due to dementia or surgery due to sudden illness.
- 1205 은퇴 후 필요한 생활자금이 많으며, 국민연금이 이를 뒷받침해 주기에는 만족스럽지는 못한 실정.  
고령화로 인해 내 자녀가 내야하는 세금걱정  
A lot of living expenses are required after retirement, but in reality the national pension system is not satisfactory enough to support the need. I am also worried about the tax that my children should pay due to the aging society
- 1247 저도 걱정이긴 하지만 부모님이 더 걱정하시고 계십니다..곧 은퇴는 다가오는데 모아놓은 돈이 없어서 걱정이 많으십니다..  
I'm worried about myself too, but my parents are more worried.. Their retirement is coming soon, but they haven't accumulated much money, so they are very worried.
- 1258 그동안 자식들을 키우면서 노후 준비가 미흡한 상태이다. 아직 젊은 나이지만, 곧 은퇴를 다가와서 이후의 계획을 제대로 생각하지 못했다.  
While raising my kids, I haven't been able to prepare for my retirement. Although I'm still in my youth, retirement is coming up soon, so I haven't been able to think about my plan after then.
- 1319 노후준비에 대해서 구체적으로 어떻게 설계해야할지, 건강하게 오래잘지낼수있을지 고민합니다.  
I am concerned how I should concretely plan for my life after retirement, and how I could live a long, healthy life.
-

## Word clouds for each concern category

To have a better sense of the topics that people provide in their open-ended responses, we translated the first 200 open-ended responses to English. Then, we generated the word clouds that show the words that were frequently mentioned in the open-ended responses.

**Figure S3**

*Word clouds of frequent words by personal concern category*



## Manipulation Check

At the end of the survey, the following question was asked to assess how well the key differences across experimental conditions were perceived by the respondents: “Which of the following was mentioned in the news story that you read in this survey?”

- Corporate employment (1)
- College admission (2)
- Beneficiaries for elderly care (3)
- None of the above (4)

Only the respondents who were assigned to one of the treatment conditions, thus had seen a corruption scandal story, were given this manipulation check question. Following Hauser, Ellsworth, & Gonzalez (2018)'s recommendation, we placed this question at the very end of the survey in order to prevent any unintended influence of this question on outcomes. We did not drop respondents who failed the manipulation check, excluding respondents who failed the manipulation check can result in biased results as suggested by Aronow, Baron, & Pinson (2019).

**Table S3**

*Responses to manipulation check by experimental conditions*

	Treatment Conditions			Total
	College admission corruption	Nepotism corruption	Elderly care corruption	
College admission	<b>65.2</b>	3.2	4.4	23.8
Corporate employment	33.8	<b>94.6</b>	18.4	48.7
Beneficiaries for elderly care	1.0	2.2	<b>77.3</b>	27.5
None	0	0	0	0
N	305	312	321	938

Note: Entries are the percentage of each response per experimental condition.

As shown in Table S3, responses across different conditions indicate that the key experimental manipulation—the area of corruption scandal—in this study was effective. In all treatment conditions, a majority of responses were consistent with the intention of the study design. In the condition with college admissions corruption, 65.2% of the respondents said they were given a story about college admissions. In the condition where respondents were given a nepotism corruption story, 94.6% of respondents recalled that they were given a story about corporate employment. Among respondents assigned to the condition with an elderly care corruption story, 77.3% recalled that they were given a story about beneficiaries for elderly care. None of the respondents who were assigned to the treatment conditions chose ‘none of the above’ for this question.

### **Effects of Explicit versus. Implicit Competition Framing on Government Blame**

This study had a 3 by 2 experimental design that varied the area of corruption (3 topics: college entrance, nepotism, elderly care) and the explicitness of competition (2 variations: explicit, implicit), in addition to control condition. We expected that competitive framing of corruption as a zero-sum competition between elites and the public would increase government blame. When elite corruption highlighted its consequences of taking opportunities away from ordinary people, we considered this corruption case as having an *explicit competition cue*. We manipulated this dimension of our experiment by either explicitly mentioning or not mentioning the consequence of corruption scandals. In the experimental design, participants were randomly assigned to either the *explicit* condition where the text included a sentence “In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected” or the *implicit* condition where the text did not include this sentence.

**Table S4***Content of experimental stimuli: Area of corruption and explicit competition cue*

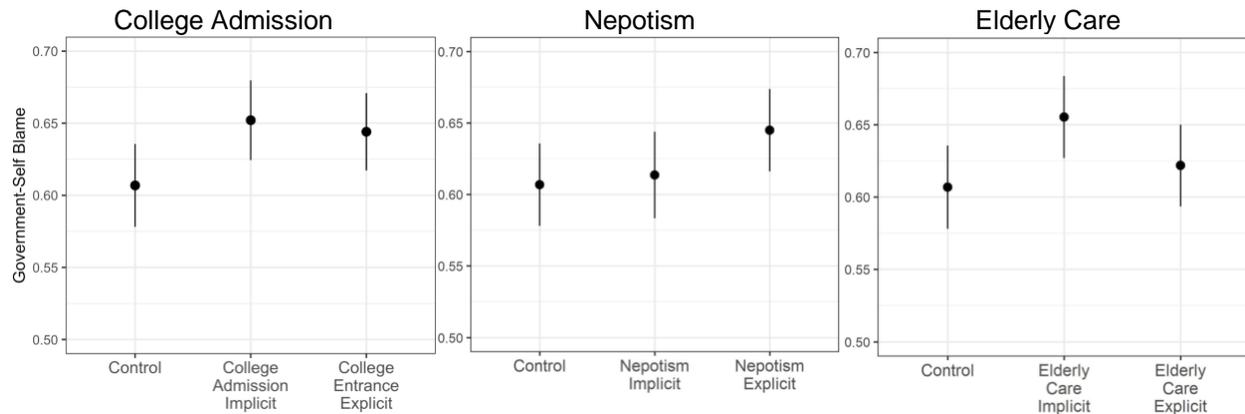
	Competition	
Topic	Implicit	Explicit
College Entrance	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the admission process of universities</b>. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were admitted to prestigious universities without going through the appropriate process.</p>	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the admission process of universities</b>. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were admitted to prestigious universities without going through the appropriate process. <b>In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.</b></p>
Nepotism	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the employment process of companies</b>. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were employed at large companies without going through the appropriate process.</p>	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the employment process of companies</b>. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were employed at large companies without going through the appropriate process. <b>In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.</b></p>
Elderly Care	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the selection process for beneficiaries of a new national elderly care center</b>. It was found that elderly parents of politicians and high government officials were admitted to the institute without going through the appropriate process.</p>	<p>In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in <b>the selection process for beneficiaries of a new national elderly care center</b>. It was found that elderly parents of politicians and high government officials were admitted to the institute without going through the appropriate process. <b>In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.</b></p>

*Note.* None of the text was bolded in the actual study.

We expected that an explicit mention of opportunity loss due to elite corruption would trigger greater blame on the government, compared to when such consequence was implicit. However, the extents to which explicit and implicit opportunity loss increases government blame were not statistically different in all areas of corruption as shown in Table S5. Thus, we decided to collapse the implicit and explicit conditions, and focused on the treatment effects by corruption topics in the main text of the paper.

**Figure S4**

*Effects of explicit competition cue on government-self blame by corruption topics*



*Note:* Mean and 95% confidence interval of government-self blame attribution by experimental conditions.

**Table S5**

Average government-self blame by experimental conditions: By topic and consequence priming

Topic	Consequence		Difference (t-statistic)
	Implicit	Explicit	
College admission	0.65	0.64	-0.41, $p = .68$
Nepotism	0.61	0.64	1.47, $p = .14$
Elderly care	0.66	0.62	-1.65, $p = .10$

We propose two conjectures about the reasons behind this null finding. First, the treatment we devised to manipulate the explicitness of competition and unequal opportunities might have been too weak. We simply inserted a sentence that says “This corruption led to many applicants to [college admissions / corporate employment / elderly care benefits] to lose their chance,” which could have been too weak as an intervention to explicitly highlight the potential personal consequences. Another possibility is that people who were not given this extra sentence (the implicit condition) might have still inferred the opportunity loss caused by this corruption, thus ultimately having similar reactions with people assigned to the explicit condition. A second conjecture is that the explicitness or salience of opportunity loss is not a strong factor in how corruption scandals affect blame perceptions. It may be the case that regardless of whether corruption scandals result in the loss of opportunity for ordinary people, people may still come to blame the government to a greater extent after learning about elite corruption. Future research is needed to understand the role of explicit competition or loss of opportunity more clearly.

## Effects of Corruption Scandals on Topic-Specific Blame

**Table S6**

*Corruption scandal effects on **education** blame by anxiety levels*

	<i>Government-Self Blame: Education</i>	
	More worried	Less worried
College admission	0.12*** (0.03)	0.02 (0.04)
Nepotism	0.08*** (0.03)	-0.02 (0.04)
Elderly care	0.09*** (0.03)	0.001 (0.03)
Constant	0.60*** (0.02)	0.59 (0.03)
N	658	527

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree to which individuals blame the government as the cause of personal concerns, where higher value indicates blaming to the government and lower value indicates blaming oneself (coded to range from 0 to 1). \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table S7**

*Corruption scandal effects on **employment** blame by anxiety levels*

	<i>Government-Self Blame: Education</i>	
	More worried	Less worried
College admission	0.06** (0.03)	0.002 (0.03)
Nepotism	0.07** (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
Elderly care	0.05* (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Constant	0.60*** (0.02)	0.59*** (0.03)
N	658	527

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table S8**

*Corruption scandal effects on **retirement** blame by anxiety levels*

	<i>Government-Self Blame: Education</i>	
	More worried	Less worried
College admission	0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Nepotism	0.02 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Elderly care	-0.01	0.05

	(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	0.67***	0.57***
	(0.02)	(0.03)
N	658	527

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

### Treatment Effects of Corruption Scandal by Ideology and Partisanship

**Table S9**

*Corruption scandal effects on government-self blame: By ideology and partisanship*

	<i>Government-Self Blame</i>			
	Liberals	Conservatives	Incumbent Party	Opposition Party
College admission	0.043*	0.008	0.049**	0.041
	(0.026)	(0.038)	(0.025)	(0.031)
Nepotism	0.014	0.012	0.034	-0.008
	(0.027)	(0.038)	(0.026)	(0.032)
Elderly care	0.048*	0.002	0.042	0.013
	(0.026)	(0.039)	(0.025)	(0.031)
Constant	0.605***	0.642***	0.601***	0.639***
	(0.022)	(0.031)	(0.021)	(0.024)
N	505	256	585	305

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. *College admission* = 1 if college admission corruption =, 0 otherwise; *Nepotism* = 1 if nepotism corruption, 0 otherwise; *Elderly care* = 1 if elderly care corruption, 0 otherwise. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of blaming the government or oneself as the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (government-blame) to 0 (self-blame). \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table S10**

*Corruption scandal effects on government-self blame among moderates and independents*

	<i>Government-Self Blame</i>	
	Moderates (Ideology)	(Pure) Independents
College admission	0.06*	0.03
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Nepotism	0.04	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Elderly care	0.03	0.04
	(0.03)	(0.04)
Constant	0.59***	0.58***
	(0.03)	(0.03)
N	424	290

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. *College admission* = 1 if college admission corruption =, 0 otherwise;

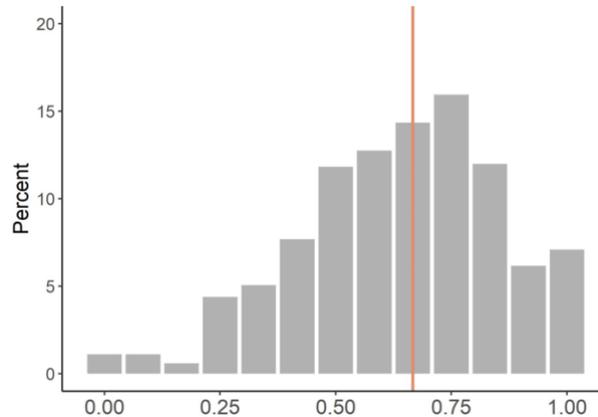
*Nepotism* = 1 if nepotism corruption, 0 otherwise; *Elderly care* = 1 if elderly care corruption, 0 otherwise. *Government-Self Blame* refers to the degree of blaming the government or oneself as the cause of personal concerns, ranging from 1 (government-blame) to 0 (self-blame). \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

### Additional Analysis of Anxiety

To analyze how anxiety moderate the effects of corruption scandals, we used the median split approach (Iacobucci et al., 2015). The median level of anxiety was the 0.6667, the vertical line shown in Figure S2, which included 170 respondents. There are two choices to create binary groups on the basis of this median: include individuals with the median level of anxiety in either higher-concern group or lower-concern group. When we take the first approach, there are 658 more worried and 527 less worried individuals. With the second approach, there are 488 more worried and 697 less worried individuals. In the main text of the paper, we present the results based on the first approach, because 1) the number of respondents is relatively more even across the two groups, and 2) the median is closer to the higher end of the anxiety scale, so the substantive meaning of median level anxiety is relatively higher anxiety.

#### Figure S5

*The distribution of anxiety (horizontal axis, ranging from 0 to 1) and the median level of anxiety (vertical line)*



To confirm that our substantive findings are robust to the alternative way of median-split categorizations, we present the results based on the second approach in Table S11. The statistical significance and direction of treatment effects, and substantive findings stay the same, reinforcing the robustness of our findings on how anxiety moderate the effects of corruption scandals on blame attribution.

**Table S11**

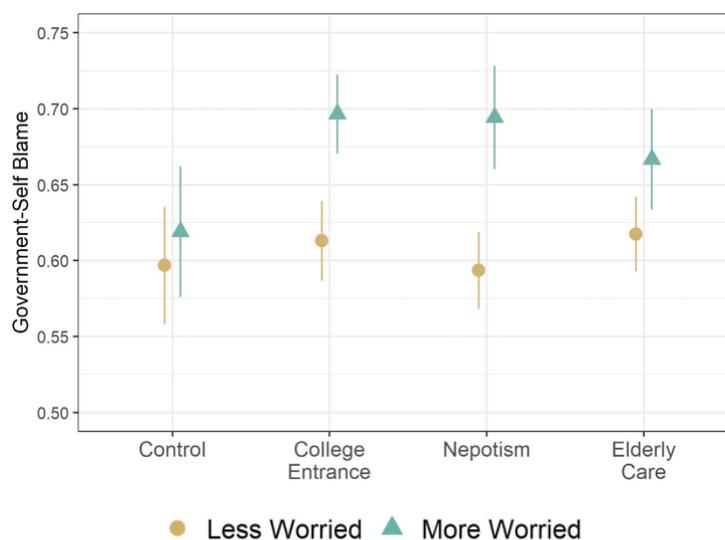
*Treatment effects of corruption scandal stories on government-self blame by anxiety levels (Alternative median split)*

	<i>Government-Self Blame</i>	
	More worried	Less worried
College admission	0.08*** (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)
Nepotism	0.08*** (0.03)	-0.003 (0.02)
Elderly care	0.05* (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)
Constant	0.62*** (0.02)	0.60*** (0.02)
N	488	697

*Note:* Entries are the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .1$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Figure S6**

*Treatment effects of corruption scandals on government-self blame by anxiety levels (Alternative median split)*



*Note:* Mean and 95% confidence interval of government-self blame attribution by experimental conditions.

### Survey Questionnaire (English, Translated)

The full survey questionnaire, data, and codes will be made available at an OSF repository upon the publication of this paper. The questions that are most relevant to the current study are presented below.

## 1. Pre-treatment Questions

**[Spouse]** What is your marital status?

- Never married (1)
- Married (Have a spouse) (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Widowed (4)
- Separated (5)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

**[Children]** Do you have a child (children)?

- Yes [Number of children: \_\_\_\_\_] (1)
- No (2)

**[Parent]** When is the birth year of your parent and are your parent alive?

1. Father	Birth year _____	Alive (1) Dead (2) Other (Describe: _____) (3)
2. Mother	Birth year _____	Alive (1) Dead (2) Other (Describe: _____) (3)

**[Partisan Identity] PID1.** Generally speaking, is there a political party in South Korea that you usually think of yourself as a supporter of the party?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Don't know (3)

[display if PID1==1] **PID2.** If so, which of the following is the party that you feel the closest to?

- Democratic Party of Korea (1)
- Liberty Korea Party (2)
- Justice Party (3)
- Bareun Party (4)
- Party for Democracy and Peace (5)
- Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

[display if PID1 == 2 | 3] **PID3.** Even so, is there a party that you feel relatively closer than other parties?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

[display if PID3 == 1] **PID3.** If so, is there a party that you feel relatively closer than other parties?

- Democratic Party of Korea (1)
- Liberty Korea Party (2)
- Justice Party (3)
- Bareun Party (4)
- Party for Democracy and Peace (5)
- Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

**[Ideology]** People usually distinguish liberalism and conservatism. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

- Very conservative (1)
- Conservative (2)
- Slightly Conservative (3)
- Middle (4)
- Slightly Liberal (5)
- Liberal (6)
- Very liberal (7)

**[Anxiety]** The tables below present a list of problems that many people these days experience in their personal lives. Among **[employment, education, retirement]**, what is the concern that you have about yourself or your family members? For each category, how much are you worried about yourself and your family members?

<b>Employment</b>	Extremely worried (1)	Very worried (2)	Moderately worried (3)	A little worried (4)	Not at all worried (5)
Yourself (1)					
Your spouse (2)					
Your children (3)					
Your parents (4)					

<b>Education</b>	Extremely worried (1)	Very worried (2)	Moderately worried (3)	A little worried (4)	Not at all worried (5)
Yourself (1)					
Your spouse (2)					
Your children (3)					
Your parents (4)					

<b>Retirement/Aging</b>	Extremely worried (1)	Very worried (2)	Moderately worried (3)	A little worried (4)	Not at all worried (5)
Yourself (1)					
Your spouse (2)					
Your children (3)					
Your parents (4)					

\* Display “your spouse,” “your children,” “your parent” items if the respondent indicated earlier in the survey that they have each member in their family.

**[Open-ended Employment Concerns].** Regarding **Employment**, please elaborate on the worries you have about yourself or your family member.

\* Skip if ‘not at all’ to all four categories on employment

**[Open-ended Employment Concerns].** Regarding **Education**, please elaborate on the worries you have about yourself or your family member.

---

\* Skip if 'not at all' to all four categories on education

**[Open-ended Retirement Concerns].** Regarding **Retirement/Aging**, please elaborate on the worries you have about yourself or your family member.

---

\* Skip if 'not at all' to all four categories on retirement

## 2. Experimental Treatment

**[Instruction]** The following story is about one of the topics that have been in the news recently. Before moving on to the next questions, please take a moment to read the story. We will ask you some questions about your thoughts about what was discussed in the story.

*Note:* Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the 7 conditions.

**Condition ==1. Control group:** No vignette is provided

**Condition ==2. College admission x Implicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the admission process of universities*. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were admitted to prestigious universities without going through the appropriate process.

**Condition ==3. College admission x Explicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the admission process of universities*. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were admitted to prestigious universities without going through the appropriate process. *In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.*

**Condition ==4. Nepotism x Implicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the employment process of companies*. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were employed at large companies without going through the appropriate process.

**Condition ==5. Nepotism x Explicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the employment process of companies*. It was found that children of politicians and high government officials were employed at large companies without going through the appropriate process. *In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.*

**Condition ==6. Elderly care x Implicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the selection process for beneficiaries of a new national elderly care*

center. It was found that elderly parents of politicians and high government officials were admitted to the institute without going through the appropriate process.

**Condition ==7. Elderly care x Explicit competition cue:**

In October 2017, ten congressmen were implicated in a corruption scandal. It was revealed that, by using government power, they intervened in *the selection process for beneficiaries of a new national elderly care center*. It was found that elderly parents of politicians and high government officials were admitted to the institute without going through the appropriate process. In consequence, many applicants who met admission criteria were rejected.

### 3. Post-treatment Question

**[Government-Self Blame for Personal Concerns]** Regarding your personal concerns that you have recently, between government and yourself as a cause of your concerns, which do you think is more responsible? “Government” can refer to politicians, central and local governments, government’s relationship with Cheobol system or government’s management of economy. “Yourself” can refer to your educational background, your family’s financial condition, your lack of ambition and effort, or your personal choice.

	Government is completely responsible [1]	Government is somewhat responsible [2]	Equally responsible [3]	I myself is somewhat responsible [4]	I myself is completely responsible [5]
Employment (1)					
Education (2)					
Retirement/Aging (3)					

### 4. End of the survey

[Display if condition != 1] **[Manipulation check]** Which of the following was mentioned in the news story that you read in this survey?

- Corporate employment (1)
- College admission (2)
- Beneficiaries for elderly care (3)
- None of the above (4)

## Survey Questionnaire (Korean, Original)

### 1. 실험문항 이전

**[배우자]** 귀하의 혼인상태는 어떻게 되십니까?

- 1) 미혼
- 2) 기혼 (배우자 있음)
- 3) 이혼
- 4) 사별
- 5) 별거

6) 기타 (직접 작성: \_\_\_\_\_)

[자녀] 자녀유무를 선택해 주세요.

- 1) 있음 ( ) 명
- 2) 없음

[부모님] 귀하의 부모님의 출생연도 및 생존해 계신지 여부는 어떻게 되십니까?

1. 아버지	_____년생	1) 생존 2) 사망 3) 기타 (직접 작성: ____ )
2. 어머니	_____년생	1) 생존 2) 사망 3) 기타 (직접 작성: ____ )

[정당일체감] PID1. 평소 지지하는 정당이 있다고 생각하십니까?

- 1) 그렇다
- 2) 아니다
- 3) 모르겠다

[PID1==1] PID2. 그렇다면, 어느 정당을 지지하십니까?

- 1) 더불어민주당
- 2) 자유한국당
- 3) 정의당
- 4) 바른미래당
- 5) 민주평화당
- 6) 기타 \_\_\_\_\_

[PID1==2|3] PID3. 그렇지 않다면, 다른 정당보다 비교적 더 지지한다고 생각하는 정당이 있습니까?

- 1) 그렇다 [Q7으로]
- 2) 아니다 [Q8로]

[PID3==1] PID4. 그렇다면, 다른 정당보다 더 지지한다고 생각하는 정당은 어디입니까?

- 1) 더불어민주당
- 2) 자유한국당
- 3) 정의당
- 4) 바른미래당
- 5) 민주평화당
- 6) 기타 \_\_\_\_\_

[정치이념] 정치에서 사람들은 보통 진보와 보수를 구분합니다. 귀하께서는 귀하 자신이 어디에 속한다고 생각하십니까?

매우 보수적	보수적	약간 보수적	중도	약간 진보적	진보적	매우 진보적
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**[개인적 걱정]** 아래의 표에는 최근 많은 사람들이 개인적인 삶에서 겪고 있는 문제들의 목록이 제시되어 있습니다. 다음 목록 **[취업/고용, 교육, 은퇴/고령화]** 중 귀하가 본인 또는 가족구성원 (배우자, 자녀, 부모님 등)에 관하여 최근 갖고 있는 걱정거리는 무엇입니까? 각 항목마다 귀하가 본인과 가족구성원에 대하여 걱정하는 정도는 어떻게 되십니까?

취업/고용	매우 걱정한다 (1)	걱정하는 편이다 (2)	보통이다 (3)	걱정하지 않는 편이다 (4)	전혀 걱정하지 않는다 (5)
본인 (1)					
배우자 (2)					
자녀 (3)					
부모님 (4)					

교육	매우 걱정한다 (1)	걱정하는 편이다 (2)	보통이다 (3)	걱정하지 않는 편이다 (4)	전혀 걱정하지 않는다 (5)
본인 (1)					
배우자 (2)					
자녀 (3)					
부모님 (4)					

은퇴/고령화	매우 걱정한다 (1)	걱정하는 편이다 (2)	보통이다 (3)	걱정하지 않는 편이다 (4)	전혀 걱정하지 않는다 (5)
본인 (1)					
배우자 (2)					
자녀 (3)					
부모님 (4)					

(\* 배우자, 자녀, 부모님 항목은 설문 초반 관련 문항에 대한 응답에 따라 해당 가족 구성원이 있는 경우에만 활성화)

**[개인적 걱정: 취업/고용]** 취업/고용과 관련하여, 본인 또는 귀하의 가족구성원에 관하여 갖고 있는 걱정거리가 무엇인지 구체적으로 적어주세요. \_\_\_\_\_

(\* 취업/고용 항목에 모든 구성원에 5. 전혀 아님을 응답할 시 SKIP)

**[개인적 걱정: 교육]** 교육과 관련하여, 본인 또는 귀하의 가족구성원에 관하여 갖고 있는 걱정거리가 무엇인지 구체적으로 적어주세요. \_\_\_\_\_

(\* 교육 항목에 모든 구성원에 5. 전혀 아님을 응답할 시 SKIP)

**[개인적 걱정: 은퇴/고령화]** 은퇴/고령화와 관련하여, 본인 또는 귀하의 가족구성원에 관하여 갖고 있는 걱정거리가 무엇인지 구체적으로 적어주세요. \_\_\_\_\_

(\* 은퇴/고령화 항목에 모든 구성원에 5. 전혀 아님을 응답할 시 SKIP)

## 2. 실험문항

다음의 글은 최근 뉴스에서 다루어진 주제 중 하나에 관한 글입니다. 다음 문항으로 넘어가기 전에, 이 글을 읽어주시기 바랍니다. 해당 사건에 관하여 귀하께서 어떠한 생각을 갖고 계신지 여쭙는 문항이 주어질 예정입니다.

### 1. Control group (통제군):

[아무런 글도 제공되지 않음]

### 2. College admission x Explicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 대학 입시에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위 공직자의 자녀들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 일류 대학에 입학하였음이 밝혀졌습니다.

### 3. College admission x Explicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 대학 입시에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위 공직자의 자녀들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 일류 대학에 입학하였음이 밝혀졌습니다. 이로 인하여, 입학 자격을 충족했던 수많은 지원자들이 대학 입시에서 불합격 통보를 받은 것으로 드러났습니다.

### 4. Nepotism x Implicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 기업들의 채용 과정에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위 공직자의 자녀들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 대기업에 취직하였음이 밝혀졌습니다.

### 5. Nepotism x Explicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 기업들의 채용 과정에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위 공직자의 자녀들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 대기업에 취직하였음이 밝혀졌습니다. 이로 인하여, 취업 자격을 충족했던 수많은 지원자들이 채용시험에서 불합격 통보를 받은 것으로 드러났습니다.

### 6. Elderly care x Implicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 국립 양로원 수혜자 선정 과정에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위 공직자의 노부모들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 수혜자로 선정되었음이 밝혀졌습니다.

### 7. Elderly care x Explicit competition cue

지난 2017년 10월, 국회의원 10명이 부패 스캔들에 연루되었음이 밝혀진 사건이 있었습니다. 이들은 정부 권력을 이용하여 국립 양로원 수혜자 선정 과정에 관여한 것으로 드러났습니다. 이 사건에서 정치인과 고위

공직자의 노부모들이 정당한 절차를 거치지 않고 수혜자로 선정되었음이 밝혀졌습니다. 이로 인하여, 수혜자 자격을 충족했던 수많은 지원자들이 수혜 대상자 선발 과정에서 불합격 통보를 받은 것으로 드러났습니다.

### 3. 실험문항 이후

**[정부-본인 책임 평가]** 귀하가 본인 또는 가족구성원 (배우자, 자녀, 부모님 등)에 관하여 최근 갖고 있는 걱정거리의 원인으로, 정부와 귀하 자신 중 누구의 책임이 더 크다고 생각하십니까?  
선택지 중 “정부 책임”에서 ‘정부’는 정치인, 중앙정부, 지방정부, 정부와 재벌 간의 관계, 정부의 경제 관리를 포괄적으로 의미하며, 선택지 중 “본인 책임”에서 ‘본인’은 귀하의 교육 배경, 가정의 경제적 여건, 개인적인 야망과 노력의 정도, 개인적 선택을 포괄적으로 의미합니다.

	완전히 정부 책임 (1)	대체로 정부 책임 (2)	동등한 책임 (3)	대체로 본인 책임 (4)	완전히 본인 책임 (5)
취업/고용 (1)					
교육 (2)					
은퇴/고령화 (3)					

### 4. 설문조사 마지막 부분

**[실험조작 점검]** 설문조사 중반부에 보셨던 정치인 부패 스캔들에 관한 글은 다음 중 무엇과 가장 관련이 깊습니까? [통제군에게는 제시하지 않음]

- 1) 기업 채용
- 2) 대학 입시
- 3) 국립 요양원 수혜자 선정
- 4) 해당사항 없음

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