5-2013

Anti-Corruption Efforts and Russian Perceptions: Presidents Putin and Menvedev's Efforts to Influence Perceptions of Corruption

Jeris Kendall
Utah State University

ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS & RUSSIAN PERCEPTIONS: PRESIDENTS PUTIN AND MEDVEDEV'S EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE PERCEPTIONS OF CORRUPTION

by

Jeris Kendall

A Plan B thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Political Science

Approved:

_____	_____
Major Professor	Committee Member
_____	
Committee Member	

Utah State University
Department of Political Science
2013

Corruption in Russia is a Serious Problem

The problems affecting Russia because of corruption are serious and pressing. Police officers, judges, government officials, and many others are involved in taking bribes for services or benefits they provide. These actions are contrary to the laws they are to follow, and they are preventing the rule of law from operating properly in Russia. In order to resolve this issue Russia needs to understand how corruption works against national progress, how society perceives the efforts of Russian presidents in the battle against corruption, and how those perceptions can be utilized to help improve the situation.

According to Lanny A. Breuer, who was the Assistant Attorney General of the United States, "when corruption takes hold in any nation, its political institutions tend to lose legitimacy, threatening democratic stability and the rule of law."[1] Mr. Breuer made this comment during a speech to the third Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States Summit on Anti-Corruption. For Russia, the corruption Mr. Breuer talked about leads to further problems in the performance of its economy which prevents the progress of its society.

A report by Harvard's Nieman Reports in spring 2011 states that, "President Dmitry Medvedev's administration says that in just one year corrupt government contracts drained the Russian economy of a trillion rubles ($35 billion)."[2] With this staggering amount of economic loss, it is apparent that economic growth in Russia is hampered greatly by the effects of corruption. Further observation from Antonio Spilimbergo, the mission chief for the

[1] Breuer, Lanny A. "Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division Speaks at the 3rd Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States Summit on Anti-Corruption." *Justice News*. The United States Department of Justice. 16 March 2011. Web. 22 February 2013.

[2] "Russia: Corruption Isn't Only a Threat to the System - It Is the System." *Nieman Reports*. The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard. (Spring 2011). Web. 22 February 2013.

International Monetary Fund in Russia, stated that "in order to diversify the economy and build growth potential in other sectors, the country has to attract both domestic and international investment. But this cannot happen if there is a problem with corruption and transparency."[3] When international businesses are unable to trust the Russian government and business owners they are less likely to take their business to Russia. Russia will need to overcome corruption in order to help grow investment and its economy.

Russians need to understand how corruption affects them, and they need to understand the magnitude of this problem. There is a general perception that corruption is acceptable throughout Russia. It is likely that corruption will persist because Russian's are not fully aware of the consequences resulting from this problem. An informed populace is more likely to deal with their problems and not contribute to furthering the problem.

Several academics, Man (2009)[4] & Orttung (2006),[5] recommend that Russia needs to involve their society in this fight. They suggest it can be done by providing oversight through non-governmental organizations, the media, and its citizens.

The following section will go into depth on what the literature has discussed with regards to involving society in the fight against corruption. There, I will also discuss further the importance of understanding society's role in overcoming corruption in Russia.

[3] International Monetary Fund. *Russia Needs Deep Reforms to Maximize its Growth Potential*. IMF Survey (August 3, 2012). Web. 4 March 2013.

[4] Man, Michelle. "Political Corruption in Russia: An Evaluation of Russia's Anti-Corruption Strategies, 1991-2009." *POLIS Journal.* Vol. 2 (Winter 2009).

[5] Orttung, Robert. "Causes and Consequences of Corruption in Putin's Russia." *PONARS Policy Memo No. 430*.

Literature Review

The global literature on corruption is increasing because of organizations such as Transparency International and the World Bank. They are improving understanding about the detrimental effects of corruption, but more needs to be done in Russia. Fortunately, there are some academics like Belousova, et al (2011),[6] Mishler & Rose (2010),[7] and others who seek to better understand corruption in Russia. A close look at their writings will provide the necessary context to understand corruption and the perceptions of Russian society with regards to Presidents Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev.

Some of the major findings that come from the literature are: (1) Russia's populace is somewhat accepting of corruption (Kofanova & Petukhov 2006[8]); (2) civil society in Russia needs to be involved in the fight against corruption (Man 2009); (3) Putin has failed to effectively fight corruption (Demidov 2005[9] and Holmes 2008[10]); (4) rhetoric affects the fight against corruption (Orttung 2006), and it is important to understand the different ways to measure corruption (Mishler & Rose 2010).

Kofanova & Petukhov (2006) argue that administrative measures are not the only measures needed to "conquer corruption."[11] Another measure and one that is important to the research done in this study is Man's (2009) recommendation about the need to involve civil

[6] Belousova, Veronika, et al. "Causes of Corruption in Russia: A Disaggregated Analysis." *The Bank of Finland (BOFIT) Institute for Economies in Transition*. BOFIT Discussion Papers 31 (2011).
[7] Mishler, William & Rose, Richard. "Experience Versus Perception of Corruption: Russia as a Test Case." *Global Crime.* Vol. 11, No. 2 (May 2010).
[8] Kofanova, E.N. & Petukhov. "Public Opinion of Corruption in Russia." *Russian Social Science Review*. Vol. 47, No. 6 (November-December 2006).
[9] Demidov, Boris. *Corruption in Russia, 2000–2003: The Role of the Federal Okrugs and Presidential Envoys* (2005).
[10] Holmes, Leslie. "Corruption and Organised Crime in Putin's Russia." *Europe-Asia Studies*. Vol. 60, No. 6 (August 2008).
[11] Kofanova, E.N. & Petukhov. "Public Opinion of Corruption in Russia," 23.

society. Kofanova and Petukhov (2006) found that the populace of Russia is generally tolerant towards corruption. This suggests that some effort is needed in order to motivate Russia's society to overcome corruption.

Through a survey conducted by the Russian Center for Public Research, Kofanova & Petukhov (2006) found that Russians who were asked about fourteen issues affecting their economy saw corruption as the most significant issue preventing their nation from achieving prosperity. Even with this perception, they found that the respondents had more anxiety over other problems less problematic to the economy such as the spread of alcoholism and narcotics abuse.[12] While these issues are important to address, corruption is one of the greatest problems that Russian political elites face.

As mentioned previously, Michelle Man (2009) found that Russia needs to involve its citizens better in the fight against corruption. Overall, she recommends that Russia should do the following five things: "increase transparency and accountability in all levels of government; improve legislative sanctions against corrupt behaviour; establish incentives for good behaviour; facilitate a credible privatisation process; and strengthen civil society."[13] Her recommendations followed her discovery of President Yeltsin's failure to effectively combat corruption. In her eyes, the source of his failures was that he focused on prosecuting individuals while failing to open a dialogue with society.

Yeltsin was not the only president that faltered in this regard. Man (2009) also noted that Putin failed to engage society "in shaping anti-corruption policies."[14] Much of his policies

[12] Kofanova & Petukhov, *Public Opinion of Corruption in Russia,* 24-25.
[13] Michelle Man, *Political Corruption in Russia,* 1.
[14] Michelle Man, *Political Corruption in Russia*, 25 & 30.

dealt with expanding government to handle the issues of corruption – an action that ended up expanding corruption through increasing the amount of bureaucrats by which corruption could occur. Such moves did not involve Russian society in forming and enforcing anti-corruption policies which Man suggests would have been successful.

Holmes (2008) expounds on the importance of Russian presidents committing themselves to the fight. He argues "that political will is a necessary but not sufficient condition for reducing corruption."[15] Holmes (2008) also understands that it is important for the president to gain support from society. That is why he concludes his research with a warning about the danger of Russian presidents promising to fight corruption and not being able to fulfill their promise. In providing this warning, he is suggesting that Medvedev needed to follow through with his promises to battle corruption because Putin was unsuccessful with similar promises.[16]

Several organizations measuring corruption in Russia such as Transparency International's Corruption Perception Indexes[17] and Freedom House's (FH's) *Nations in Transit*[18] produced data that suggested corruption grew worse during the second half of Putin's time as president from 2000-2008 even though he promised that he would fight corruption during his presidency. This suggests that Putin did not fulfill his promises and that his efforts did not work. Either way, that is what Holmes is conveying – Russian presidents need to fulfill the promises they make to society.

[15] Holmes, Leslie. *Corruption and Organised Crime in Putin's Russia*, 1028.
[16] Holmes, *Corruption and Organized Crime in Putin's Russia,* 1029.
[17] Holmes. *Corruption and Organized Crime in Putin's Russia,* 1016-1017.
[18] Freedom House. *Russia.* Nations in Transit 2006.

Boris Demidov (2005) provided a different insight into Russian corruption and how it relates to Putin. Demidov (2005) looked at the role of Putin's presidential envoys to Russia's Okrugs (territorial divisions in Russia)[19] and how these envoys were unable to effect a change in Russia's corruption problem. Although the objectives of the envoys were different than fighting corruption, Demidov (2005) suggests that this was one of the objectives that Putin intended.

Demidov (2005) found the envoys' efforts to exercise reforms were minimal largely because the envoys were tasked with other concerns from the central government. He also found the envoys were too weak to effectively institute change which lessened the chances for the federal government to introduce consistent anti-corruption reforms.

Demidov (2005) ultimately suggests that the weakness of the envoys kept the central government from initiating consistent anti-corruption efforts which was possible if the envoys were more powerful. The fact that they were so weak and that Putin did not include anti-corruption efforts as the *main* objectives provides evidence for his failure to fulfill his promise to fight corruption.

More importantly, Demidov (2005) believes that corruption grew "in direct correlation to the creation of a new level of government."[20] Not only were the envoys ineffective in producing changes, they enlarged the bureaucracy. Putin enhanced the chances for corruption through the expansion of the central government. The envoys failed and Putin's anti-corruption battle remained unsuccessful. This particular issue is significant because it supports other research (Orttung 2006) that suggests Putin's efforts to change corruption, by expanding the central government, actually increased the occurrence of corruption.

[19] "Okrug." *Oxford Dictionaries.* Oxford University Press.

[20] Demidov, Boris. *Corruption in Russia, 2000–2003*, 331.

Robert Orttung (2006) found that in connection with increasing the size of the central government, the Kremlin's tightened grip on the media and NGOs produced a negative effect on necessary oversight of the government. This created "extensive grounds for corruption."[21] Because Putin allowed the restriction of the media and NGOs, these organizations were limited in their ability to expose corrupt government actions. It is important to understand that these findings show an increase of corruption during Putin's time as president, and that he prevented media and NGO oversight of the government. Thus, Putin's promises appear to be little more than rhetoric unfulfilled.

Michelle Man (2009) provides similar historical insight that supports unfulfilled presidential promises when she describes anti-corruption measures by President Boris Yeltsin. Man (2009) explains that "it was widely recognized that [Yeltsin's] policies constituted political measures levelled at his opposition."[22] This statement was made in the context of Yeltsin's efforts to fight corruption. Thus, it is understood that Man (2009) implies that Yeltsin used the fight against corruption as a way to strike at his opponents. In relation to Putin's promises, the example taken from Man (2009) coincides with the idea that political elites will use the fight against corruption for political gain.

Although the idea of promoting an anti-corruption campaign for political gain was not the purpose of Man's (2009) paper, such findings provide an understanding of why it is important to recognize the difference between perceived corruption and actual incidents of corruption. Even when the president of Russia claims that he will fight corruption, it does not mean that he will fight it or fight it effectively. Therefore, it will be important for this study to

[21] Robert Orttung, *Causes and Consequences of Corruption in Putin's Russia*, 2.
[22] Man, *Political Corruption in Russia*, 24.

look at the perceptions of Russian citizens that correlate with presidential actions thereby learning which presidential actions are effective in motivating the populace and how such perceptions may help in the actual fight.

Mishler & Rose (2010) addressed these issues and found that incidents of bribery did not necessarily alter public perceptions of corruption. In other words, levels of corruption and perceived levels of corruption do not fully correlate. Mishler & Rose (2010) learned that incidents of paying bribes to public officials did not change the perceptions of Russian citizens when compared to citizens who did not experience paying bribes. Rather, other factors were more influential in respondents' perceptions of corruption. Some factors that have a more powerful influence on perception than incidents of paying a bribe include the media, friends, and neighbors.[23] This leads us to conclude that perceptions of corruption are not completely accurate because Russians are not affected by actual incidents of bribery as much as they are affected by the opinions of others.

Even so, Mishler & Rose (2010) fail to recognize that there are other ways in which incidents of corruption may occur. For example, it also occurs when a politician favors one contractor over another solely because of personal ties, or when a professional provides services to an individual who bribes the professional with something other than money. Therefore, their study is not all inclusive when considering incidents of corruption because they merely use incidents of paying bribes.

Overall, Mishler & Rose (2010) come closest to this study's topic because they look at the correlation between Russians' views of legitimacy of the political regime and their view on

[23] Mishler, William & Rose, Richard. *Experience Versus Perception of Corruption*, 156 & 158.

how corrupt the political system was. They found that Russians who experienced corruption by paying bribes themselves did not associate such experiences with their perception of the Russian regime. Thus, there may be some value in looking at the perceptions of Russians without determining whether or not they personally participated in a bribe. Even though Mishler and Rose look at the relation between the political elite and perceptions of society they do not look specifically at Russian presidents and how the efforts of Russian presidents affect the perceptions of Russian citizens.

As for other studies (Belousova, *et al* 2011, Demidov 2005, Kofanova & Petukhov 2006, and Orttung 2006) who have looked at perceptions as a way to gauge the level of corruption in Russia, it does not appear that they look at the correlation between the efforts of Russian presidents to fight corruption and the perceptions of Russian citizens on those efforts. Therefore, this study will take a look at this particular aspect of the corruption issue in Russia.

Hypothesis and Methods

Man (2009), Kofanova & Petukhov (2006), & Orttung (2006) argue that Russian presidents need to involve their society in the fight against corruption because of the powerful oversight and support society is capable of providing. This will be difficult for presidents to achieve because there is a high tolerance for corruption among Russia's society. Therefore, it is important that we understand the relationship between the government, specifically the President and the Russian people. If Russian presidents are able to inform their citizens about the dangers of corruption and motivate them to actively participate, there is a greater chance Russia will be able to improve its status, improve the rule of law, and grow its economy.

This study looks at the effects on the perceptions of Russian society when Presidents Putin and Medvedev instituted reforms to fight corruption. Specifically, it will strive to answer whether or not Putin and Medvedev's anti-corruption efforts improved perceptions of the Russian people about corruption. In short, did Putin and/or Medvedev cause the Russian people to perceive Russia as any less corrupt?

The dependent variable for this study is the perception of Russian citizens towards the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. The independent variables are the efforts of presidents Putin and Medvedev to fight corruption.

In order to evaluate the perceptions of Russian citizens this study uses survey data gathered by one of the most noted anti-corruption organizations in the world, Transparency International (TI). A considerable amount of data from TI comes from its Global Corruption Barometers (GCB). In this study, the data from the GCBs is compared with data on presidential efforts to fight corruption. The data comes from information gleaned from the President of Russia website and the Moscow Times.

The GCBs provide data from surveys conducted among Russian citizens. The surveys ask respondents questions that relate to how they perceive corruption in their country. This study will focus specifically on three questions. The first question asks respondents what they think will happen to the level of corruption in Russia over the next three years, the second asks what they think happened to corruption in the past three years, and the third asks respondents how effective the Russian government is in the fight against corruption.

From these three questions, Transparency International provides a percentage that represents the portion of respondents associated with each answer choice. The data are then

compared with information about anti-corruption efforts of Putin and Medvedev. Although the information from the President of Russia website and Moscow Times is not accessed in the Russian language, these sites are managed by the Russian government or by Russians and the information they provide in English is considered to be a reliable depiction of what appears in the Russian-language press.

These sources were used to gain information about Putin and Medvedev's anti-corruption efforts by performing an online search to pinpoint relevant articles mentioning efforts by the two presidents. Specifically, the words "Medvedev Corruption" were used to find articles making mention of Medvedev's efforts, and the words "Putin Corruption" to find articles mentioning Putin's efforts.

The results of these searches were then recorded, and the title and summary of the articles reviewed to find which articles provided an example of anti-corruption efforts by the presidents. With this information, four charts were created.[24] There are two types of charts: the first type reveals the amount of articles that mention anti-corruption efforts from each president, and the second type reveals how many times different categories of anti-corruption efforts appear from the following list:

1) Action or voiced action based on firing, replacing, or enacting legislation to remove power from an individual(s) for reasons to fight corruption,
2) Action or voiced action based on cutting or ordering to cut the number of government employees to prevent corruption,
3) Action or voiced action based on requiring government employees to declare income &/or limit income,
4) Action or voiced action based on ordering or enacting *reform* to diminish corruption,
5) Action or voiced action based on anti-corruption legislation or undefined anti-corruption decree,

[24] The charts mentioned here are found in the Appendix at the end of this study.

6) Action or voiced action based on receiving, revealing, redefining plan(s) to fight corruption,
7) Action or voiced action based on investigating or ordering an investigation to find out corruption or punish those guilty of corruption,
8) Action or voiced action based on a pledged commitment or a mention of the importance to fight corruption,
9) Action or voiced action based on urging or ordering others in the fight against corruption,
10) Action or voiced action based on reprimanding others in the fight against corruption,
11) Action or voiced action based on raising government employee's income,
12) Action or voiced action based on the creation or involvement of a committee, council, or the like to fight corruption,
13) Action or voiced action based on delegating anti-corruption efforts to others,
14) Action or voiced action based on high level anti-corruption conversation with others,
15) Action or voiced action based on implementing international anti-corruption laws,
16) Action or voiced action based on establishing a reserve of qualified personnel for the president, and
17) Action or voiced action based on removing certain powers from an individual(s) based on corruption.

By charting the amount of articles that mention anti-corruption efforts for each president it is possible to determine the amount of effort exhibited by each president. By charting how many times different categories appear it is possible to see how different types of efforts to fight corruption may have affected perceptions.

If Russian presidents are able to affect perceptions, they could become a valuable asset in the fight against corruption, and they might help to change the perception that corruption is a common and unalterable part of Russian society. The next section will compare the results of the data from the GCBs and the presidential efforts in the media.

Results

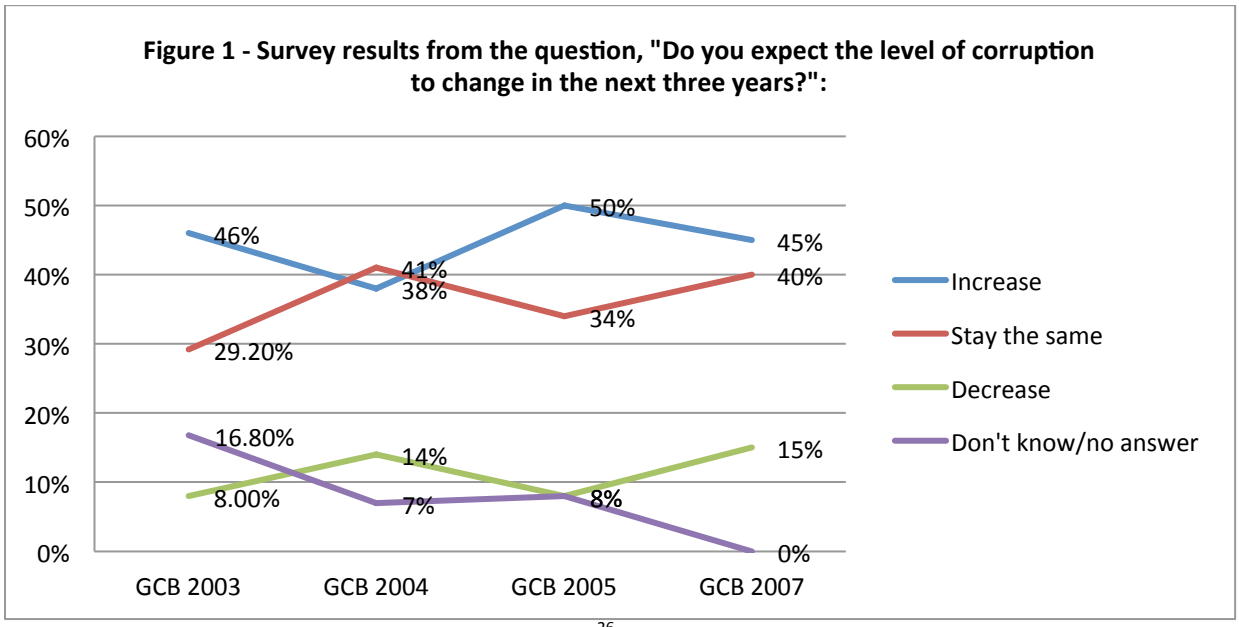
First, we examine the data on Russian expectations about corruption during President Putin's first two terms. Then, I compare these perceptions with his anti-corruption efforts. Second, I assess government effectiveness during Putin and Medvedev's presidencies.

Following that, I compare their anti-corruption efforts with such data. Third, I look at how general corruption changed throughout Russia under Medvedev, and how this compares to his anti-corruption efforts. Finally, I look at the articles from the President of Russia website along with the articles from the Moscow Times and compare them with perceptions of Russians.

Perceptions of Corruption under Putin

In this section I present the results for the first two questions in the surveys. Respondents from the surveys conducted in 2002, 2004, 2005, and 2007[25] were asked if they expected the level of corruption to change in the next three years. Of those surveyed in 2002, only 29.2% of respondents indicated that corruption would stay the same (see Figure 1). For that same survey 46% of Russians thought corruption would increase. In 2004, 41% thought corruption would stay the same, an almost 12% difference from 2002, but those who perceived corruption would increase dropped, equaling 38%. In 2005, those who said corruption would stay the same were 34%. Yet, there was a noticeable rise of 12% for those who viewed corruption as increasing equaling 50% total. In 2007, the amount of those who saw corruption staying the same rose to 40% while those who saw corruption as increasing was 45%. How Russians perceived corruption to increase or stay the same from one survey to the next fluctuated a lot, telling us there might be something affecting this fluctuation.

[25] These were the only years the question, "Do you expect the level of corruption to change in the next three years," was incorporated into the surveys conducted for Transparency International's Global Corruption Barometers.



The survey from the 2003 GCB was conducted in 2002.[26]

From 2002 to at least 2005 Putin was not able to make a positive impact on how Russians viewed overall corruption, but Putin might have something to do with the fluctuation of percentages.

The second question asks, "In the past three years, how has the level of corruption in this country changed?"[27] During Putin's two terms this question was asked once in 2005. In reply to this question, 88% of respondents in 2005 said that corruption stayed the same or that it increased over the past three years. Thus, Russians perceived that corruption stayed the same or increased in the preceding three years by 4% more than those who believed corruption would stay the same or increase during the three years after the survey.[28] Both figures are high, and it suggests that only a small percentage of Russians viewed the past more negatively than

[26] Information and data for this chart comes from the following sources: GCB 2003: *Technical Information.* Transparency International. GCB 2003. *Appendix 5*. Transparency International; GCB 2004. *Annex IV: Table 17.* Transparency International; GCB 2005. *Annex I: Table 12.* Transparency International; GCB 2007. *Appendix 4: Table 4.3.* Transparency International.
[27] Global Corruption Barometer 2005. *Annex II; Questionnaire.* Transparency International.
[28] GCB 2005. *Annex I: Table 12.* Transparency International.

they did the future. Overall, most Russians were not positive about how the battle against corruption was playing out in Russia, and this question emphasizes how poorly corruption was viewed in 2005.

This data from both questions signifies the low expectations in the fight against corruption during the first part of Putin's second term, and Russians did not express much hope for change beyond this. Even so, there are some trends of shifting percentages that suggest the perceptions of a number of Russians changed. The following section discloses the potential ways that Russians were persuaded by Putin's anti-corruption efforts.

The Impact of Putin's Efforts on Perceptions of Corruption

There are two significant findings evident from comparing Putin's anti-corruption efforts with the perceptions of Russians from the 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2007 GCBs. First, there is a correlation between perceptions of corruption and anti-corruption efforts based on firing, replacing, and enacting legislation to fire individuals for reasons of corruption. Second, there is a correlation between the amount of anti-corruption efforts exhibited within a two month period prior to a survey and the perception of corruption.

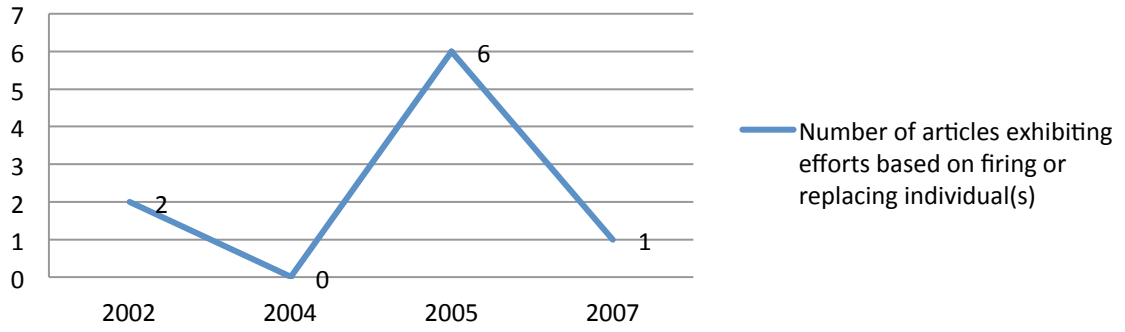
For these findings I compare information about Putin's anti-corruption efforts from the Moscow Times with the GCB survey results, but I drop the use of the President of Russia website because it did not produce enough information for Putin. Also, the survey for the 2007 GCB is difficult to interpret for two reasons. First, two out of the three years following the 2007 survey Putin was not the president, making it the only survey where a question goes beyond his presidency. During the time of this survey, it was not known who would fill the presidency after Putin. By this, we can assume that the data is more telling about Putin than it is about

Medvedev, but the overlap between Putin and Medvedev should make us cautious in using this data to interpret Putin's efforts on Russian perceptions.

The first finding starts in 2002, 2005, and 2007 when Russians perceived corruption would increase the most over a three year period. During these years, Putin frequently fired, replaced, or worked to enact legislation giving him power to fire certain individuals for reasons of corruption providing us with a correlation that such efforts affected perceptions of increased corruption.

The lowest percentage of Russians who perceived corruption would increase was recorded in 2004. This was the only year in which surveys were conducted that Putin did not exhibit efforts based on firing, replacing, or enacting legislation to fire individuals for reasons of corruption (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 - Number of articles exhibiting efforts based on firing or replacing individual(s) in the Moscow Times



Data created from articles retrieved from the Moscow Times' archive website.

In 2002 46% of Russians perceived that corruption would increase[29] which is the second highest total. In this same year there were four Moscow Times articles that mention Putin's efforts to fight corruption. Of those four, half of them dealt with efforts based on firing or

[29] GCB 2003. *Appendix 5*. Transparency International.

replacing individuals. In one article Putin said that corrupt officers need to be chased out of the force while the other mentioned that Putin had dismissed Yevgeny Adamov, Russian Minister of the Ministry of Atomic Energy,[30] because of corruption allegations.

In the 2005 survey there were ten articles exhibiting anti-corruption efforts. Five out of the ten articles dealt with Putin creating and finalizing a bill or bills allowing him to fire governors and nullify their selection through popular vote. Another article discussed a bill that conferred similar powers on Putin with regard to judges. This year also witnessed the most drastic rise in expected corruption with a 12% increase from the previous survey in 2004.

In 2007, one out of six anti-corruption articles mentioned an effort by Putin to fire or replace someone. This article mentioned the replacement of the prosecutor general of Russia. In this year, 45% perceived corruption would increase in the following three years[31] making this survey the third highest percentage of those who perceived corruption would increase. The correlation associated with this year is not as strong as others because there was only one article, but it does not take away from the possibility that a correlation exists, especially when it agrees with other years. Thus, the data suggest that the more Putin fires people for corruption, the more a number of the public seems to perceive that corruption will intensify in the years ahead.

Next, I look at the amount of articles that appear two months prior and leading up to each survey. The combined percentages of Russians who perceived corruption stayed the same along with those who perceived it increased are higher when there are fewer or no anti-corruption articles within the two months prior to a survey.

[30] "Yevgeny Adamov." *Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR)*. The World Bank – UNODC. Web. 28 October 2013.
[31] GCB 2007. *Appendix 4: Table 4.3.* Transparency International.

There was no correlation between efforts that appeared within a year before each survey and perceptions of Russians. Thus, I looked at the two month period prior to each survey. I realized Russians were more likely to remember the articles that appear within a shorter range to the surveys. Therefore, the survey results are likely affected by what respondents view within two months prior to a survey as opposed to a year.

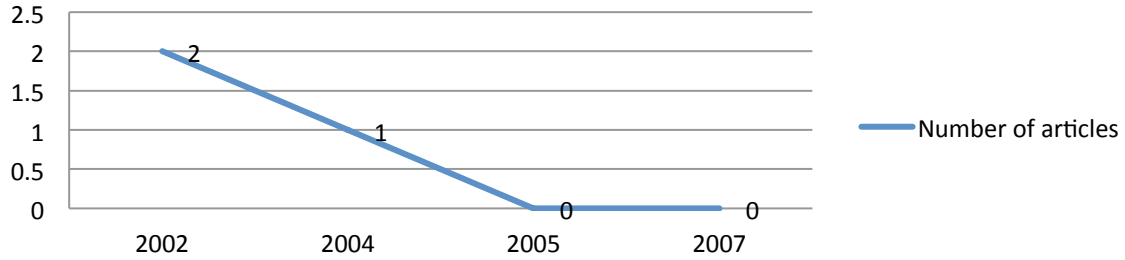
From the articles that fall within a two month period, only one mentioned an effort about getting rid of (firing) individuals for reasons of corruption. One might be inclined to say these articles did not affect survey results because they were not within two months prior to a survey. This might be true although this type of effort is very common in Russia making it likely that respondents remembered it with greater ease than any other types. Besides that, this type of effort was used more than any other, and it was the only type of effort that correlated with perceptions. It is likely that its wide use allowed respondents to not forget it when answering surveys.

When I looked at the results from the surveys I saw that anti-corruption efforts by Putin did not correlate with the fluctuation of how respondents viewed corruption would increase or stay the same, but when I combined how respondents viewed corruption would increase and stay the same there was a correlation. The correlation showed the amount of articles that appeared two months prior to each survey reacted to how respondents viewed corruption would increase and stay the same.

In 2002 there were two anti-corruption articles within the two months prior to the survey, in 2004 there was one anti-corruption article two months prior, and in 2005 and 2007 there were no articles within that period (see Figure 3). This correlates with the combined

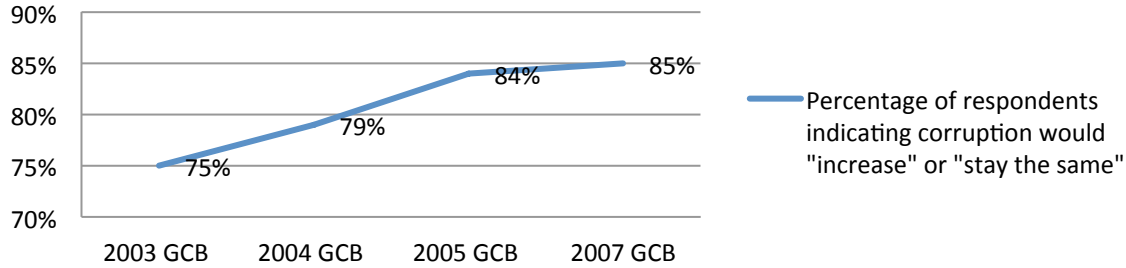
percentages of respondents who said corruption would increase and stay the same. In 2002 the combined percentages equaled 75.2%, in 2004 it was 79%, in 2005 it was 84%, and in 2007 the total was 85% (see Figure 3a). This means there was a gradual increase of those who believed corruption would increase and stay the same as opposed to those who viewed corruption decreased. This follows the gradual decrease of articles that appear two months prior to a survey.

Figure 3 - Amount of anti-corruption articles in the Moscow Times that appear two months prior to each survey



Data created from articles retrieved from the Moscow Times' archive website.

Figure 3a - Percentage of respondents indicating corruption would increase or stay the same in the three years following each survey when asked, "Do you expect the level of corruption to change in the next three years?"



The survey from the 2003 GCB was conducted in 2002.[32]

[32] Information and data for this chart comes from the following sources: GCB 2003: *Technical Information.* Transparency International; GCB 2003. *Appendix 5*. Transparency International; GCB 2004. *Annex IV: Table 17.* Transparency International; GCB 2005. *Annex I: Table 12.* Transparency International; GCB 2007. *Appendix 4: Table 4.3.* Transparency International.

The reason I chose to combine the results for answer choices "increase" and "stay the same" is to see how perceived corruption changed *overall* from one survey to the next. I believe that these two categories, when combined, tell us how corrupt Russians believe their country is. This is because whether corruption is increasing or staying the same, it is not decreasing. Thereby, the corruption situation did not improve for these individuals.

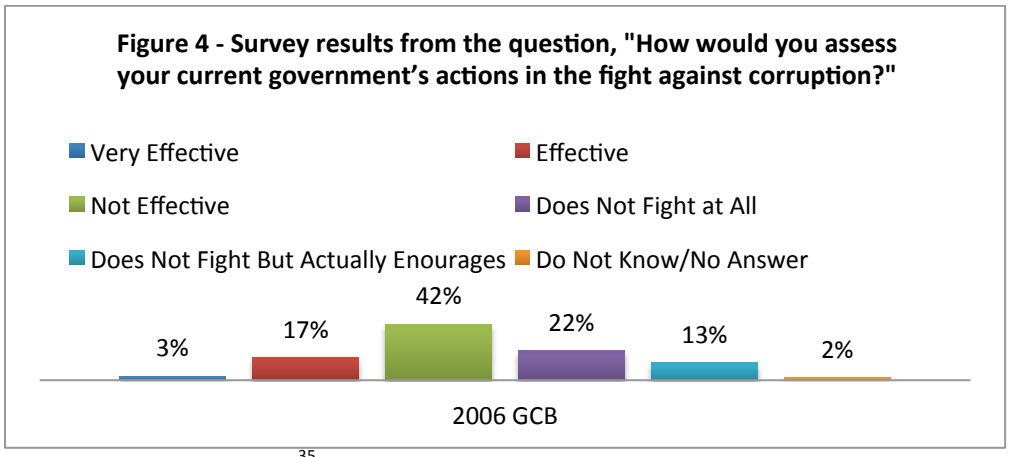
From this data it appears that: 1) when Putin exhibited efforts to fire, replace, and enact legislation to replace governors as an anti-corruption effort there is a correlation that the perceptions of increased corruption grew slightly except in cases that involved the police, and 2) a small group of respondents were influenced by anti-corruption efforts that appeared within a two month period prior to a survey in that they were less likely to indicate corruption was staying the same or increasing.

Assessing Government Effectiveness under Putin and Medvedev

Another question from the GCB surveys asks, "How would you assess your current government's actions in the fight against corruption?"[33] This question is significant because it can be linked more closely to the political regime in power at the time the question was asked. The 2006 survey is the first time this question appears which is at the end of Putin's presidency. From there, it is asked in every survey up to the present time. The years the surveys are conducted after 2006 are 2007, 2008, 2010, and one in 2013. Unfortunately, Transparency International did not publish the exact week or month the surveys were conducted in 2013 making it so we cannot make comparisons with it.

[33] Global Corruption Barometer 2006. *Annex I: Table 5: How respondents assess their government's fight against corruption, all countries.* Transparency International.

In the survey conducted for the 2006 GCB, 77% (see Figure 4) of respondents indicated that the government was either "not effective", "does not fight at all", or "does not fight but actually encourages" corruption.[34] Thus, this data is not much different from what we saw with perceptions about general corruption in previous years. Many are still skeptical about the corruption situation.

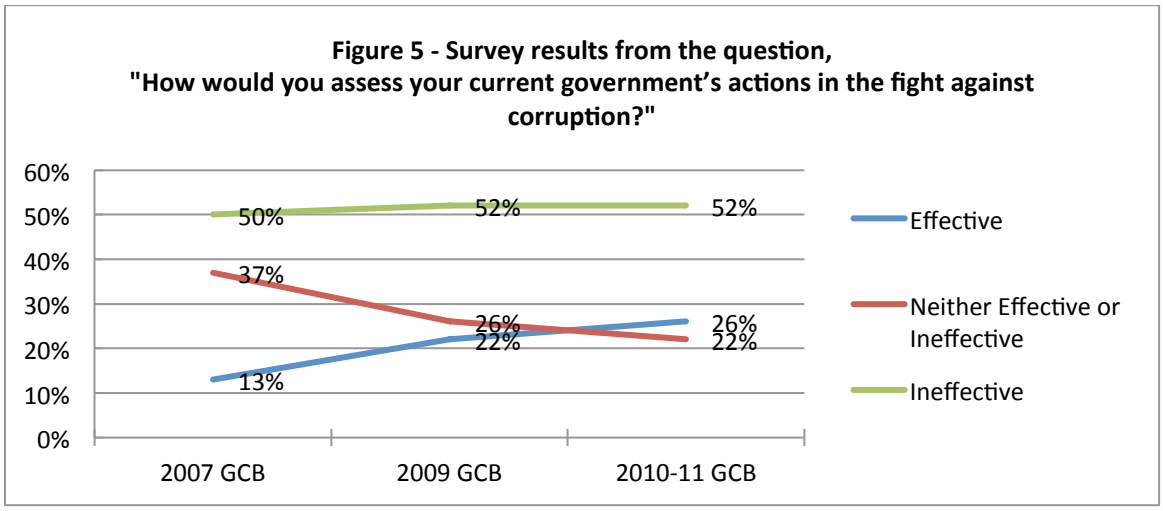


Transparency International[35]

In 2007 the answer choices changed from how they were in the previous survey, and instead of offering respondents the choices: "very effective", "effective", "not effective", "does not fight at all", "does not fight but actually encourages", and "don't know/no answer", the respondents were offered three options: "effective", "neither effective or ineffective", and "ineffective". These three answer choices remain the same from 2007 to 2013.

When looking at the results in 2007 we learn that the percentage of those who viewed the government as effective was 13% (see Figure 5). This was the last year of Putin's second term in office, and it presents us with a 7% decrease in government effectiveness from 2006.

[34] GCB 2006. *Annex I: Table 5.* Transparency International.
[35] GCB 2006. *Annex I: Table 5.* Transparency International.



The survey for the 2009 GCB was conducted in November of 2008 and the survey for the 2010-11 GCB was conducted in June and July of 2010.[36]

Then, the 2009 GCB which gathered its information from a survey conducted in November of 2008 informs us that the percentage of those who viewed the government's efforts as effective rose to 22%. This was approximately halfway through Medvedev's first year as president, and government effectiveness totaled a 9% increase. Then, in the 2010 survey it rose by 4% to 26%.

In 2007, 50% of respondents viewed the government's actions as ineffective, 52% in 2008, and 52% in 2010. About half of the respondents continued to perceive anti-corruption actions unfavorably throughout these years.

Overall, there was a growing percentage of Russians who viewed the government's actions as effective while there was a much larger percentage that maintained a negative view

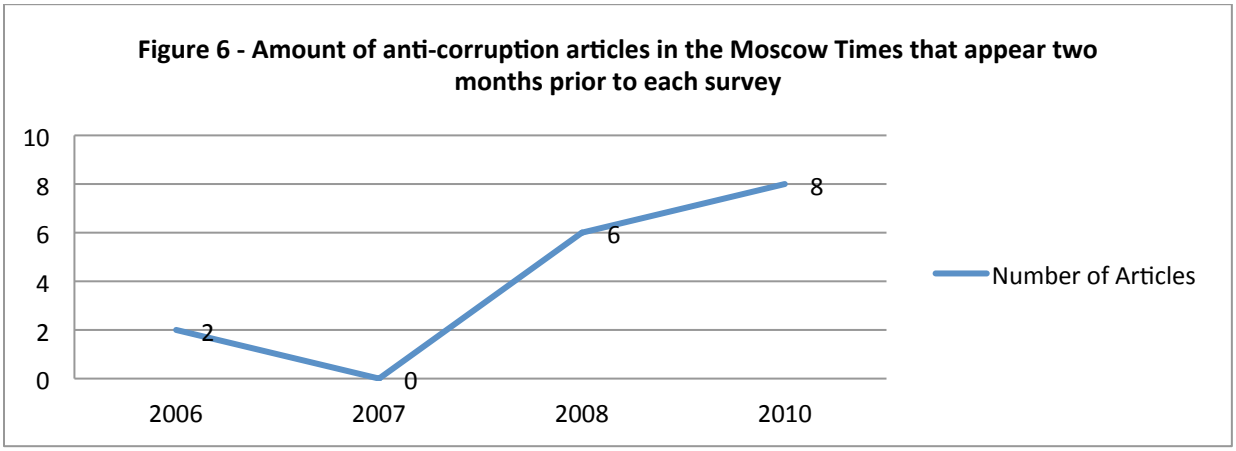
[36] Information and data for this chart comes from the following sources: Global Corruption Barometer 2009. *Appendix A: Table I: Survey data.* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2010-11. *Appendix: A2: 2010 and 2011 fieldwork details, by country.* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2007. *Appendix 4: Table 4.4: Respondents' evaluation of their government's efforts to fight corruption.* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2009. *Appendix D: Table 4: How would you assess your current government's actions in the fight against corruption?* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2010-11. *Section 3: Tab 3a:* % of people that think the government is effective in the fight against corruption. Transparency International.

towards the government's actions against corruption. This brings us to ask whether Putin's anti-corruption efforts or the lack thereof, correlated with a decline in the percentages of those who viewed the government's actions as effective. Also, did Medvedev's efforts correlate with the increased perception that the government *improved* its fight against corruption?

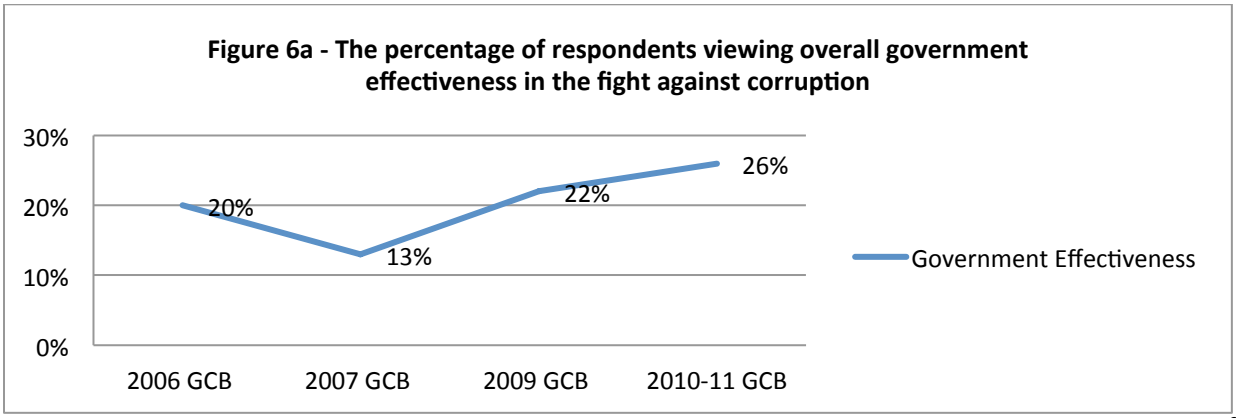
Comparing Anti-Corruption Efforts to Perceptions of Government Effectiveness

During Putin's presidency, from 2006 to 2007, there was a 7% decrease in the percentage of respondents who indicated the government was effective in its anti-corruption efforts. From 2007 to 2010, under Medvedev, perceptions of government effectiveness improved. What happened? A similar trend from perceptions of general corruption also applied to perceptions of government effectiveness. Essentially, the percentage of respondents who viewed the government as effective increased when the number of anti-corruption articles increased within the two month period prior to each survey. Yet, I found no correlation between efforts to fire and replace individuals for reasons of corruption with regards this question.

Under Putin's presidency, within the two months prior to the 2006 survey there were two anti-corruption articles (see Figure 6), and 20% of respondents thought the government was effective in the fight against corruption (see Figure 6a). The 2007 survey indicated there were no anti-corruption articles that ran in the Moscow Times, and 13% of respondents thought the government was effective.



Data created from articles retrieved from the Moscow Times' archive website.



The survey for the 2009 GCB was conducted in 2008, and the survey for the 2010-11 GCB was conducted in 2010.[37]

Under Medvedev, within the two month period prior to the 2008 survey, the Moscow Times ran six articles covering his anti-corruption efforts. This is four more than any two month period during Putin's presidency. This could be one of the reasons we saw a 9% increase, from 2007 to 2008.

Then, during the two months prior to the survey in 2010 there were eight anti-corruption articles and a 4% increase of respondents who perceived the government as effective. A higher increase than 4% might be expected. After all, the year Putin had two

[37] Information and data for this chart comes from the following sources: GCB 2009. *Appendix A: Table I.* Transparency International; GCB 2010-11. *Appendix: A2.* Transparency International; GCB 2006. *Annex I: Table 5.* Transparency International; GCB 2007. *Appendix 4: Table 4.4.* Transparency International; GCB 2009. *Appendix D: Table 4.* Transparency International; GCB 2010-11. *Section 3: Tab 3a.* Transparency International.

articles, the percentage of respondents who viewed the government as effective was as high as 20% and for 2010 it was only 26% with eight articles. This imbalance might exist simply because the answer choices were different in 2006, and the percentage could have been lower.

I found no correlation between efforts to fire and replace individuals and Medvedev's efforts. This question is covered in two sections from this one.

With the increase of anti-corruption efforts within a two month period prior to a survey government effectiveness also increased. This finding is similar to what we found when looking at corruption in general under Putin. Together, these findings convey that the presidents may have influenced a small group of Russians to view the government as effective in the fight against corruption, and to view corruption in general as improving.

Perceptions of Corruption under Medvedev

In the summer of 2010, about two years into Medvedev's presidency, Russians were asked, "In the past three years, how has the level of corruption changed?"[38] The survey conducted for the 2013 GCB asked the same question with one variation. Instead of asking about the past three years it asked about the past two years.[39] These two questions tell a partial story about general perceptions of corruption during the first half and the very end of Medvedev's presidency.

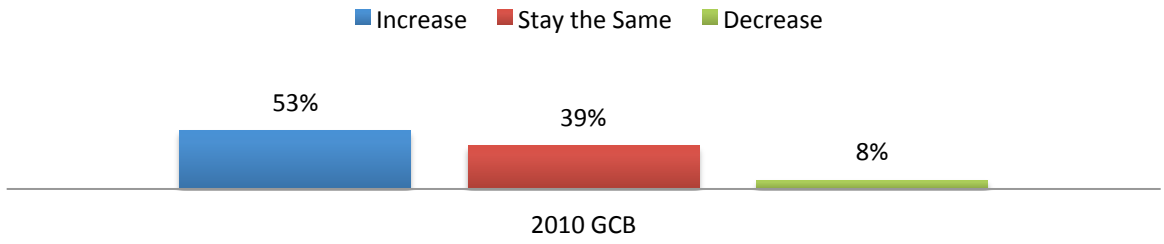
The 2013 Global Corruption Barometer from Transparency International does not disclose the exact dates the survey was conducted in Russia; rather, it gives us a range from

[38] Global Corruption Barometer 2010-11. *Question 1: "In the past 3 years, how has the level of corruption in this country changed?* Transparency International. Web. 7 November, 2013.
[39] Global Corruption Barometer 2013. *Appendix B: Questionnaire.* Transparency International.

September 2012 to March 2013[40]. Because of this, we do not know precisely when the survey was conducted and we do not know the exact time frame for the two years before it. This makes it difficult to compare previous trends with data from this survey. All we can do is get a general idea of where perceptions of corruption rest around the end of Medvedev's presidency.

Of those who responded to the 2010 survey, 92% perceived that corruption either stayed the same or increased during the prior three years (see Figure 7). Of all the surveys, this is the highest percentage for these two categories ("stay the same" & "increase") combined. A perception of corruption throughout Russia was at its highest for these three years leading up to the 2010 survey. This information also touches on the Putin years. One of the three years prior to 2010 was during Putin's second term. Thus, the effects of Putin's effort or the lack thereof to battle corruption might have affected this data as well.

Figure 7 - Survey results from the question,
"In the past three years, how has the level of corruption changed in this country?"

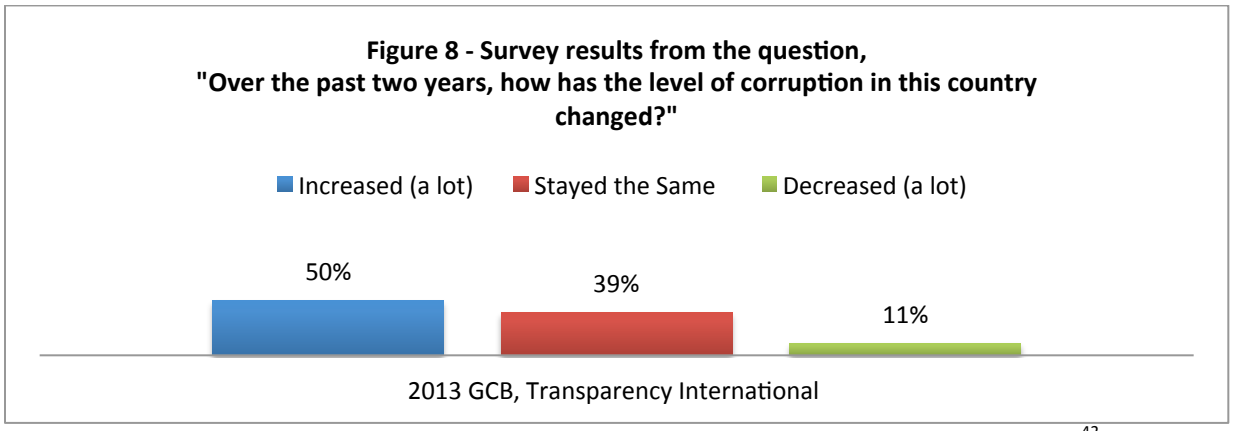


The survey for the 2010-11 GCB was conducted from June 17 to July 22 of 2010.[41]

In 2013, as Russians looked back on two years instead of three, their perception of corruption was essentially the same (Figure 8). In 2010, 53% of Russians believed that corruption had increased versus 50% in 2013. 8% believing corruption had decreased versus

[40] Global Corruption Barometer 2013. *Appendix A: Global Corruption Barometer survey methodology.* Transparency International.
[41] Information and data for this chart come from: GCB 2010-11. *Appendix: A2.* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2013. *Section 1: Tab 1a.* August 2012. Microsoft Excel File.

11% in 2013, a very modest change (see Figure 8). From the beginning of Medvedev's presidency to the end, perceptions of corruption appear little different.



The survey for the 2013 GCB was conducted some time between September 2012 and March 2013.[42]

The Impact of Medvedev's Efforts on Perceptions of Corruption

The government effectiveness variable tells a somewhat different story. Those who perceived corruption to stay the same and increase was as high as 92% when respondents were asked about past corruption during the first half of Medvedev's presidency.[43] Yet, approximately one quarter of respondents said the government was effective at fighting corruption. It appears that Medvedev's anti-corruption efforts did not influence perceptions of general corruption. Rather, his efforts only influenced a portion of respondents' perceptions about government effectiveness. Why is this so?

Perhaps certain respondents are affected by anti-corruption efforts only when considering government effectiveness and general corruption in the present and the future and not the past. Or perhaps for some respondents presidential anti-corruption efforts do not influence perceptions of corruption but do influence perceptions of government effectiveness.

[42] Information and data for this chart come from: GCB 2013. *Appendix A.* Transparency International; Global Corruption Barometer 2013. *GCB2013 Data.* July 2013. Microsoft Excel File.
[43] GCB 2013. *Section 1: Tab 1a.*Microsoft Excel File.

Under Putin, respondents were asked how corruption would change over a future three year period. A few responded in a way that suggested his efforts influenced them to respond positively, meaning they indicated corruption would improve. The question in the surveys about government effectiveness asked about corruption in the present. Again, a number of respondents appeared to be influenced positively by presidential anti-corruption efforts. The questions about corruption changing in the past three or two years did not reveal a correlation between anti-corruption efforts and perceptions. Perhaps the small number of respondents influenced by anti-corruption efforts did not notice a change when looking behind them, but were able to develop positive feelings and expectations about the present and the future. However, the overall correlation between anti-corruption efforts and expectations about future changes in corruption levels remains weak and may not be significant.

The second possibility says that presidential efforts influenced perceptions of government effectiveness but not perceptions of corruption. Respondents might have believed anti-corruption efforts by the president and the government was sufficient but society's ability to receive such efforts was not.

Observations from the President of Russia Website

From the President of Russia website, I found more articles (19) about the anti-corruption efforts of Medvedev over a two-year span than I found articles (6) about the anti-corruption efforts of Putin over a six year span. Similarly, from the Moscow Times, I found fifty-seven articles dealing with Medvedev's anti-corruption efforts over a two year span and only thirty-six about Putin's efforts over a five year span. Even so, Russians remained mostly skeptical about actually reducing corruption throughout both presidencies. The more

prominent efforts of Medvedev to remedy corruption did not noticeably alter public perceptions of corruption.

In the years Russians were asked about corruption in general, three quarters and above answered that it would stay the same or increase. It did not matter whether they were looking backward or forward. In fact, the combined percentages of those indicating corruption stayed the same or increased were highest in 2010 (92%) [44] and in 2013 (89%).[45] These GCBs were influenced by both presidents, but again, Medvedev's more salient efforts did nothing to improve the general perceptions of Russians towards corruption and only slightly towards perceptions of government effectiveness.

Conclusion

Originally, I anticipated that anti-corruption efforts made by Medvedev and possibly Putin would induce the Russian public to see corruption as declining. Demidov (2005) and Holmes (2008 had warned that Putin's anti-corruption efforts had failed, so my expectations about the influence of Putin's anti-corruption efforts on public perceptions were low. I expected Medvedev to demonstrate a greater impact on perceptions simply because a more expansive anti-corruption effort was on display in the media. However, the data were more consistent with a persistent public appraisal of the futility of any anti-corruption efforts under any president. Holmes (2008) notes that, in the public mind, Russian presidents have failed to fulfill their promises. Consistent with their cynicism, Russians have generally remained accepting of corruption (Kofanova & Petukhov 2006).

[44] GCB 2010-11. *Section1I: Tab 1a.* Transparency International.
[45] TI: GCB 2013. *GCB2013 Data.* July 2013.

Man (2009) believes that Russian regimes need to involve society more in the fight against corruption. One might wish that Putin and Medvedev had found a source capable of encouraging the involvement of the Russian people, but the results tell a different story.

Ultimately, a majority of Russians remain skeptical towards corruption regardless of anti-corruption efforts from Putin and Medvedev. Under Putin, we learned that one of his anti-corruption campaigns actually increased perceptions of corruption. The campaign involved firing, replacing, and enacting legislation to fire individuals for reasons of corruption. Man (2009) notes that efforts to fire individuals have never been looked upon positively by Russians. Similar actions by government leaders during Soviet times and throughout Yeltsin's presidency were carried out to diminish political competition. Purges have left a negative impression in the Russian public mind and have contributed to a public disdain for government. A different type of anti-corruption reform might be needed to influence public perceptions in a positive manner. Again, public involvement might be the key to that conception.

Two modest, but positive results emerged from the data: 1) a small number of Russians indicated the government was effective in fighting corruption and this correlates with presidential efforts, and 2) there is a possibility that presidential efforts influenced a small number of Russians to think general levels of corruption were expected to decline in the future.

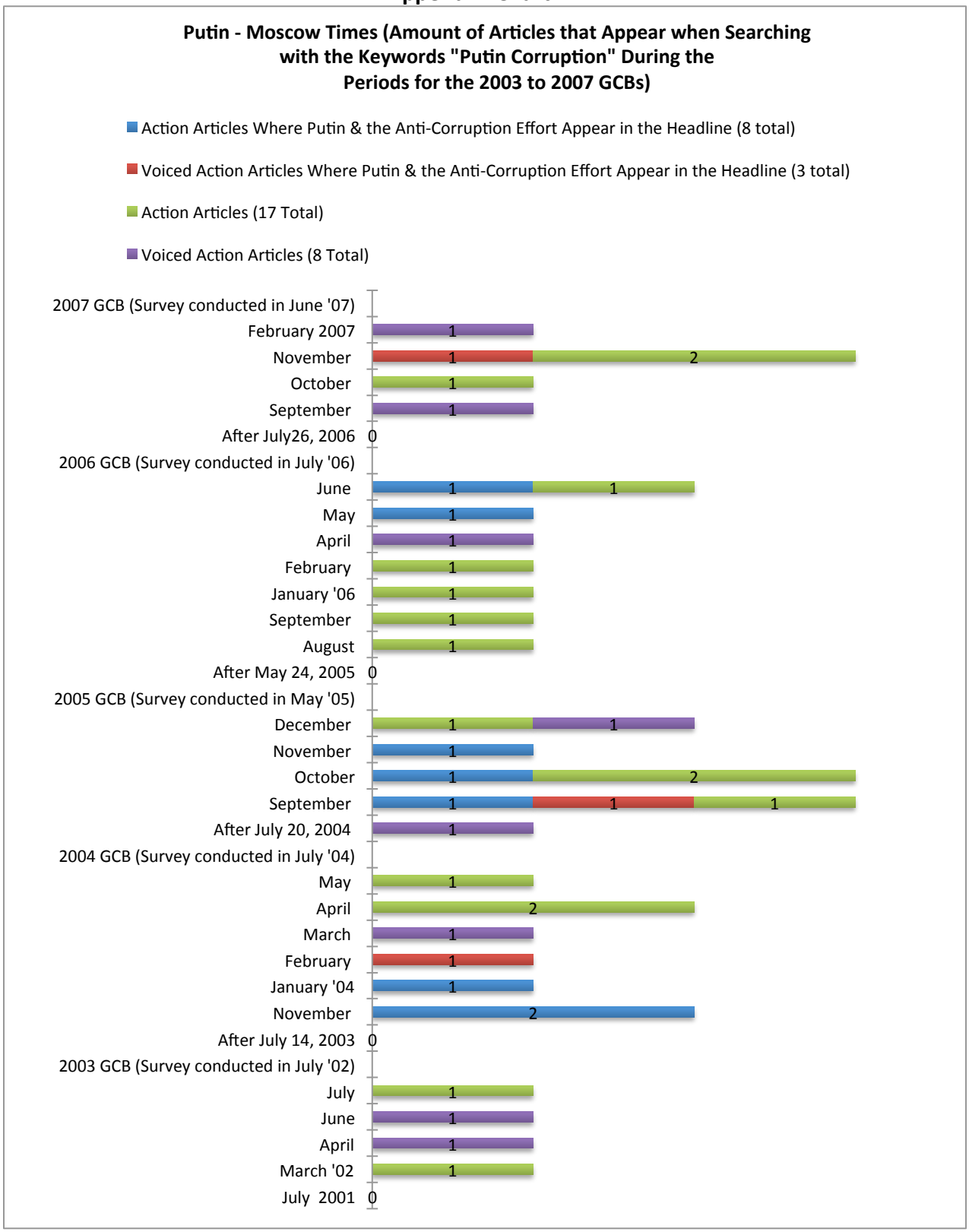
While there is skepticism towards corruption that seems to continue from Soviet times, small percentages of Russians appear receptive to anti-corruption efforts made by Putin and Medvedev. Of course, we do not know how many Russians paid attention to anti-corruption efforts in the press. If more Russians were informed about anti-corruption efforts then more might be influenced to see reforms in a positive light.

Robert Orttung (2006) explains how Putin tightened control of the media during his presidency and argues this was one of the causes of Putin's failure in the fight against corruption. The public may have been unaffected by messages in the press about anti-corruption efforts because people believed the press was untrue to what was actually happening. Other methods of informing the populace might be more successful.

Even so, we are not sure this is the case. We do not know if Medvedev controlled the media to the extent that Putin did or whether the public perceived that Medvedev had loosened controls. The data suggest that Medvedev influenced perceptions to a greater degree than did Putin from this study. Greater faith in the credibility of the press under Medvedev might have given press reports greater weight. Maybe presidents who exhibit greater anti-corruption efforts while maintaining openness through the media are more likely to improve Russian's perceptions of corruption.

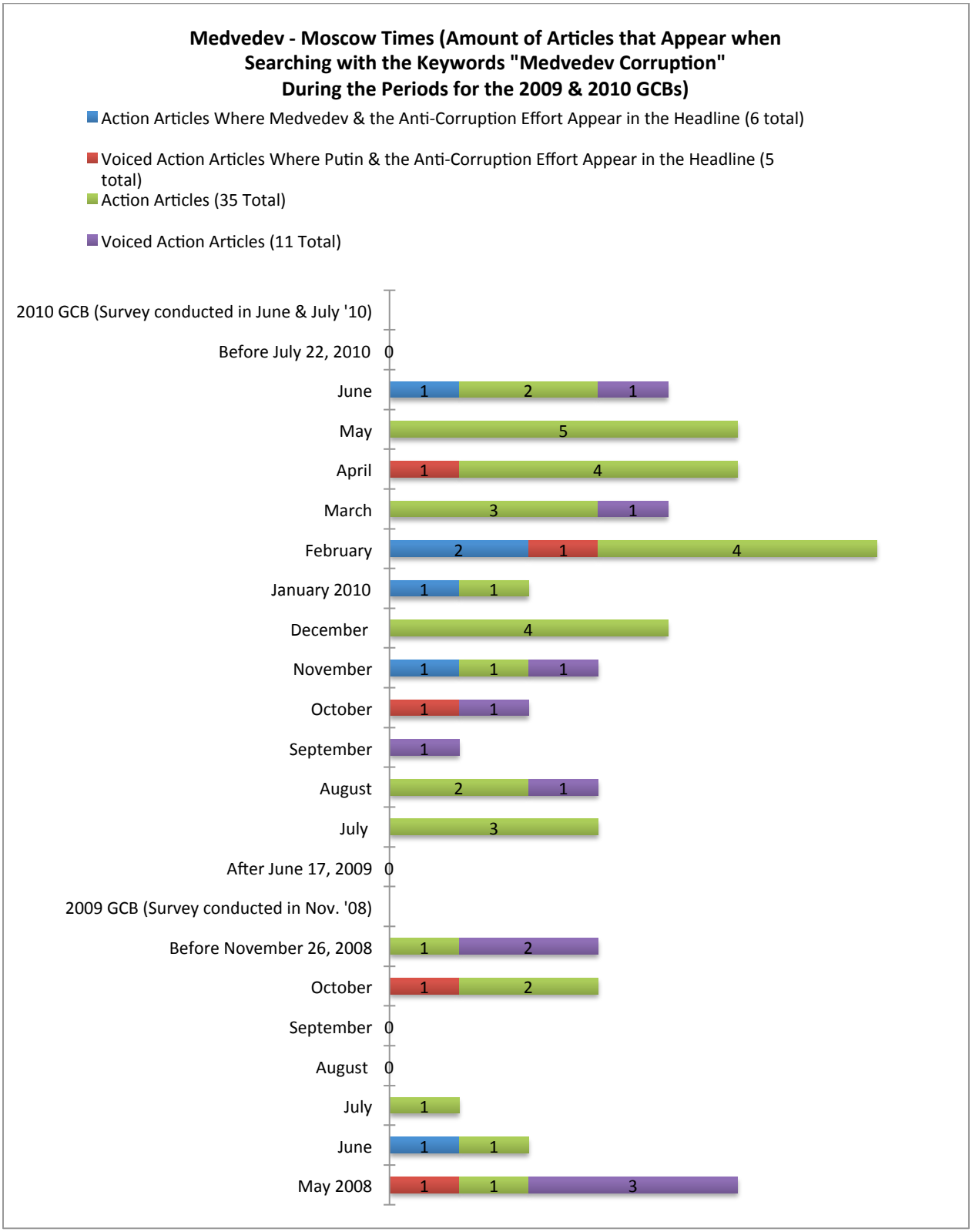
Our understanding could be improved with research on the extent to which the populace pays attention to the press, and whether they believe in the truthfulness of press reports. For now, Russians remain skeptical in their views about the prospects for reducing corruption, and it will likely take a great deal of effort from government and society to change this point of view.

Appendix: Chart 1



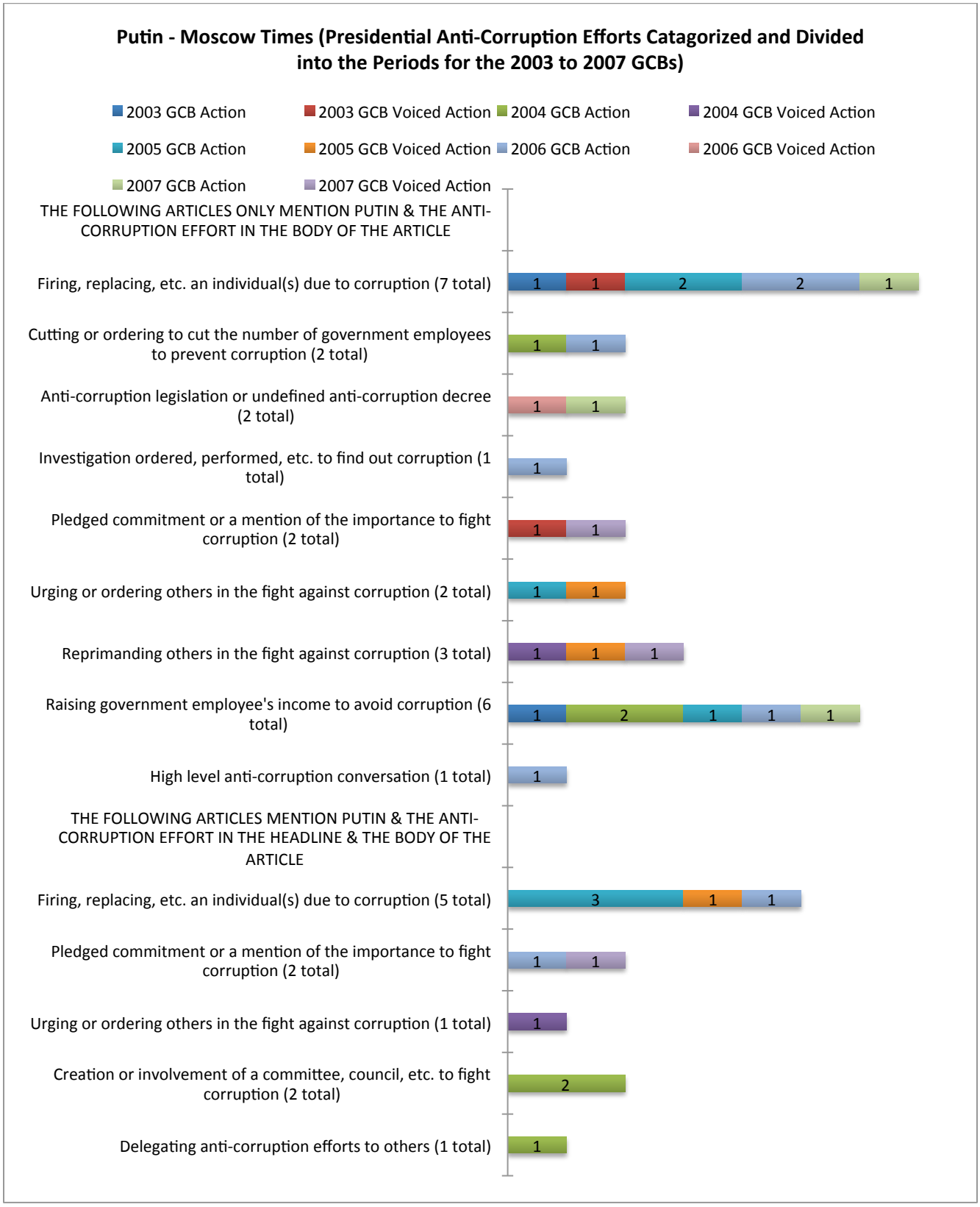
Each article mentions an action or a voiced action (an action that is only verbal or the mention of an action to be done in the future) by President Putin whether or not that action took place at the time of the article.

Chart 2



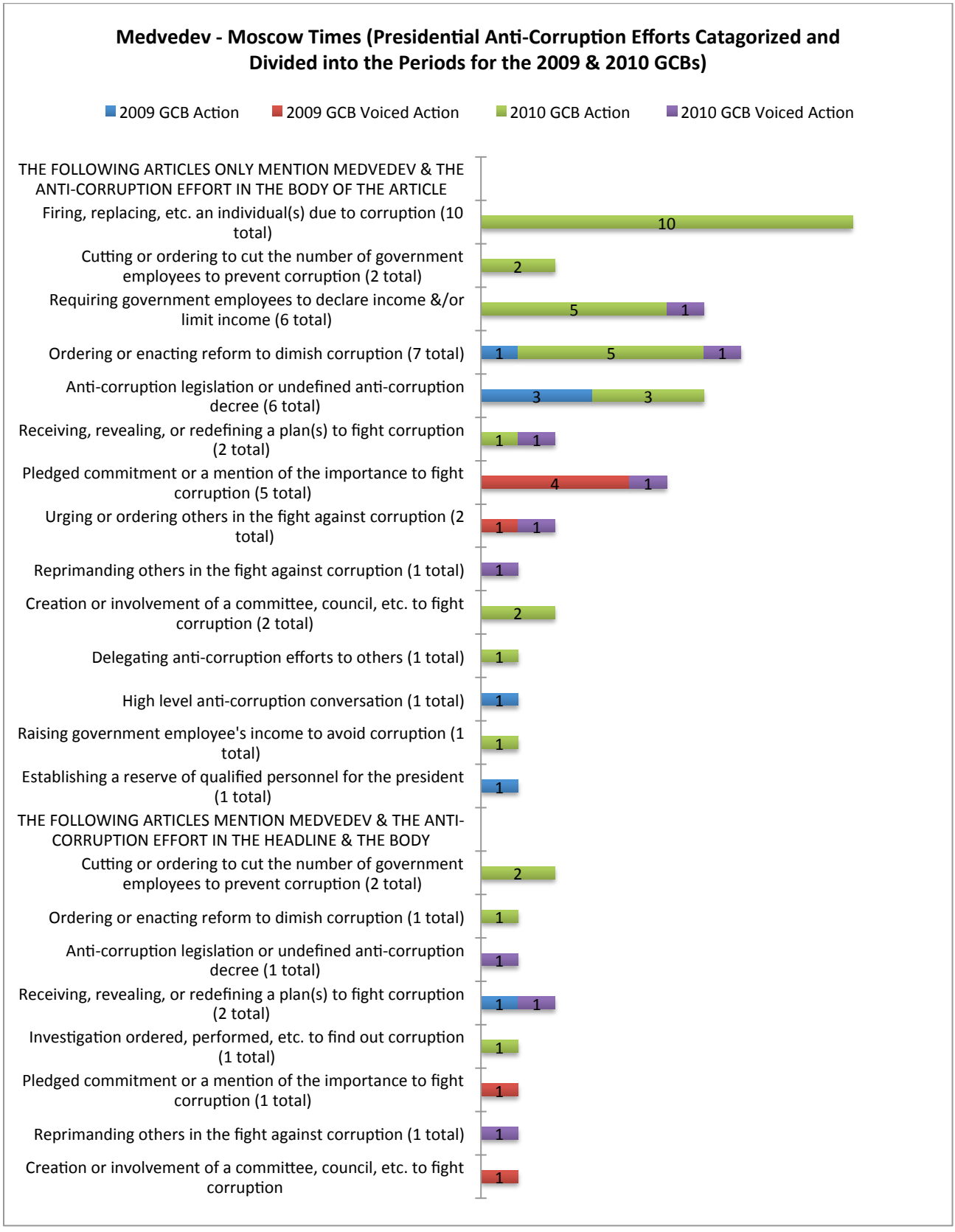
Each article mentions an action or a voiced action (an action that is only verbal or the mention of an action to be done in the future) by President Medvedev whether or not that action took place at the time of the article.

Chart 3



In an article on January 27, 2006 two efforts are mentioned. All other articles mention one effort.

Chart 4


Medvedev - Moscow Times (Presidential Anti-Corruption Efforts Catagorized and Divided into the Periods for the 2009 & 2010 GCBs)
2009 GCB Action
2009 GCB Voiced Action
2010 GCB Action
2010 GCB Voiced Action
THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES ONLY MENTION MEDVEDEV & THE ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORT IN THE BODY OF THE ARTICLE
Firing, replacing, etc. an individual(s) due to corruption (10 total)
10
Cutting or ordering to cut the number of government employees to prevent corruption (2 total)
2
Requiring government employees to declare income &/or limit income (6 total)
5
1
Ordering or enacting reform to dimish corruption (7 total)
1
5
1
Anti-corruption legislation or undefined anti-corruption decree (6 total)
3
3
Receiving, revealing, or redefining a plan(s) to fight corruption (2 total)
1
1
Pledged commitment or a mention of the importance to fight corruption (5 total)
4
1
Urging or ordering others in the fight against corruption (2 total)
1
1
Reprimanding others in the fight against corruption (1 total)
1
Creation or involvement of a committee, council, etc. to fight corruption (2 total)
2
Delegating anti-corruption efforts to others (1 total)
1
High level anti-corruption conversation (1 total)
1
Raising government employee's income to avoid corruption (1 total)
1
Establishing a reserve of qualified personnel for the president (1 total)
1
THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES MENTION MEDVEDEV & THE ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORT IN THE HEADLINE & THE BODY
Cutting or ordering to cut the number of government employees to prevent corruption (2 total)
2
Ordering or enacting reform to dimish corruption (1 total)
1
Anti-corruption legislation or undefined anti-corruption decree (1 total)
1
Receiving, revealing, or redefining a plan(s) to fight corruption (2 total)
1
1
Investigation ordered, performed, etc. to find out corruption (1 total)
1
Pledged commitment or a mention of the importance to fight corruption (1 total)
1
Reprimanding others in the fight against corruption (1 total)
1
Creation or involvement of a committee, council, etc. to fight corruption
1