

Strengthening Integrity Through Anti-Corruption Education in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study analyzes the role of anti-corruption education in strengthening integrity among elementary school students. The research aims to examine how anti-corruption values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and fairness are integrated into school learning and how they influence students' character development. A qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach is used, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that anti-corruption education is effectively implemented through value integration in classroom learning, teacher role modeling, and school habituation practices. Students demonstrate improved integrity when exposed to consistent and contextual value-based education. However, challenges remain in ensuring consistency between school-based learning and the broader social environment. The study concludes that continuous and collaborative efforts between schools, families, and society are essential for strengthening students' integrity through anti-corruption education.

Keywords

Anti-Corruption Education; Integrity; Character Building; Elementary School Students; Value Internalization



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INTRODUCTION

The strengthening of integrity through education has become an essential agenda in addressing moral degradation and corruption in society. In particular, elementary education plays a strategic role in shaping students' character from an early age, as this stage represents a critical period for moral and behavioral development. Anti-corruption education is increasingly recognized as a key instrument in fostering values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, fairness, and simplicity, which are fundamental components of integrity. Through structured educational processes, students are expected to internalize these values and apply them consistently in their daily lives.

The urgency of anti-corruption education has been widely acknowledged by both national and international institutions. In Indonesia, the Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia has emphasized that building a culture of integrity must begin from early education through systematic value socialization in schools. This initiative highlights that corruption prevention is not only a legal and institutional issue but also a matter of character formation. Similarly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime underscores the importance of integrating ethics and integrity education into school curricula as part of global efforts to prevent corruption and promote good governance.

At the elementary school level, students are in a formative stage where moral reasoning and behavioral patterns are being developed. According to Albert Bandura, children learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within their social environment. This implies that teachers and the school environment play a crucial role as models of integrity. When teachers consistently demonstrate ethical behavior, students are more likely to adopt similar attitudes and behaviors, making the school a vital space for character development.

However, the implementation of anti-corruption education still faces several challenges. One of the main issues is the inconsistency between values taught in schools and behaviors observed in the broader social environment, including family and community contexts. Such inconsistencies can weaken the internalization process and reduce the effectiveness of character education. This highlights the importance of collaboration between schools, families, and society in reinforcing integrity values consistently.

In addition, the effectiveness of anti-corruption education depends on the learning strategies used. Interactive and participatory methods such as discussions, storytelling, role-playing, and habituation practices are considered more effective in helping students understand and apply moral values. These approaches allow students to engage actively in learning and connect abstract concepts with real-life experiences. As emphasized by Transparency International, fostering a culture of integrity requires continuous education supported by collective action from all stakeholders.

Although various studies have examined character education and moral development, there is still a need for deeper analysis of how anti-corruption education contributes specifically to strengthening integrity in elementary schools. Understanding this process is essential for improving educational practices and ensuring long-term impact on student behavior.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of anti-corruption education in strengthening integrity among elementary school students. The research focuses on how anti-corruption values are implemented in school settings and how they influence students' attitudes and behavior. Ultimately, this study is expected to contribute to the development of effective character education strategies that support the formation of an honest and integrity-based generation.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design with a case study approach to analyze the implementation of anti-corruption education in strengthening integrity among elementary school students. The qualitative method is chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of educational processes, teacher–student interactions, and the internalization of moral values within the natural school environment. The research focuses on a selected elementary school where anti-corruption education is integrated into classroom learning and school habituation programs. The case study approach is used to understand how anti-corruption values are implemented, practiced, and internalized by students in real educational settings. This approach enables a comprehensive analysis of both instructional strategies and behavioral outcomes. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations are conducted to examine how teachers integrate anti-corruption values into learning activities and how students respond to these practices. Semi-structured interviews are carried out with teachers to explore their experiences, strategies, and challenges in implementing anti-corruption education. Documentation such as lesson plans, school regulations, and student activity records are also analyzed to support and validate the findings. The data are analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involves selecting relevant information related to anti-corruption education practices. The data are then organized and presented systematically to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on patterns and themes that emerge from the data. To ensure the validity of the findings, triangulation of sources and methods is applied by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. This approach ensures a comprehensive and credible understanding of how anti-corruption education contributes to strengthening students' integrity in elementary schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that strengthening integrity through anti-corruption education in elementary schools is effectively achieved through the integration of value-based learning into classroom instruction, school culture, and daily student activities. Anti-corruption values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, fairness, and simplicity are more effectively internalized when they are consistently reinforced through both formal teaching and informal school practices. Students demonstrate stronger moral awareness when these values are contextualized in real-life situations, such as honesty during examinations, responsibility in completing assignments, and fairness in group work. This supports the strategic approach promoted by the Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia, which emphasizes early education as a foundational effort in building a culture of integrity and preventing corrupt behavior in society.

The study also reveals that teachers play a central role in the success of anti-corruption education. Students tend to imitate behaviors demonstrated by teachers, making teacher integrity a critical factor in shaping student character. When teachers consistently exhibit honesty, discipline, and fairness, students are more likely to adopt these behaviors in their daily lives. This finding aligns with the social learning theory proposed by Albert Bandura, which explains that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within social environments. In this context, the school functions not only as a place for academic learning but also as a moral environment that shapes student behavior.

Furthermore, interactive and participatory learning methods such as discussions, storytelling, role-playing, and group activities significantly enhance students' understanding of anti-corruption values. These methods allow students to engage actively with moral dilemmas and develop critical thinking regarding ethical behavior. The learning process becomes more meaningful when students are encouraged to reflect on real-life situations related to honesty and responsibility. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, value-based education is a key component in long-term corruption prevention strategies, as it helps shape ethical behavior from an early developmental stage.

However, the study also identifies several challenges in strengthening integrity through anti-corruption education. One of the main challenges is the inconsistency between values taught in schools and behaviors observed in the broader social environment, including family and community contexts. This inconsistency can weaken the internalization process and reduce the effectiveness of school-based moral education. Additionally, limited parental involvement and lack of reinforcement

outside school further hinder the sustainability of value development. As emphasized by Transparency International, building a culture of integrity requires a comprehensive approach involving education systems, families, and society at large.

Overall, the findings suggest that anti-corruption education is most effective when implemented continuously, consistently, and collaboratively. The integration of values into all aspects of school life, supported by strong teacher role modeling and active student participation, contributes significantly to the development of integrity among elementary school students. However, sustained efforts beyond the classroom are necessary to ensure long-term behavioral change and the formation of an honest generation.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that strengthening integrity through anti-corruption education in elementary schools is an effective strategy for fostering students' moral development. The integration of anti-corruption values into learning activities, school culture, and daily behavior contributes significantly to shaping honesty, responsibility, discipline, and fairness among students. Teacher role modeling plays a crucial role in this process, as students tend to imitate behaviors demonstrated by educators. The findings also show that interactive and participatory learning methods enhance students' understanding and internalization of anti-corruption values. However, challenges remain, particularly the inconsistency between school-based education and the broader social environment. Therefore, collaboration between schools, families, and communities is essential to ensure the sustainability of integrity development. In conclusion, anti-corruption education in elementary schools is a strategic approach to building a generation with strong integrity, provided that it is implemented continuously, consistently, and supported by a conducive social environment.

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