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The Impact of Corruption on Economic Stability and Community Life in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the social and economic impact of corruption in Indonesia. Using the thematic method, statements of key personalities and data gathered from documentation studies were analyzed. Results of data analysis revealed that corrupt practices inhibit economic progress and erode public trust. Moreover, it promotes a negative perception on state institutions, unjust distribution of resources, and unsatisfactory public goods and services. Corruption has a direct impact on vital sectors such as education, health, and economic development, thus hindering the improvement of the quality of human resources and community welfare. Prevalence of corruption exacerbates social inequality and violations of human rights. Eradicating corruption requires collaborative efforts among various stakeholders as well as improvement on the enforcement and public awareness of the law.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak sosial dan ekonomi dari korupsi di Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, data menunjukkan bahwa praktik korupsi menghambat kemajuan ekonomi dan mengikis kepercayaan publik. Selain itu, korupsi juga mendorong persepsi negatif terhadap lembaga negara, distribusi sumber daya yang tidak adil, dan barang dan jasa publik yang tidak memuaskan. Korupsi berdampak langsung pada sektor-sektor vital seperti pendidikan, kesehatan, dan pembangunan ekonomi, sehingga menghambat peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia dan kesejahteraan masyarakat. Maraknya korupsi memperburuk kesenjangan sosial dan pelanggaran hak asasi manusia. Pemberantasan korupsi memerlukan upaya kolaboratif di antara berbagai pemangku kepentingan serta peningkatan penegakan dan kesadaran hukum masyarakat.

A. INTRODUCTION

Corruption is a form of extraordinary crime that has a broad impact on various aspects of national life, especially in the economic sector (Akimova, Litvinova, Ilchenko, Pomaza-Ponomarenko, & Yemets, 2020). This crime not only harms state finances, but also threatens economic stability, weakens government institutions, and damages social order. Corruption complicates development, worsens public services, and creates inequality in the distribution of resources. Unfortunately, corruption is still a chronic problem in Indonesia because it is more often understood normatively than dealt with effectively (Prabowo & Cooper, 2016).

Sociologically, corruption has developed into a habit that is rooted in the bureaucracy and political sectors. This damages democratic values and ethics, and weakens public trust in the state (Vergara, 2021). The low level of honesty among public officials is one of the main causes of the proliferation of corrupt practices (Rachman, 2020). In addition, the economic impact of corruption is also alarming, leading to reduced investments and stagnant economic growth as well as worsening poverty and wider social disparities (Spyromitros & Panagiotidis, 2022).

Corruption has been shown to hamper economic development through budget allocation distortions, inefficient use of resources, and high economic costs due to extortion and bribery practices (Paranata, 2025). In the private sector, corruption creates an unhealthy business climate and significantly increases operational costs. This certainly has a direct impact on the national economy, including in the form of rising prices of goods, such as fuel, and weakening state revenues from the tax sector.

Previous studies have examined corruption from various perspectives. Pertiwi & Ainsworth (2021) discusses the roots of corruption and solutions; Pahlevi (2022) examines strategies for eradicating corruption; Song et al., (2021) examines the correlation between corruption, economic growth, and poverty; while Saputra (2017) and Setiadi (2018) highlight the importance of moral values and the impact of corruption on aspects of people's lives. This study takes a different approach, focusing on government efforts to overcome corruption and analyzing the impact of corruption more specifically on national economic stability.

This study aims to explore in depth how corruption contributes to the country's economic losses, as well as the importance of strict law enforcement and public participation in forming a clean and transparent system. In addition to providing conceptual understanding, this study is also expected to increase public awareness of the threat of corruption in the economic and social life of the Indonesian society.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of deeply understanding the impact of corruption on the country's economy (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Data were collected through documentation studies and observations of statements by public figures, such as academics, state officials, activists, and economists, which were conveyed through media platforms such as YouTube, news portals, and social media. In addition, secondary data from scientific journals, official agency reports, and news articles were also used to strengthen the analysis. Data were analyzed using a thematic approach or by identifying the main patterns and themes that are relevant to the focus of the study. This approach was chosen as it can provide an in-depth description of the impact of corruption on economic stability and people's lives.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY IN ERADICATING CORRUPTION TO MAINTAIN ECONOMIC STABILITY

Data analysis revealed that effective law enforcement plays a crucial role in preventing and eradicating criminal acts of corruption. According to the views expressed in several media interviews, corruption prevention can be carried out through the application of the principles of transparency, accountability, and strict law enforcement. Syadiyah et al. (2024) stated that transparency and accountability

are the main keys to forming a clean government. Without these two things, the government system is vulnerable to abuse of authority which can ultimately disrupt the stability of the national economy.

In addition to the role of the government, active citizen participation is likewise an important factor in combating corruption. The community not only has the right to supervise, but also has the responsibility to report and provide information to those in authority. This is in line with the opinion of Putra & Linda (2022), who stated that community involvement in the process of eradicating corruption can strengthen the public supervision system and form a culture of legal awareness. A critical and courageous society can be a moral force to push for the realization of a clean and just government.

Furthermore, several views emphasize that a deterrent effect through the imposition of severe legal sanctions is also needed in efforts to eradicate corruption. Wahid (2022) emphasized that as an extraordinary crime, corruption must be dealt with strict sanctions, such as revocation of office, heavy prison sentences, and even death penalty in some cases. Law enforcers must be neutral and fair, regardless of the position or social status of the perpetrator, in order to maintain public trust in the legal system. With a strong law enforcement system and active community support, corruption can be significantly suppressed. This is important not only for the sake of upholding justice, but also for maintaining the country's economic stability. When the risk of punishment is high and supervision is effective, the potential for perpetrators to commit corruption will decrease, so that the allocation of the state budget can run optimally for the welfare of the people.

CORRUPTION AS AN INHIBITOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ERODER OF PUBLIC TRUST

Based on themes that emerged from the data, corruption has a major impact on economic development and public trust in the state. Corruption robs resources that should be used for the public interest, such as infrastructure, education, and health services, resulting in unequal distribution, a decline in the quality of public services, and damage to public trust in the government. Magakwe (2024) emphasized that corruption stains the credibility of law enforcement agencies and the judicial system, creating an environment that is not conducive to economic growth. Corruption is also closely related to human rights violations. When public funds are misused, the poor are the most disadvantaged because they do not get fair access to basic services such as health and education. As a result, social inequality increases and poverty alleviation efforts are hampered. In addition, important development projects, especially infrastructure, often stall due to misappropriated budgets. This strengthens public distrust of the state system, including in terms of paying taxes or complying with rules that are considered unfair. Harnois & Gagnon (2022) stated that corruption diverts public funds to projects that benefit individuals or certain groups, rather than the needs of the people.

Another impact is the emergence of acute social injustice. Those who have access, power, or money often gain unfair advantages, such as through bribes in the job recruitment process or project procurement. Meanwhile, competent and high-achieving individuals are marginalized. Mugellini et al (2021) explained that manipulative corruption can occur in the form of regulations or policies that are

made only to benefit certain groups, even though they are detrimental to the wider community.

With these serious impacts, it is clear that corruption is not only a moral problem, but also a real threat to economic growth and social stability. Joint efforts are needed between the government and society to oversee the implementation of public policies, increase active participation, and foster a culture of legal awareness so that corruption does not continue to damage the foundations of national development.

FACTORS CAUSING CORRUPTION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STATE ECONOMY

Results of thematic analysis showed that the level of corruption in a country or region is influenced by various interrelated and complex factors. These factors include social, economic, cultural, and political aspects. A major theme is the poor welfare among public employees, weak supervision systems, and lack of transparency and accountability in the management of state finances. Kohar & Rahmawati (2024) argued that external factors such as low income and a social environment that is permissive of corruption exacerbate this condition. On the other hand, the deep-rooted culture of corruption and the lack of legal awareness in society are the main triggers for the high rate of corruption. In addition, the lack of competency among human resources (HR) is also referred to as a dominant factor influencing the occurrence of corrupt practices. When individuals do not have integrity, work ethics, and high moral awareness, the opportunity to commit corruption is greater. In fact, corruption is not only carried out because of economic needs, but also because of greed. Olugboyega (2024) explained that greed can drive anyone, regardless of their social status, to commit corruption for personal gain. This condition is aggravated if people's welfare is not prioritized since economic pressure can encourage individuals to take shortcuts that are detrimental to the country.

Weak supervision systems and lack of firm law enforcement are also the main triggers for the development of corrupt practices. When supervisory and law enforcement officers do not carry out their functions optimally—either due to limited capacity or because they are influenced by bribes—corruption will be considered a tolerable violation. Singh (2022) emphasized that law enforcers' leniency is one of the causes of the proliferation of corruption, because perpetrators feel they will not face serious consequences.

Hence, to significantly reduce the level of corruption, a comprehensive approach is needed, starting from institutional reform, improving people's welfare, strengthening the supervision system, fair law enforcement, as well as character building and improving the quality of human resources. If these factors that trigger corruption are not addressed systematically, the impact on the country's economy will be severe, promoting inequality, slowing economic growth, and weakening public trust in the government.

THE URGENCY OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH IN COMBATING CORRUPTION AND MAINTAINING THE STATE'S ECONOMIC STABILITY

Corruption has become one of the main obstacles to economic and social development in various countries, especially in developing countries like Indonesia. Corruption not only harms state finances, but also hinders economic growth, creates social inequality, damages public trust, and weakens government institutions. The

results of this study indicate that eradicating corruption cannot be done partially, but requires an integrated approach which includes strong law enforcement, community participation, structural reform in government, and improving the quality of human resources.

First, from an institutional perspective, the government plays a central role in preventing and prosecuting corruption. Transparent, accountable, and firm law enforcement is needed to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators. Kardina & Frinaldi (2023) state that transparency and accountability are the main keys to forming a clean government. The government must show its commitment to the values of integrity and build a strict internal monitoring system for every use of the budget. Without a strong system, corruption will continue to recur in various forms, from abuse of power to embezzlement of public funds.

However, government efforts alone are not enough. The community also has a strategic role in creating an anti-corruption culture. Involving the community in public supervision can narrow the scope for corrupt practices. According to Akmal et al (2021) community participation in eradicating corruption can be realized in the form of the right to provide suggestions and opinions responsibly to law enforcement officers. In other words, the community must be involved in the decision-making process, have access to public information, and dare to report irregularities that occur. A society that is aware of the law and dares to act will be a driver of social change.

From observations of various public figures, corruption has also been shown to have a broad impact on economic growth. Public funds that should be used for infrastructure development, health services, and education are instead diverted for the interests of certain individuals or groups. stated that corruption damages public trust in law enforcement agencies and the justice system as a whole (Iswardhana, 2023). When the public no longer believes that the law is enforced fairly, compliance with the state decreases, including in important aspects such as paying taxes or complying with business regulations.

In addition to eroding trust, corruption has an impact on economic efficiency. Corruption causes imbalances in resource allocation, increases transaction costs, and creates distortions in the market system. Corruption diverts public investment to projects that benefit certain elites, not based on the needs of the people (Rachmawati, 2022). As a result, economic growth becomes uneven and national productivity declines. Foreign investment is also reluctant to enter because of the high risks and unofficial costs that must be incurred.

Furthermore, the roots of corruption are often closely related to structural and cultural factors. Economic factors such as low salaries of state officials, lack of respect for integrity, and pressures of life's needs are the initial triggers. However, corruption does not stop at economic needs alone. Greed, a culture of permissiveness, and weak ethics education play a major role in perpetuating this practice. Astuti et al. (2023) state that The first factor of greed states that anyone with excessive greed will work in various ways, including corruption, to achieve their goals. This shows that enhancing welfare is not enough as it must be accompanied by character and ethics development.

Moreover, the system of supervision and law enforcement need reform. If the supervisory and law enforcement officers are lenient or even involved in corrupt practices, it will create the perception that corruption is normal. Arsad (2023) noted that The prevalence of corruption cases can be attributed to inconsistencies in the

provision of public services to the community, resulting in a failure to meet the expected service standards. When perpetrators do not receive appropriate punishment, the public will feel that the legal system is unfair and untrustworthy. This creates a cycle of corruption that continues to repeat itself and is difficult to stop. One of the main solutions that emerged from this study is the importance of comprehensive bureaucratic reform. This reform includes improving the welfare of ASN, periodic evaluation of the performance of state institutions, digitalization of public services to reduce direct interactions that are prone to bribery, and a safe reporting system for whistleblowers. In addition, early anti-corruption education must also be strengthened, both in the family, school, and workplace.

In addition, collaboration between the public and private sectors is important. The private sector is often involved in bribery practices in order to secure contracts or business permits. Consequently, the business sector must also be involved in the anti-corruption movement through integrity training, implementation of a code of ethics, and compliance with regulations. When all sectors and institutions collaborate, the likelihood of reducing corruption increases.

It must also be realized that eradicating corruption is not only a technical matter, but also involves political will. Leaders at all levels, from the center to the regions, must demonstrate a strong commitment to fighting corruption (Jones, 2022). There must be leadership by example in order for change to take place at the grassroots level.

To ensure the effectiveness of eradicating corruption, the government needs to implement a series of policies that not only emphasize the aspect of enforcement, but also long-term prevention. One strategic policy that can be taken is strengthening the digitalization system of government administration. By minimizing direct interaction between officials and the community in public services, the potential for bribery and extortion can be reduced. Online licensing systems (online single submission), electronic tax reporting, and digitalization of procurement of goods and services have been proven to reduce the gap for corruption in various countries (Heinemann & Stiller, 2025).

In addition to digitalization, it is also important to implement a firm and consistent reward and punishment system (Meiqi & Qianjin, 2024). Civil servants who have integrity and demonstrate good performance need to be given incentives as a form of appreciation, while those who are proven to have committed violations must be given appropriate sanctions without discrimination. This will create a competitive and ethical work environment, where integrity is the main value.

Furthermore, anti-corruption education also needs to be mainstreamed in the national education system. Materials on integrity, ethics, and social responsibility must be introduced early on, not only in theory but also in practice through social projects and character training. An anti-corruption culture cannot be formed in a short time, but requires a long and consistent process that starts at the individual and family level.

To enrich understanding of effective anti-corruption strategies, Indonesia can also learn from several countries that have succeeded in significantly reducing their corruption levels. One successful example is Singapore. This small country implements a high salary policy for public employees to reduce the temptation of corruption, accompanied by a very strict legal system. Singapore's Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) has full independence and is supported by the strong political will of its leaders (Van der Wal, 2021). It is no wonder that Singapore is one

of the countries with the lowest corruption perception index in the world according to Transparency International.

Another example is Rwanda, a country that was once hit by a prolonged conflict but has now emerged as one of the African countries free from corruption. The Rwandan government has carried out massive bureaucratic reforms and prioritizes the principle of zero tolerance for corruption. Every official is required to report their assets transparently, and the slightest violation can result in dismissal or legal proceedings.

These experiences prove that eradicating corruption can be successful if there is synergy between a strict legal system, an efficient bureaucracy, and leadership with a moral commitment. Indonesia has the resources and capacity to achieve the same thing, as long as leaders demonstrate political will and there is collaboration among various members of society.

In addition to following other countries' examples, Indonesia must also strengthen its internal institutions such as the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), the Supreme Audit Agency (BPK), and the Ombudsman. However, the strength of these institutions must be protected from political intervention and legally legitimized so that they remain independent (Khaitan, 2021). If these institutions remain weak, the space for eradicating corruption will become increasingly narrow and will bring Indonesia back into the cycle of failed governance.

On the community side, strengthening civil society is also important. Civil society organizations engaged in transparency and accountability must be given space to play an active role in overseeing policies and the use of public budgets. A free and responsible press is also an important part of the anti-corruption ecosystem, because it is able to open access to information and form public opinion that is critical of deviations.

It is also important to understand that success in eradicating corruption will have a direct impact on the country's economic stability. With a dependable government system, investors will feel safe to invest their capital. The business sector becomes more competitive because it does not need to rely on bribery practices to get projects. State revenues from taxes also increase, because the public believes that their money is being managed properly and used for the common good.

Moreover, eradicating corruption contributes to equitable development. A well-targeted budget will improve the quality of infrastructure, education, health, and other basic services, thereby narrowing the social gap. In the long term, this will increase national productivity and strengthen Indonesia's competitiveness on the global stage. As stated by the United Nations (UN) in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, corruption is one of the main obstacles to achieving sustainable development goals (Mombeuil & Diunugala, 2021). Therefore, the anti-corruption commitment is not only a national agenda but also a global responsibility.

This study has shown that corruption has severe implications on the welfare of Indonesians. Such corrupt practices cause major economic losses, degrade state institutions, and instil doubt of government. Corruption also triggers social inequality and exacerbates poverty due to inequitable and unjust allocation of resources.

To that end, handling corruption requires a comprehensive strategy: legal reform, restructuring the bureaucracy, citizen participation, character education, and use of technology. Collaborative efforts among government, society, academics, business groups, and the media shall build a strong and sustainable anti-corruption culture.

D. CONCLUSION

Eradicating corruption is a multidimensional effort that requires active involvement from various parties, especially the government, society, and law enforcement agencies. These three elements have a strategic role in building a transparent, accountable system that is free from corrupt practices. Strict law enforcement, transparency in budget management, and citizen participation are the main keys to creating clean governance. Corruption has a serious impact on economic growth, weakens public trust in state institutions, and damages the foundations of social life. This practice hinders development, worsens the distribution of resources, and deepens social inequality. Factors that encourage corruption include low welfare of state officials, weak supervision systems, lack of competency among human resources, and a culture of permissiveness towards deviant behavior. Therefore, efforts to prevent corruption cannot be carried out in a fragmented manner, but require a comprehensive and sustainable approach. Institutional reform, strengthening the supervision system, increasing individual integrity, and early anti-corruption education are important steps that must be implemented. Finally, a strong political commitment and collective support from all key sectors and institutions are needed to realize a fair, clean government system that is able to encourage inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

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