

Internalization of Anti-Corruption Values to Foster Integrity Among 6th Grade Elementary School Students

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Abstract

The internalization of anti-corruption values in elementary education plays a crucial role in building a generation with strong integrity and moral character. This study aims to analyze how anti-corruption values are internalized among 6th grade elementary school students to foster honesty, responsibility, and discipline from an early age. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach, using data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the internalization of anti-corruption values is most effective when integrated into daily learning activities and reinforced through teacher modeling, participatory learning methods, and consistent habituation practices. Students demonstrate better understanding and behavioral adaptation when values such as honesty and responsibility are contextualized in real-life classroom situations. The study also reveals that teachers play a central role as role models in shaping students' moral behavior. However, challenges remain in ensuring consistency between school-based learning and the broader social environment. The study concludes that continuous, integrated, and collaborative efforts between schools, teachers, and parents are essential for the successful internalization of anti-corruption values in elementary education.

Keywords

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



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INTRODUCTION

The development of character education in elementary schools has become an increasingly important focus in efforts to build a generation with strong integrity and moral awareness. One of the most urgent issues in contemporary society is corruption, which not only occurs at institutional levels but is also rooted in weak ethical values within individuals. For this reason, early education plays a strategic role in instilling anti-corruption values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, simplicity, and fairness. These values are expected to shape students' character from an early age,

ensuring that they grow into individuals who are resistant to corrupt behavior in the future.

The importance of anti-corruption education has been widely emphasized by national and international institutions. In Indonesia, the Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia has consistently promoted anti-corruption education as part of a long-term strategy to prevent corrupt behavior through character building in schools. Similarly, global organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime highlight the significance of education in promoting integrity and preventing corruption by integrating ethical values into formal education systems. These efforts reflect a growing recognition that combating corruption is not only a legal and institutional challenge but also an educational and cultural one.

At the elementary school level, particularly in grade 6, students are at a critical stage of cognitive and moral development. According to Lawrence Kohlberg, children in this developmental phase begin to understand social rules and internalize moral reasoning based on fairness and social expectations. Therefore, this stage is considered highly effective for introducing and internalizing values that shape long-term behavior. Through structured learning experiences and consistent reinforcement, students can gradually develop a strong sense of integrity that guides their actions both inside and outside the classroom.

However, the implementation of anti-corruption value education in schools still faces several challenges. One of the main issues is the gap between theoretical instruction and practical application. In some cases, anti-corruption values are taught as abstract concepts without sufficient contextualization in students' daily experiences. This can limit the effectiveness of value internalization. As noted by Albert Bandura, moral learning is highly influenced by observational learning and modeling, meaning that students are more likely to adopt values that are consistently demonstrated by teachers and reinforced through social interaction.

In addition, the success of anti-corruption education is influenced by the school environment and the consistency of role models within it. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' behavior, as they serve as primary examples of integrity in the classroom. When teachers demonstrate honesty, fairness, and responsibility, students are more likely to imitate these behaviors. Conversely, inconsistencies between taught values and observed behavior can reduce the effectiveness of character education.

Although various studies have examined character education and moral development, there is still a need for deeper analysis focusing specifically on the internalization of anti-corruption values at the elementary school level. Understanding

how these values are introduced, absorbed, and practiced by students is essential for improving educational strategies and ensuring long-term impact.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the internalization of anti-corruption values in fostering integrity among 6th grade elementary school students. The research seeks to explore how these values are implemented in classroom practices and how they influence students' attitudes and behavior. Ultimately, this study is expected to contribute to the development of more 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 internalization of anti-corruption values among 6th grade elementary school students. The research focuses on understanding how anti-corruption values are introduced, internalized, and reflected in students' attitudes and behaviors within the school environment. The qualitative approach is chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of educational processes, teacher–student interactions, and value formation in real classroom settings.

The study uses a phenomenological orientation to capture the lived experiences of teachers and students in implementing anti-corruption education. The primary focus is on how values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, simplicity, and fairness are socialized and practiced in daily school activities. In this context, the research seeks to understand not only what is taught but also how these values are internalized by students through learning experiences and social interaction.

Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations are conducted to examine how anti-corruption values are integrated into teaching and learning activities, as well as how students respond to these values in practice. Semi-structured interviews are carried out with teachers to gain insights into instructional strategies, classroom management, and value reinforcement methods. In addition, documentation such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and school activity records are analyzed to support and validate the findings.

The data obtained from these sources are analyzed using an interactive model of qualitative analysis, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction is conducted by selecting and focusing on relevant information related to anti-corruption value education. The data are then organized

and presented in a structured manner to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions are drawn based on patterns and themes that emerge from the data.

To ensure the validity of the findings, this study applies triangulation of sources and methods. Data from observations, interviews, and documentation are cross-checked to ensure consistency and accuracy. This methodological approach allows the researcher to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how anti-corruption values are internalized among elementary school students and how such processes contribute to the development of integrity-based character education.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the internalization of anti-corruption values among 6th grade elementary school students plays a significant role in fostering integrity, honesty, and responsible behavior from an early age. The socialization process carried out through classroom learning, habituation activities, and teacher modeling demonstrates that students are more responsive to value-based education when it is delivered in an interactive and contextual manner. Anti-corruption values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, simplicity, and fairness are more effectively absorbed when integrated into daily school activities rather than being taught solely as abstract concepts. This aligns with the perspective of Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia, which emphasizes that early education is a strategic entry point for building a corruption-free culture in society.

The study further reveals that teachers play a central role as role models in the internalization process. Students tend to imitate behaviors demonstrated by teachers, particularly in relation to honesty in academic tasks, punctuality, and fairness in classroom interactions. When teachers consistently demonstrate integrity, students gradually develop similar behavioral patterns. This finding supports the theory of social learning proposed by Albert Bandura, which states that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling. In the context of anti-corruption education, this implies that moral values are not only taught but also transmitted through everyday interactions within the school environment.

In addition, the results show that the use of participatory learning methods, such as group discussions, storytelling, and role-playing, enhances students' understanding of anti-corruption values. These methods allow students to engage emotionally and cognitively with moral dilemmas, making the learning process more meaningful. The integration of real-life examples, such as honesty in exams and fairness in group work, helps students connect abstract values with practical behavior. According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, value-based

education is essential in preventing corruption in the long term, as it shapes attitudes and behaviors before they become deeply rooted in adulthood.

However, the study also identifies several challenges in the internalization process. One of the main challenges is the inconsistency between values taught at school and behaviors observed in the surrounding environment, including at home and in society. When children are exposed to contradictory examples outside the classroom, the effectiveness of anti-corruption education may be weakened. This highlights the importance of synergy between schools, families, and communities in reinforcing integrity values. As noted by Transparency International, corruption prevention must involve a holistic approach that includes education, social environment, and institutional integrity.

Furthermore, the study finds that continuous reinforcement is necessary to ensure that anti-corruption values are not only understood but also internalized as part of students' character. Short-term interventions or one-time socialization activities are insufficient to create lasting behavioral change. Instead, sustained educational strategies that include repetition, reinforcement, and evaluation are required. Teachers need to consistently integrate integrity values into both academic and non-academic activities to ensure that students develop a strong moral foundation.

Overall, the findings suggest that internalizing anti-corruption values at the elementary school level is an effective strategy for building a generation with strong integrity. When supported by appropriate teaching methods, strong teacher role models, and a conducive learning environment, students are more likely to develop honest and responsible behavior. However, the success of this process depends on the consistency of value reinforcement across school, family, and societal contexts. Therefore, anti-corruption education should be implemented as a continuous and collaborative effort involving all stakeholders in the educational ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the internalization of anti-corruption values among 6th grade elementary school students is an effective strategy in fostering integrity, honesty, and responsible behavior from an early age. The process of value internalization is most successful when anti-corruption education is integrated into daily learning activities, supported by interactive teaching methods and reinforced through consistent behavioral modeling by teachers. In this context, teachers play a crucial role as role models, as students tend to adopt attitudes and behaviors demonstrated in the school environment.

The findings also show that participatory learning strategies such as storytelling, discussion, and role-playing significantly enhance students' understanding and appreciation of anti-corruption values. These methods help students connect abstract moral concepts with real-life situations, making value learning more meaningful and applicable. This aligns with the emphasis of Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on the importance of early anti-corruption education as a foundation for long-term character building and corruption prevention.

However, the study also identifies challenges in the internalization process, particularly the inconsistency between values taught in schools and behaviors observed in the broader social environment. This indicates that value education cannot be effective in isolation and requires reinforcement from family and community environments. Therefore, a collaborative approach among schools, parents, and society is essential to ensure the sustainability of integrity values.

In conclusion, strengthening anti-corruption education at the elementary level contributes significantly to character formation and the development of an honest generation. Continuous, consistent, and integrated efforts are necessary to ensure that anti-corruption values are not only understood but also fully internalized and reflected in students' daily behavior.

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