

ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS AN EFFORT TO FOSTER ANTI-CORRUPTION CHARACTER IN STUDENTS

Zawir Muhammad Barus^{1*}

Syaifullah²

Andrie Hasugian³

Ryan Taufika⁴

* 1, 2, 3, 4 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

* ¹email: zawirmuhammadbarus16@gmail.com

Abstract: This research begins with the author's interest in the ongoing problem of corruption. As the severity of this issue intensifies, some individuals perceive corruption in Indonesia to have become a cultural phenomenon and even a virus that must be collectively addressed. Islamic teachings explicitly state that corruption (such as bribery, extortion, coercion, gratification) is a condemned act, deemed forbidden, and carries severe threats. Corruption impacts various aspects of society, including economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions. As victims of corruption, it is the community that feels the most significant consequences. Given this situation, the role of Islamic Religious Education in cultivating an anti-corruption character is considered urgent. This research employs the literature study method, which involves the examination of data from various references and research findings to establish the theoretical foundation for the investigated problem in the effort to solve it. The study concludes that Islamic Religious Education is one of the factors influencing the attitudes and behaviors of students, transforming them into characters that become ingrained habits in societal life. Islamic Religious Education functions to produce individuals who are faithful, pious, and ethical. It has the capacity to nurture an anti-corruption character to achieve progress in civilization, justice, and prosperity for the nation.

Keywords: Anti-corruption, student character, Islamic Religious Education

Introduction

The Indonesian nation, as a vast and culturally rich entity with diversity in culture, language, the widest territory in Southeast Asia, and a population exceeding 260 million, demonstrates its existence not only through these aspects but also through the complexity of issues that have encompassed almost every sector of life for over 73 years. These issues include education, the economy, natural resource management, national character, and politics, with causes ranging from poor management systems to low-quality human resources. One root problem often highlighted by society is the rampant behavior of corruption, where certain parties attempt to gain personal or group benefits by abusing their power.

Many factors make corruption challenging to eliminate in this country, including political, juridical, and cultural factors. Corruption stemming from juridical factors is characterized by weak legal sanctions and loopholes in regulations related to corruption offenses. When discussing the weaknesses of punishment sanctions, this includes evaluating the role of judges in decision-making and sanctions that are considered weak according to the provisions in articles and clauses of regulations related to corruption offenses in the Indonesian

Constitution. Furthermore, the positive legal system of this country cannot be separated from Islamic law, given that the majority of its population adheres to Islam. In the context of positive law, corruption offenses are regulated by the Indonesian Constitution Number 21 of 2001 concerning Amendments to the Indonesian Constitution Number 31 of 1999 concerning the Eradication of Corruption Crimes. On the other hand, Islamic law considers corruption offenses as violations of the principles of justice, accountability, and responsibility. Corruption, with its negative consequences causing distortions in the country and society, can be regarded as a facade and harmful to the earth, an action morally condemned by any nation.

However, in the effort to combat corruption in Indonesia, it is crucial to assess the integrity of judges handling corruption cases. If judges have integrity and good legal reasoning (*ijtihad*), the penalties imposed on corrupt individuals causing harm to state and public assets can be more severe. These penalties may be more stringent compared to those prescribed by Islamic regulations that mandate hand amputation. For perpetrators of corruption causing significant financial losses to the state, severe punishments such as death penalty or life imprisonment can be imposed, as recently applied to the former Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court.

From the perspective of Islam, corruption is divided into several dimensions, including *risywah* (bribery), *sariqah* (theft), *ghulul* (embezzlement), *ghasab* (forcibly taking someone else's rights), and *hirabah* (robbery). Corruption in the dimension of *risywah* is viewed as a reprehensible act and a major sin, deserving Allah's curse. Although Islam does not specify a specific punishment for bribery, discretionary (*ta'zir*) penalties tailored to each individual's role in the crime can be applied. Bribery, involving giving to authorities or officials with the intention of gaining benefits or facilitating matters, is considered a serious offense if it occurs in the context of justice or law enforcement.

In the context of corruption, if a judge receives a gift, it means they have consumed forbidden goods, and if they accept a bribe, it can be regarded as an act of infidelity. From the perspective of Islamic law, corruption is considered a criminal act (*jarimah*) with characteristics that are quite unique. Corruption is not classified as a *qisas* crime, and it also does not fall under the scope of *hudud* offenses. Both types of offenses are clearly outlined in various religious texts, including the Quran and Hadith, specifying their types and sanctions as explained by the primary sources of Islamic teachings.

Although steps have been taken to address this issue, such as the formation of the Corruption Eradication Commission and the Anti-Corruption Courts, these efforts are considered incomplete and require more radical and sustainable policies. The importance of corruption prevention is highlighted, with a focus on the upstream sector, where anti-corruption education is seen as one of the solutions. Anti-corruption education is a key step in preventing the emergence of new potential corruptors and improving the overall behavior of the Indonesian nation (Irfan, 2009).

The government has taken initiatives in implementing anti-corruption education, such as through collaboration between the Corruption Eradication Commission and the Ministry of Education and Culture. The jointly signed commitment involves several ministries and institutions, acknowledging the importance of character education and an anti-corruption culture as vital preventive measures in shaping an integrity-based generation. In addition to government efforts, the role of Islamic education in Indonesia is also expected to be significant in preventing corruption. In Islam, corruption is considered a serious moral violation, and Islamic education is seen as a tool to instill values of honesty and responsibility towards entrusted duties. Although Islamic education has made significant contributions to various aspects of Indonesian society, questions arise about the extent of its role in facing the challenges of corruption plaguing the nation. Therefore, this writing aims to discuss the role of Islamic

education in corruption prevention, considering Islam's emphasis on morals and ethics, as well as the corruption-related moral decay that needs to be rectified and prevented (Poernomo, 2013).

In a broader sense, corruption or political corruption is the misuse of official positions for personal gain. All forms of government in governance are susceptible to corruption in practice. The severity of corruption varies, from the mildest form involving the use of influence and support to provide and receive assistance, to severe, institutionalized corruption, and so forth. The extreme point of corruption is kleptocracy, literally meaning a government by thieves, where officials pretend to act honestly but do not at all.

Looking at the definition of corruption above, it can be concluded that corruption is a form of betrayal, in this case, betrayal of the people who have entrusted a specific task. In the Qur'an, Allah SWT has reminded humans about this, as stated in Surah An-Nisa (4:107): "And do not argue on behalf of those who deceive themselves. Indeed, Allah does not like anyone who is a habitually sinful deceiver." From the above verses of Allah SWT, it is clear that Islam prohibits all forms of betrayal. Allah SWT prohibits corruption because corruption is one of the forms of betrayal.

Regarding Anti-Corruption Education, it is worth analogizing it. If Allah SWT obliges us to perform prayers, for example, then we must learn the knowledge of prayers. If we do not learn the knowledge of prayers, it is impossible for us to perform prayers properly. Similarly, when Allah SWT commands His people to be trustworthy, we must learn about that trust so that humans always live in awareness and caution. Therefore, if Allah SWT has given a red light to the act of corruption, it is clear that this is a green light to implement anti-corruption education. Just like Islamic education, which examines all the obligations and prohibitions of humans, anti-corruption education is undoubtedly necessary to provide a deeper understanding to humanity in fulfilling entrusted duties and avoiding betrayal, one of which is corruption. Because it is not impossible for a person who engages in corruption to do so out of greed, rather than a lack of understanding of the various forms of corruption.

The prevalence of corruption in Indonesia indicates the low level of moral education possessed by the Indonesian people. This proves that not all employees have religious intelligence, even though many civil servants have above-average intellectual intelligence. Schools are not only a place for the process of teaching and learning or for matters related to scientific knowledge alone, but schools also have a more significant function, namely as a place for character formation. Through the Islamic Education curriculum in schools, support can be provided for the formation of students' characters. In addition, to strengthen the impression of the importance of character formation, the role of teachers as role models in schools and collaborative efforts towards this goal are crucial for an educational institution called a school. In cultivating an anti-corruption character, schools need support from the government as the organizer of education policies.

Literature Review

Understanding Corruption and Its Forms

Corruption has become a national and international issue, and the causes of corruption can vary depending on the context. The media often publicizes corruption cases related to power within the government. In reality, corruption has occurred from the simplest to the most complex matters. Corruption is always associated with politics, economics, government policies in social and international issues, as well as national development. Every year, and perhaps every month, many government officials are caught for engaging in corrupt practices. The understanding of corruption can be viewed from various perspectives. Essentially,

corruption can occur in any aspect of life, not just in the government, leading to diverse interpretations of corruption.

Corruption is a term derived from the Latin word "corruptio," originating from the verb "corrumpere," meaning to rot, decay, shake, overturn, spoil, bribe, steal. In line with Nurdjana's opinion, corruption is a term that comes from the Greek language, "corruptio," meaning misconduct, bad, dishonest, bribable, immoral, deviating from purity, violating material, mental, and legal norms.

Types of Corruption include:

1. Financial loss to the state
2. Bribery
3. Embezzlement in office
4. Extortion
5. Cheating
6. Conflict of interest in procurement
7. Gratification

Character Education for Students

The components of character can be observed through several indicators, including moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. Indicators of knowledge include awareness, values, perspectives, thinking, decision-making, and personal knowledge. Feelings are indicated by conscience, self-esteem, empathy, love for goodness, self-control, and humility. The indicators of actions encompass competence, desire, and habits (Lickhona, 2012).

Character is the embodiment of the total psychological function of humans, including cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, and in the context of interaction, it is referred to as the totality of socio-cultural functions (social culture). The basic components of the socio-cultural system, according to Afandi (2016), are ideological superstructure, social structure, and material infrastructure. Social culture is closely related to the school, family, and community environment that lasts throughout a person's life (Komalasari and Saripudin, 2017). Thus, character reflects that an individual not only possesses knowledge but can also exhibit good behavior and conduct in family, school, and community life.

Parenting styles significantly influence a child's character; if parents make mistakes in educating their children, the child may not necessarily behave well. According to Fitriyani (2015), good parenting in the family provides a strong foundation for the development of emotions, behavior, character, moral and social values, and the formation of a child's character. Dewantara (Komalasari and Saripudin, 2017) explains that character education strategies are the right methods that emphasize the development of Indonesian cultural characteristics and do not use conditions or coercion. This is because Indonesian society adheres to Eastern culture, living within the values of traditional culture and a love for peace. These values include refinement of feelings, living with love, love for peace, orderliness, honesty, and politeness in speech and behavior, starting from an early age.

The role of parents is crucial in instilling and building the character of the nation. The achievement of character education processes within the family depends on the harmony between parents, children, the methods used, and the supportive environment for the educational process within the family (Setiardi, 2017). This is also aligned with our nation's culture based on the values of Pancasila as a guide for the life of the Indonesian people. Family education is a strong foundation that should be instilled in students because the influence of the environment will attempt to erode and affect students' interactions in their daily lives.

Method

This research is conducted using a literature review method. Literature review is a summary of research that has been conducted or for ideas for future research. Literature study involves searching for theoretical references relevant to the handling of aggressive behavior in children. References can be sought from books, journals, research articles, and websites. The output of the literature review is the collection of references relevant to formulating the research problem.

Result and Discussion

Islamic Perspectives on Corruption

Corruption is a form of plundering the wealth of the people and the state by exploiting one's position for personal enrichment. Regardless of the type, corruption is considered forbidden in Islam because its consequences can damage the entire order of life. According to *Hafidhuddin*, as cited by Mansyur Semma in his book "State and Corruption", attempting to portray corruption from the perspective of Islamic teachings, he states that in Islam, corruption is considered a *fasad* (mischief) or an act that damages the order of life. Those who commit it are categorized as committing *jināyah kubra* (major sin) and should be subject to sanctions such as execution, crucifixion, or amputation of hands and feet in a crossed manner or expulsion. In the broader context of Islamic teachings, corruption is an action contrary to the principles of justice (*al-'adālah*), accountability (*al-amānah*), and responsibility (Semma, 2008: 33).

Corruption, with all its negative impacts causing various distortions to the life of the state and society, can be categorized as *fasad*, damage on Earth, which is severely cursed by Allah SWT. However, even though this act is clearly prohibited in religion, the perpetrators seem to remain at the forefront. One reason why corruption is less studied as a policy issue may be the persistent feeling that there is nothing that can be done about it.

There are many sources/verses in the Qur'an supporting the implementation of anti-corruption behavior. Some of them are Allah's words in:

- a. Regarding Theft: Allah's words in Surah Al-Maidah: 38 state: "As for the thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands in recompense for what they committed as a deterrent [punishment] from Allah."
- b. Regarding Bribery: Allah's words in Surah Al-Maidah: 42 state: "They are listeners to falsehood, devourers of [what is] unlawful. So if they come to you, [O Muhammad], judge between them or turn away from them."

From the above verses, it is clear that taking and consuming someone else's property in an unjustifiable manner, including corruption, is not allowed. According to Helmy Ali, in the Indonesian language, corruption is also referred to as "bribe" or "bribery". This is related to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in a hadith which roughly means: "Allah curses the giver of bribes, the receiver of bribes, and the intermediary between them." Thus, in Islamic teachings, corruption and bribery are clearly "forbidden" and strictly prohibited, facing severe consequences on the Day of Judgment for the perpetrators (Ali, n.d.: 3).

In this era of globalization, bribery is often packaged with a religious façade in the form of gifts, either in the form of a nominal amount of money or concrete goods (Rosidi, 2006). They usually refer to it as a gift rather than a bribe, and the form of the gift varies depending on the recipient's needs. It could be a car, money, a house, or a specific guarantee, such as ensuring that their child or relative is guaranteed admission to college, and so on.

The Role of Islamic Religious Education in Cultivating Anti-Corruption Character

The Qur'an and Hadith, serving as the guide for Islamic Religious Education, encompass character values that ensure happiness in both the worldly life and the hereafter. These values include honesty, responsibility, independence, caring, discipline, courage, hard work, justice, and simplicity, collectively referred to as anti-corruption values. This signifies that individuals possessing these moral qualities are figures with high moral integrity and are resistant to the temptation of corruption.

Efforts by Muslims to eradicate corruption start with parents as the smallest unit of the community (Tilaar, 2004). Therefore, internalizing anti-corruption values by parents through family education is an attempt to prepare the nation's generation to advance morality, thoughts, and actions to curb corruption. Anti-corruption education is based on the understanding and provision of information about anti-corruption values (ontology and epistemology) aimed at nurturing children to become morally upright individuals (axiology), characterized by virtue and responsibility, in order to build a life within society and nation.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture there are nine values that should be internalized in anti-corruption education for students. These values are honesty, caring, independence, discipline, responsibility, hard work, simplicity, courage, and justice.

Anti-corruption characters must grow within the students' souls, acting as a fortress to make them future leaders far from corrupt practices. Students should possess anti-corruption characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, caring, and compliance with rules. Efforts are made by teachers to instill awareness in students to resist and prevent corruption, starting from the smallest actions like cheating, skipping classes, and violating school rules (Sofian, 2018).

Furthermore, Syaiful Anwar researched the role of Islamic religious education in shaping the nation's character. He stated that character education should be grounded in the basic character of human beings derived from revelation. The character that should be fostered includes trustworthiness, respect and attention, concern, honesty, responsibility, citizenship, courage, diligence, discipline, visionary thinking, justice, and integrity (Anwar, 2016). There is also criticism of the character concept proposed by Thomas Lickonas, especially in terms of honor and responsibility, which is considered humanistic and neglects religious aspects. The concept of character by Lickona is also seen as trapped in the relativism of values (Husni & Norman, 2018). Another study conducted by (Elihami & Syahid, 2018) discussed the implementation of Islamic religious education as an effort in shaping the personality of Muslim students. Their research found that the learning strategies of Islamic Religious Education in shaping the character of Muslim students use two teaching strategies, namely direct and indirect learning.

Character education should indeed be a focus at all levels of education, whether based on religion or not, where character formation begins with the inherent nature given by God, and individuals then shape their identity and behavior in their respective environments.

Anti-Corruption Efforts

In preventing and eradicating corruption, there is no need for many words; our commendable attitudes should be evident in our daily lives. Moral integration cannot be separated from a person's sense of shame, as it is impossible for someone not to feel ashamed of committing immoral deeds if they already have morals as taught by Islam, where shame is considered a part of faith (morality). Only morally upright individuals feel shame when engaging in inappropriate actions. Individuals with such personalities are capable of being role models (Lopa, 2001: 82).

Indonesia, as one of the most corrupt countries, poses a unique challenge for educational institutions, which serve as a platform for changing students' attitudes for the better. Schools, as a formal education channel, have values that need to be introduced and developed to achieve educational goals. One of the values that need to be cultivated in schools is those reflecting anti-corruption behavior because the dangers posed by corrupt actions involve the common welfare. Corruption occurs due to weak character. It is this weak character that eventually leads individuals to be dishonest. If honesty is instilled in various school activities from an early age, it will remain a guiding principle for students as they progress to higher levels (Kusumah, 2012: 294).

An environment that reflects anti-corruption values will instill an anti-corruption attitude in the personality of students. Schools can instill anti-corruption character through an anti-corruption culture, such as an honesty cafeteria, imposing penalties on students who lack discipline, and appreciating students who are honest. The anti-corruption culture within the school will enable students to develop an anti-corruption character. Through the cultivation of such character, schools play a role in eradicating corruption from its roots, starting with the behavior of students themselves as the future leaders of the nation.

Conclusion

From the above description, the conclusions drawn from this study are as follows:

1. Islamic Religious Education serves to produce individuals who are faithful, pious, and morally upright. Most importantly, Islamic Religious Education is capable of fostering anti-corruption character to realize the progress of civilization, justice, and prosperity as a nation, creating a harmonious religious community both at the local, national, regional, and global levels.
2. In Islamic teachings, it is clear that corruption (such as bribery, extortion, coercion, gratification, and other forms of corruption) is a cursed and strictly prohibited act, facing severe consequences in the hereafter for those involved. Corruption impacts various aspects of society, including economics, politics, social, and cultural realms. Generally, corruption leads to a decrease in the quality of public services, with society being the primary victim.
3. The role of Islamic Religious Education can be applied in schools/madrasas by teachers and in the community by parents. For teachers, it involves instilling awareness in students to resist and prevent corruption, starting from minor actions like cheating, skipping classes, and violating school rules. For parents, anti-corruption education needs to be imparted to children from an early age, fostering habits of honesty, responsibility, and simplicity.

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