

## ***From the Classroom to the Dark Room: Corruption Resistance in the World of Education***

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### ***Abstract***

*Corruption in Indonesian education is still a serious problem that threatens the integrity and quality of educational institutions. This study aims to analyze the forms of resistance to corruption that emerge in the educational environment and to formulate effective strategies in strengthening anti-corruption culture. Using a qualitative approach based on literature studies, this study examines literature, official reports, and national survey data related to corruption practices and resistance in the education sector. The results of the study indicate that resistance to corruption has begun to grow significantly, both at the institutional and personal levels. Forms of resistance include the integration of anti-corruption education into the curriculum, the habituation of a clean culture in schools and campuses, and the active participation of teachers, students, students, and the community in monitoring and reporting violations. Data from the 2024 KPK Education Integrity Assessment Survey (SPI) shows an increase in awareness and participation of education actors, although the application of anti-corruption values is not yet evenly distributed and consistent. This study emphasizes the importance of synergy between educational character, transparent governance, and the use of information technology as a strategy for corruption resistance. This study recommends strengthening anti-corruption literacy and sector collaboration to create a clean, transparent, and integrated educational environment.*

**Keywords:** *Educational Corruption, Corruption Resistance, Anti-Corruption Education, Participation of Educational Actors*

### ***Abstrak***

Korupsi di dunia pendidikan Indonesia masih menjadi masalah serius yang mengancam integritas dan kualitas lembaga pendidikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bentuk-bentuk resistensi korupsi yang muncul di lingkungan pendidikan serta merumuskan strategi efektif dalam memperkuat budaya antikorupsi. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berdasarkan studi pustaka, penelitian ini mengkaji literatur, laporan resmi, dan data survei nasional terkait praktik serta resistensi korupsi di sektor pendidikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa resistensi terhadap korupsi mulai tumbuh secara signifikan, baik di tingkat institusional maupun personal. Bentuk resistensi meliputi integrasi pendidikan antikorupsi dalam kurikulum, pembiasaan budaya bersih di sekolah dan kampus, serta partisipasi aktif guru, siswa, siswa, dan masyarakat dalam mengawasi dan melaporkan pelanggaran. Data Survei Penilaian Integritas Pendidikan (SPI) KPK tahun 2024 menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kesadaran dan partisipasi aktor pendidikan, meskipun penerapan nilai antikorupsi belum merata dan konsisten. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya sinergi antara karakter pendidikan, tata kelola yang transparan, dan pemanfaatan teknologi informasi sebagai strategi resistensi korupsi. Studi ini merekomendasikan penguatan literasi antikorupsi dan kolaborasi sektor untuk menciptakan lingkungan pendidikan yang bersih, transparan, dan berintegritas.

**Kata kunci:** Korupsi Pendidikan, Resistensi Korupsi, Pendidikan Antikorupsi, Partisipasi Aktor Pendidikan.

## A. Introduction

Corruption in the world of education is still a serious problem. The world of education, which is supposed to be a fortress for the protection of the values of honesty, justice, and anti-corruption, is actually threatened by increasingly systematic corruption practices. The change from a "classroom" that is supposed to be a place to internalize the values of honesty, justice, anti-corruption and integrity (honesty-based learning process) has actually changed to a "dark room" that carries out hidden corrupt practices (hidden corruption transactions), this reflects a great irony in the world of education in Indonesia. Character education plays an important role to be applied in Indonesia. Today, one of the character values that has received special attention is honesty <sup>1</sup>.

Corruption in the world of education does not only occur at the upper bureaucratic level, but also spreads to educational institutions at the regional level, such as schools <sup>2</sup>. Indonesian Corruption Watch data titled "The irony of education becoming a land of corruption", noted that the level of corruption in the education sector is still very high. Most of the perpetrators involved in corruption cases came from the State Civil Apparatus (ASN), especially in the Education Office, with a total of 288 people or around 46.3% of the total 421 suspects. Meanwhile, the second most positions are occupied by individuals who serve as Principals and Deputy Principals, as many as 157 people have been designated as suspects.<sup>3</sup> Corruption in the education sector has always been included in the top five most corruption cases. This condition not only damages school governance, but also erodes public trust in the role of schools as agents of social change.

Although there is a lot of research on corruption in education, studies on active resistance from the education community are still very limited. Previous studies, such as research, <sup>4</sup> have focused more on real conditions, identifying the causative factors, and offering solutions to overcome corruption in the education sector in Indonesia. The resistance that arises from educational actors such as teachers, students, students, and the community in preventing corruption, is still very limited. This gap underscores the importance of research that examines corruption resistance efforts from the perspective of direct education actors. The active involvement of educational actors is very important to study. Thus, this paper seeks to

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<sup>1</sup> Dwi Wijayanti, "Anti-Corruption Education in the Perspective of the Teachings of Ki Hadjar Dewantara," *PPKn Journal* 6, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>2</sup> Zainudin Hasan and Daniel Junesco, "School Efforts in Preventing Corrupt Practices in the World of Education," *Referendum: Journal of Civil and Criminal Law* 1, no. 4 (2024).

<sup>3</sup> Sigit Wijaya, "The Irony of Education Is a Land of Corruption" 2022, 2022, <https://doi.org/https://antikorupsi.org/id/ironi-pendidikan-jadi-lahan-korupsi>.

<sup>4</sup> Sidik Permana and Mursyid Setiawan, "Corruption in the Education Sector in Indonesia: Reality, Causes, and Solutions," *Integrity: Anti-Corruption Journal* 10, no. 2 (2024).

complement existing research that offers a new perspective that places more emphasis on the real actions and practical experiences of educational actors.

This research aims to fill this gap with the aim of analyzing the forms of resistance in the world of education and formulating effective strategies for resistance to corruption. Thus, this research is expected to make a real contribution in developing a more contextual and applicable corruption eradication strategy in the world of education. Resistance to corruption in the world of education emerges actively through the role of teachers, students/students, and the community who strive to maintain the values of integrity and transparency in the midst of rampant corrupt practices in the education sector. Based on the research title "From the Classroom to the Dark Room: Corruption Resistance in the World of Education"

## **B. Research Methods**

The research was conducted using a qualitative approach. According to Supoto and Arief, qualitative research aims to describe and analyze various phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of individuals and groups, carried out in a structured manner to interpret data from informants by describing, explaining, and revealing. The researcher uses library research as the main method, where literature/literature is the main source of data, as long as the material is still relevant to the topic being researched stated as quoted in the journal by.<sup>5</sup> Literature study is a process of studying data sourced from various reference books and previous research results that are relevant to the research topic, with the aim of obtaining a theoretical basis for the problem to be researched. In literature studies, researchers urgently need relevant literature as an important part of designing research designs. The Analysis Unit in this study is scientific documents, such as journals, books, and research reports that discuss related issues. The type of research used is qualitative research with a literature study method. The data collected is secondary data, meaning that this data is not collected directly by the researcher but from pre-existing sources, such as documents, literature, or data collected by other parties. Examples of secondary data sources include books, academic journals, articles, financial journals, and census data collected by the government <sup>6</sup>. Literature studies were chosen because they allow researchers to combine knowledge thoroughly without collecting field data directly. The data sources in this study are derived from relevant literature, such as scientific journal articles, reference books, conference proceedings, and other official documents, not necessarily field research. The selection of data sources is carried out

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<sup>5</sup> Achmad Munib and Fitria Wulandari, "Literature Study: The Effectiveness of the Horay Course Review Type Cooperative Model in Science Learning in Elementary School," *Journal of Basic Education of the Archipelago* 7, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>6</sup> Undari Sulung and Mohamad Muspawi, "Understanding Research Data Sources: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary," *Journal of Edu Research: Indonesian Institute For Corporate Learning And Studies (IICLS)* 5, no. 3 (2024).

purposively, that is, only literature analysis that meets the criteria of relevance, actuality, and credibility is used as material. These criteria ensure that the data used is of high quality and resolution. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling method where the researcher ensures the citation of illustrations through the method of determining a special identity that matches the research purpose so that it is expected to respond to the research case <sup>7</sup>. The data collection technique is carried out through systematic literature search using databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and university digital libraries. In qualitative research, data is obtained from various sources, using various data collection techniques, and is carried out continuously until the data is saturated <sup>8</sup>. This process involves identifying appropriate keywords, selecting documents based on abstracts and contents, and recording relevant references for further analysis. The entire process is carried out carefully so that the data obtained really supports the research objectives. The analysis technique used is content analysis, where the researcher identifies, classifies, and synthesizes the main findings from various literature sources. The analysis was carried out thematically to find existing patterns, relationships, and knowledge gaps. There are several methods that can be used in qualitative research, and this thematic analysis is very important to learn because it is considered a core skill or basic knowledge to conduct analysis in qualitative research <sup>9</sup>. The results of the analysis are then used to draw conclusions and provide recommendations based on the findings of the literature study.

### C. Discussion

Resistance to corruption in education shows a significant increase in some schools and educational institutions. This can be seen from the transparency in budget management, open violations, and the strengthening of anti-corruption character education included in the curriculum. Teachers, students, students, and school committees began to dare to criticize and report various deviant actions that occurred in the school environment. The forms of resistance that arise can be broken down into several main aspects, which are as follows.

#### 1. Integration of Anti-Corruption Education in Learning

This was voiced by the KPK in its 2024 annual report <sup>10</sup>, the implementation of anti-corruption education in formal institutions does not only rely on the integration of materials in subjects. Schools/madrassas and colleges are also encouraged to create a culture clean from corruption through daily habits. This was strengthened by the KPK in its 2024 annual report, as an effort to instill character values in students, throughout 2024,

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<sup>7</sup> Ika Lenaini, "Purposive Sampling and Snowball Sampling Techniques," *HISTORIC: Journal of Historical Education, Research & Development* 6, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>8</sup> Suggestion, *Quantitative, qualitative and R&D research methodology*, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Novendawati Wahyu Sitasari, "Getting to Know Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis in Qualitative Research," *Scientific Forum* 19, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>10</sup> KPK Annual Report Team, *KPK Annual Report 2024 "Continuous Mission in the Midst of Transition,"* 2024.

the KPK has carried out a series of socialization, dissemination, public lectures and audiences for all levels which have reached 2,049 educational units/agencies with a total of 25,164 people. In addition, the Education Integrity Assessment Survey (SPI Education) has been carried out by the KPK since 2021 and has become a national priority in 2023 and 2024, which aims to measure the condition of educational integrity nationally up to the district/city level and the effectiveness of the implementation of anti-corruption education by mapping integrity conditions.

In general, according to the KPK report on the Education Integrity Assessment Survey (SPI Pendidikan ), it is known that there are 449,865 respondents, including 141,134 students (students and students), 101,315 parents/guardians of students, 161,808 educators (teachers and lecturers) and 45,608 leaders of education units. Then 36,888 in education units, including 35,368 schools/madrasas for the national and 82 for abroad, 1,238 in universities. The educational integrity index is 69.50, including 78.01 character index, 71.35 ecosystem index, and 58.68 governance index. This indicates that in general, efforts to improve integrity in the world of investigation have begun, but have not been carried out evenly, consistently and optimally. The Chairman of the KPK, Setyo Budiyanto, emphasized that this index is not just a number, but a real reflection that shows that building an anti-corruption fortress in the world of education can no longer be postponed.

These facts occur in the context of increasing awareness of the importance of justice in the educational environment, driven by corruption cases that have come to light nationally. Public pressure and government policies that encourage transparency also strengthen this resistance movement. In fact, the KPK said that in schools/madrasas, anti-corruption values are included in the Pancasila Education Subject, Citizenship (PPKn), and other subjects or as local content. While in universities, this course is often inserted in the Compulsory Curriculum Course (MKWK) or even stands alone as an independent course. Data as of December 2024 (Dapodik Data of the Ministry of Education, EMIS of the Ministry of Religion and PD Dikti), states that the commitment to anti-corruption education is getting stronger, so that anti-corruption material has been integrated into subjects and courses, the data produced in primary and secondary education are 26,175 at the school level, and 2,838 at the madrasah level, then in higher education there are 21,597 study programs.

## **2. Active Participation of Education Actors**

The active participation of education actors is a crucial element in efforts to prevent and eradicate corruption in the world of education, education actors play a leading role in

instilling the values of integrity and anti-corruption. Many teachers, students and students individually refuse to engage in the practice of bribery, value buying and selling or liar levies. They become agents of change by transmitting the values of honesty and integrity through real daily actions, such as refusing gratuities and reporting violations. A close relationship can be seen between the character of education, transparency of governance, and community participation. The three reinforce each other: the character of education fosters awareness, transparency opens up space for participation, and community participation strengthens supervision of corrupt practices. Corruption resistance does not only occur through institutional structures, but also through individual awareness and actions personally, as it can form a sustainable and deep anti-corruption culture in the educational environment. Educational actors carry out strategic roles, teachers as role models and agents of change, students as social supervisors, and school community committees as external supervisors of the use of school funds and policies.

This relationship occurs in the context of education reform that demands higher accountability from a stakeholder. In schools that consistently apply the character of education, the level of public participation in the anti-corruption movement tends to be higher, so the chances of corruption can be significantly suppressed. Public awareness of the dangers of corruption is increasing. It is evidenced by the high level of community participation when the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) held a number of anti-corruption programs, which were followed across generations ranging from youth, business groups, and families. The same thing is also voiced by the 2023 Year-End Report<sup>11</sup>, namely by building an anti-corruption network at anti-corruption academies, as a digital-based anti-corruption education forum, which has succeeded in adding 7,460 users. Of this number, around 4,573 or 61% of them are female users. Then the anti-corruption school (SAKTI), in addition to digital-based anti-corruption learning, the ICW academy team also organizes an Anti-Corruption School (SAKTI) for teacher groups. The SAKTI activity was carried out at the end of October 2023 located in Bogor, was carried out face-to-face for 7 days and was attended by 11 teachers from DKI Jakarta, West Java, and Banten.

### **3. Utilization of Digital Media for Advocacy and Reporting**

The role of information technology as a catalyst for corruption resistance. Digital platforms such as school websites, reporting apps, and social media are used to announce budgets, publish financial reports, and facilitate anonymous reporting of violations,

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<sup>11</sup> ICW Team, "2023 Year-End Report (ICW LAT 2023) 'Growing in Collaboration,'" 2024, 2024.



increasing public trust and expanding the scope of oversight. The implication of these findings is the need to strengthen the capacity of teachers and education staff in character education and digital literacy, as well as the development of an easily accessible and secure reporting system. Effective strategies include anti-corruption training, the preparation of budget transparency SOPs, and collaboration with external institutions such as NGOs and the media. An example of a current reporting application is JAGA, which is a corruption prevention application initiated by the KPK to encourage transparency in the implementation of public services and the management of state assets. JAGA involves the role of the community in monitoring, proposing improvements, and reporting irregularities. JAGA also deployed the government to respond to feedback from the public <sup>12</sup>.

This is also applied by the KPK, in the 2024 annual report, one form of maintaining integrity is to report every gift received by a civil servant or state administrator. How to report it can be directly to the KPK or to the gratuity management unit (upg) of related agencies/institutions and can be online via email, online gratuity application (GOL) and others. As a result, there were gratuities based on agencies with a total of 4,218 reports, 2,958 from ministries/institutions, 689 SOEs/BUMDs/subsidiaries, then the source of gratuity reports was 4,219 total reports, 209 online mobile, 3,891 online web, 77 emails, 20 letters, 19 came directly to the KPK, 3 others, as well as gratuities based on the value of the determination status, namely 4,877 total reports, 2,229 not required to report, 1,673 state-owned, 619 rejected, 138 partially state-owned, 50 in process, 68 article 6, 49 managed by agencies, 39 reports stopped, 12 not followed up. Participatory and technology-based corruption resistance strategies open up great opportunities to create a clean and integrity education culture. With the active involvement of all parties and the use of technology, resistance can develop into a collective movement that is able to suppress corrupt practices in a systemic and sustainable manner in the world of education.

Resistance to corruption in education shows significant progress despite still facing obstacles in its implementation. The integration of anti-corruption education into the curriculum, the active participation of educational actors is also the main key in suppressing corrupt practices, in addition to the use of information technology has proven to be an important catalyst in advocacy and violations of corruption violations. This participation- and technology-based resistance strategy opens up great opportunities to create a clean and integrity education ecosystem. With strengthening the capacity of

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<sup>12</sup> KPK, *Guide to Anti-Corruption Education Implementation Report on the JAGA.Id Platform*, n.d.

education actors, developing an easily accessible reporting system, and cross-sectoral collaboration, corruption resistance in the world of education can develop into a systematic and sustainable collective movement.

#### **4. From the Classroom to the Dark Room: There is Resistance to Corruption in the World of Education**

If the integration of anti-corruption education in learning has been carried out widely through various socialization, dissemination, and curriculum strengthening programs in schools/madrasas and universities, it means that this effort indicates a strong national commitment to build fortified integrity from an early age in the educational environment. The fact that the KPK has reached tens of thousands of educational units and hundreds of thousands of respondents in monitoring educational integrity shows that the issue of anti-corruption has become a common concern and is beginning to be mainstreamed as part of education reform. However, the educational integrity index, which is still at 69.50, indicates that the application of anti-corruption values is not fully optimal and still requires equity and consistency throughout Indonesia.

These findings have the argument that the integrity of anti-corruption education in the curriculum and school culture will increase the level of integrity in the world of education. Data shows that the integration effort has indeed been running and has a positive impact, reflected in the high character index (78.01) and ecosystem (71.35). However, the low governance index (58.68) indicates that the main challenge lies in the managerial aspects and internal supervision of educational institutions. Nevertheless, although the hypothesis that anti-corruption education enhances integrity is acceptable, its effectiveness depends heavily on the quality of governance and the commitment of all education actors in consistently implementing these values.

The active participation of educational actors not only strengthens efforts to prevent and eradicate structural corruption, but also fosters a sustainable anti-corruption culture through individual awareness and action. When teachers, students, students, and the community consistently refuse to engage in corrupt practices and dare to report violations, they are acting as agents of real change in the educational environment. This proves that resistance to corruption can not only be built through formal policies, but also through the transformation of daily values and behaviors carried out by each individual. The increasing involvement of the public, as seen from the high participation in the anti-corruption programs of the KPK and ICW, indicates that the collective awareness of the dangers of corruption has grown and is beginning to take root in various levels of education.



The validity of what was originally warned, namely that the active participation of educational actors is able to suppress corrupt practices, can be proven from data and facts in the field. Schools that consistently apply an educational character and involve the community in supervision, have been shown to have lower levels of corruption. Programs such as the Anti-Corruption Academy and the Anti-Corruption School (SAKTI) initiated by ICW have also shown success in building anti-corruption networks across generations and professions, as well as increasing the capacity of teachers as agents of change. Thus, the argument that the active participation of educational actors makes a significant contribution to building a strong anti-corruption culture in the educational environment is acceptable. However, challenges remain, especially in ensuring the survival and participation of equity across regions and overcoming entrenched cultural or structural barriers.

The use of digital media as a means of advocacy and reporting has strengthened the system of resistance to corruption in the world of education. With digital platforms such as school websites, reporting applications, and social media, transparency and accountability can be realized more effectively and equitably. The public, teachers, students, and other stakeholders now have easier access to communicate, report, and justify alleged corruption violations anonymously and securely. This not only increases public trust in educational institutions, but also expands the scope of supervision to the grassroots level. Thus, information technology plays an important role as a catalyst in building a clean and integrity education culture.

Whether or not the assumption that the use of digital media is effective in strengthening anti-corruption advocacy and reporting can be seen from the gratuity reporting data that enters the KPK through various digital channels. Data for 2024 shows thousands of gratuity reports received online, both through applications, emails, and websites, which indicates that the public and state apparatus are beginning to use technology to uphold integrity. In addition, the reports received not only came from ministries/institutions, but also SOEs/BUMDs and the general public, showing a wide reach. However, this effectiveness still requires strengthening digital literacy, socialization, and an easy and secure reporting system so that all parties can participate optimally. Thus, the argument that digital media can strengthen corruption resistance in the world of education is proven to be valid, although it still needs to be improved in terms of accessibility and quality of reporting.

## D. Conclusion

The phrase "from the classroom to the dark room" highlights the paradox of the Indonesian education world, a place that should have produced an anti-corruption generation is actually vulnerable to becoming a field of corruption. Corruption resistance in the world of education is a systematic effort to fight, resist, and overcome corrupt practices through the character of education, strengthening integration, and involving all stakeholders. However, this still faces major challenges, both from the internal side (resistance, bureaucracy, resources) and external (a deep-rooted culture of corruption). This research has succeeded in revealing that resistance to corruption in the Indonesian education world has grown actively and really, both at the institutional and personal levels. The most important results that were found and that would not be possible without this research are the forms of concrete resistance carried out by educational actors, ranging from the integration of anti-corruption education in the curriculum, the habituation of a clean culture in schools, to the courage of teachers, students, students, and school committees in criticizing and reporting deviant practices. This research also shows that resistance is not only structural, but also grows from the awareness of individuals who form an anti-corruption culture on an ongoing basis. However, this study has some limitations. First, the main limitation lies in data sources that are completely secondary, so they cannot capture the latest dynamics in the field in real-time. Second, this study has not explored in depth the factors inhibiting resistance in various regions with different socio-cultural characteristics. Therefore, for follow-up research, it is recommended that field studies be conducted with qualitative and quantitative approaches, involving in-depth interviews and surveys with educational actors in various regions. Further research can also expand the scope of the influence of digital media and technological innovation in strengthening corruption resistance in the world of education.

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