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# Are Women Better Police Officers? Evidence from Survey Experiments in Uganda

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## Abstract

Can the feminization of public services improve quality and lower corruption? The underlying logic of such efforts is the belief that women have higher ethical standards than men. To answer this question, we examine the links between gender and policing practice using data from twelve vignette cases assessed by 600 Ugandan police officers. Our empirical strategy is based on a randomized framing experiment which is designed to isolate the effect of gender from institutional factors and social norms. We find that the gender of the police officer depicted in the cases and victim gender are not related to the judgment of police malpractice, nor to suggested disciplinary measures. However, respondent gender matters for the reporting of misconduct and the perception of the official institutional policy of the police. Men are stricter when assessing cases along these dimensions. The results indicate that simply feminizing the police force is unlikely to enhance service quality.

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