


The Role of University Students in Preventing Corruption in the Digital Era

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Students, Corruption Prevention	From year to year, the intensity of corruption issues has increased. In the effort to eradicate corruption, university students play a strategic role by contributing to concrete activities, including mapping corruption and providing advocacy for corruption victims. The endeavor to prevent the proliferation of corrupt practices must be carried out by all elements of society, including the youth. History has recorded in golden ink the struggle of students in combating injustice. It is also noted that the nation's struggle cannot be separated from the involvement of university students, and from their movements emerge prominent figures and national leaders. The student struggle is far from over. Today, students face challenges that are no less significant than those of the past—a situation that has left the nation in decline, exemplified by the rampant issue of corruption. Students must recognize that corruption is the principal enemy of the Indonesian nation and must be fought.
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INTRODUCTION

Corruption remains one of the main obstacles hindering societal progress and development in Indonesia. This practice not only damages the national economy but also erodes moral values, creates social inequality, and weakens public trust in government institutions. Its impact extends across various sectors of life—education, healthcare, and infrastructure—where public funds that should be utilized for the welfare of the people are often misappropriated for the benefit of a select few. This situation deepens social disparities and slows the realization of social justice. In such a context, collective efforts from all elements of society are essential, including the pivotal role of the younger generation as drivers of change (Rasyidi, 2014). The youth possess tremendous potential to bring about transformation. With their idealism, enthusiasm, and creativity, they can become key agents in fostering a cleaner and more transparent system. In today's digital era, young people have increasingly broad access to information, allowing for a deeper understanding of the adverse effects of corruption (Atmoko & Syauket, 2022). Technology serves as an effective tool for empowering youth to monitor, report, and advocate for anti-corruption efforts. However, this role can only be fully realized if it is accompanied by awareness, determination, and tangible actions from each individual youth to help break the entrenched chain of corruption.

Corruption often thrives due to weak oversight, limited transparency, and a permissive culture that has long been embedded in society (Ummah, 2019). In this regard, youth can

serve as the vanguard in shifting mindsets and cultural attitudes that tend to tolerate corrupt practices. One effective approach is by promoting continuous anti-corruption education, both through formal schooling and informal activities. Young people can actively participate in programs aimed at instilling values of honesty, integrity, and responsibility within their environments—ranging from family and community settings to educational institutions. Through these initiatives, youth can not only comprehend the dangers of corruption but also be motivated to become part of the solution. In addition, young people can take an active role in overseeing government operations and the implementation of development programs. By joining civil society organizations or anti-corruption communities, youth can help monitor public budget allocations and ensure that government policies are properly implemented. Digital technology can be utilized to create platforms that enable the public to report suspected corruption cases easily and safely. Such innovations not only broaden public participation but also strengthen transparency in the management of national resources.

The involvement of youth in the political sphere is equally important. As the generation poised to inherit leadership, young people must be equipped with a strong understanding of the principles of good governance. They need to be trained to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes that influence public policy. With their courage and commitment, youth can push for systemic reforms to ensure that corruption no longer has a place within government bureaucracy (Ummah, 2019). Nevertheless, the journey of youth in combating corruption is not without its challenges. One of the most significant obstacles is the lack of awareness among young people themselves regarding the importance of integrity and anti-corruption efforts. Many still perceive corruption as an issue solely for the government to handle. The presence of social environments that are permissive toward corrupt practices further complicates the problem. In some cases, youth who attempt to resist corruption may even face intimidation or pressure from certain actors. Therefore, strong solidarity and mutual support among young people are essential to confront these challenges.

The government and other institutions also bear a significant responsibility in supporting youth to fulfill their role as agents of change. Empowerment programs such as anti-corruption training, public awareness campaigns, and capacity-building initiatives must be prioritized. Furthermore, the government must ensure a conducive environment for youth to express their opinions and ideas without fear. Collaboration among the government, civil society, and the private sector is also critical in building a more inclusive and effective anti-corruption movement (Sanjaya, 2017). Youth represent the future of the nation, and great hope is placed upon them to drive meaningful change. By harnessing their energy, creativity, and fighting spirit, the younger generation has the power to build a corruption-free Indonesia. However, this success requires collective awareness, steadfast commitment, and synergy between youth and various stakeholders. Through education, advocacy, and concrete action, youth can serve as a leading force in establishing a society that is clean, just, and grounded in integrity. The fight against corruption is undoubtedly challenging and requires a long-term commitment. However, if young people can participate actively and consistently in this movement, the vision of a cleaner and more transparent Indonesia is not beyond reach. The younger generation must realize that the nation's future lies in their hands, and they bear a

moral responsibility to effect change. With their passion and dedication, youth can become transformative agents capable of leading Indonesia toward a better and corruption-free future.

METHOD

The research approach employed in this study is normative juridical. The data used are secondary legal data, obtained through the comparison and examination of relevant laws and regulations. A normative legal study seeks to uncover legal truths based on the logical reasoning inherent in legal science from a normative perspective. This study analyzes both primary and secondary legal materials. The strategy applied is a conceptual strategy, which involves examining legal doctrines and scholarly perspectives relevant to the field of law. The research relies on primary legal sources, such as foundational legal norms and legislation, and secondary legal sources, including legal literature and scholarly articles from electronic media. The collection of legal materials was conducted through the process of inventorying, studying, and analyzing primary and secondary legal sources related to the topic under investigation. The findings were organized using a card system, specifically citation cards, to record relevant information from each legal source. These cards include the author's name, title of the book or article, page number, and important quotations that are pertinent to answering the legal issues discussed in the study. The legal findings and supporting information were analyzed through the following stages: description, interpretation, evaluation, argumentation, and systematization.

- a. Description was used to identify and articulate the issues or meanings found within the legal materials, aligning them with the central questions of the study. At this stage, relevant legal norms and provisions related to personal data protection were described and clarified.
- b. Interpretation aimed to determine and define the meaning of the legal provisions contained in legislation, in accordance with the intent and purpose of the lawmakers.
- c. Once the legal materials were clearly identified, the process moved to systematization, which involved presenting various legal opinions and mapping the hierarchical relationships among the legal norms related to the research issue. This stage also established coherence between different legal provisions and the doctrinal views of legal scholars, ensuring an integrated understanding of the legal framework.
- d. The systematized legal materials, including legal opinions and legal norms, were then evaluated and analyzed through legal reasoning and argumentation, adjusted to ensure consistency and coherence with the specific legal issues under discussion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The role of university students in combating corruption, as outlined in Law No. 20 of 2001 on the Eradication of Corruption Crimes, is defined as a series of actions aimed at preventing and eradicating corruption through coordination, supervision, monitoring, investigation, prosecution, and trial proceedings, with active community participation in accordance with prevailing laws and regulations. This legislative framework implies that anti-corruption efforts

will never be effective without public involvement. Thus, the strategy for eradicating corruption consists of three main pillars: prevention, enforcement, and community participation. Prevention refers to all efforts made to avert corrupt behavior before it occurs. It is often associated with anti-corruption activities of a preventive nature. Enforcement encompasses all efforts to respond to and tackle corruption crimes, often referred to as repressive anti-corruption measures. Community participation involves the active role of individuals, community organizations, or NGOs in the prevention and eradication of corruption.

Corruption in Indonesia has reached an alarming level and has had a profoundly detrimental effect on nearly all aspects of life. It has undermined the economic system, democracy, politics, legal institutions, governance, and the social fabric of the nation. On the other hand, efforts to combat corruption thus far have yielded suboptimal results. Corruption continues to occur at various levels and appears to have become normalized in society. If this situation persists, it may eventually destroy the country. Based on the decree from the Ministry of Education, all higher education institutions are encouraged to integrate anti-corruption education into their curricula, either as a compulsory subject, an elective, or an embedded topic. The primary aim of anti-corruption education is to foster anti-corruption character building in students and to strengthen their spirit and competence as *agents of change* in the pursuit of a clean and corruption-free society and nation.

In relation to corruption, students are expected to be at the forefront of the anti-corruption movement. Their involvement is particularly vital in preventive efforts, rather than enforcement, which remains within the authority of law enforcement agencies. Students are expected to contribute to building an anti-corruption culture within society. The anti-corruption movement is essentially a campaign to reform individual behavior and systemic structures to prevent the occurrence of corruption. This movement must be a collective national endeavor involving all stakeholders—government, the private sector, and the public—with the aim of minimizing opportunities for corruption to take root. Given the extraordinary nature of corruption, the effort to eradicate it must also be extraordinary. Combating corruption is not an easy task and cannot be the sole responsibility of law enforcement or government bodies; it is a shared responsibility of all elements of the nation. Therefore, an inclusive approach involving all stakeholders is essential. In this context, students—as an integral part of society—are expected to play an active role. Their contribution is especially important in fostering a culture of integrity and public awareness. Students can also engage in educational and campaign programs, which serve as one of the preventive strategies to combat corruption. Through these programs, anti-corruption values and behaviors can be instilled not only among fellow university students but also among younger levels of education such as preschool, primary, and secondary schools.

Universities, for instance, can collaborate with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) to deliver tailored anti-corruption training and investigative techniques suited to students' abilities and course objectives. Students can observe and follow real-life corruption cases and investigations, gaining insights into the functioning of government institutions and the role of civil society in anti-corruption efforts. Moreover, students can actively engage in

anti-corruption initiatives through the arts, such as composing anti-corruption songs, writing short stories, designing posters, or producing short films and campaign videos. Several universities have already organized extracurricular anti-corruption activities. Other activities might include discussions on current corruption cases, causes and effects of corruption, or comparisons with anti-corruption movements in other countries. These discussions may involve materials contributed by either students or faculty members.

The impact of anti-corruption education extends beyond university campuses and into the wider community. According to a study by Punggeti et al. (2024), 65% of students reported that they had begun to share anti-corruption values with their families and friends outside the campus environment. One student, for example, shared that he often discusses the importance of financial transparency with his parents in managing the household budget. This demonstrates the potential for anti-corruption education to generate a domino effect, wherein students internalize these values and become agents of change in their communities. Overall, the anti-corruption education program at Bina Bangsa University has made a significant contribution to shaping the character of the younger generation. Through interactive and contextually relevant teaching methods, students not only gain an understanding of the dangers of corruption but also begin to apply values of integrity in their daily lives.

However, challenges such as limited time allocation and low student motivation must be addressed to enhance the program's effectiveness. By strengthening external support and overcoming existing obstacles, anti-corruption education can serve as a solid foundation for cultivating a generation of Indonesians who are principled, ethical, and actively committed to the eradication of corruption. This study emphasizes the importance of anti-corruption education as a key element in the broader effort to create a corruption-free Indonesia.

Corruption in Indonesia poses a serious obstacle to national progress, undermining the foundations of economic, political, and social life. Despite ongoing efforts to combat corruption, the results remain suboptimal, and corrupt practices are still often regarded as commonplace. University students, as part of the younger generation, have a crucial role in the fight against corruption—not only because of their idealism and enthusiasm, but also due to their access to information in the digital era, which enables them to understand the profound impact of corruption more comprehensively. This study employs a normative juridical method using a conceptual approach, analyzing secondary data such as legislation, academic literature, and electronic articles. Data collection was carried out through inventorying sources and a citation card system, and was analyzed using the methods of description, interpretation, evaluation, argumentation, and systematization to understand the legal issues and the hierarchical structure of relevant regulations.

According to Law No. 20 of 2001, corruption eradication involves three core components: prevention, enforcement, and public participation. Students are especially expected to take an active role in preventive measures, particularly in fostering an anti-corruption culture within society, rather than focusing on enforcement, which falls under the authority of law enforcement institutions. This role aligns with the Ministry of Education's directive promoting anti-corruption education as a university course aimed at building

students' character and competencies as agents of change. Concrete student contributions include education and anti-corruption campaigns through various media, such as the arts (songs, short stories, short films, posters), case study discussions, and collaboration with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in delivering tailored investigative materials. Anti-corruption education on campuses—such as at Bina Bangsa University—has demonstrated positive outcomes, with 65% of students reporting that they have disseminated anti-corruption values within their families and communities.

Nonetheless, challenges persist, including a lack of awareness among students, a permissive social environment, and the potential for intimidation. Therefore, support from the government and other institutions through empowerment programs, public awareness campaigns, and the creation of an enabling environment for students to express their ideas is essential. Synergy among the government, civil society, and the private sector is also crucial in establishing an inclusive and effective anti-corruption movement. Through active and consistent participation, students can become the vanguard in realizing a clean, just, and integrity-driven Indonesia.

Corruption in Indonesia has reached an alarming level, undermining various sectors of life and hindering the nation's progress. Despite numerous eradication efforts, the outcomes have not been optimal, and corruption appears to have become a normalized aspect of everyday life. According to Law Number 20 of 2001 on the Eradication of Corruption Crimes, anti-corruption efforts involve three key components: prevention, enforcement, and public participation. In this context, university students play a vital role as the front line in the anti-corruption movement. Students are expected to contribute significantly to preventive measures rather than enforcement, which falls under the authority of law enforcement institutions. They are encouraged to actively foster an anti-corruption culture within society. This aligns with the Minister of Education's policy that urges universities to include anti-corruption education as part of their curriculum. The objective is to instill anti-corruption values in students and shape them into competent agents of change capable of fostering a clean and accountable governance system. Students can fulfill this role through various strategies, one of which is anti-corruption education and campaigning. These initiatives are not only aimed at fellow university students but also at younger educational levels such as kindergartens, primary schools, junior high, and senior high schools. Universities may collaborate with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) to deliver investigative materials tailored to the cognitive level of students. In addition, students are encouraged to observe and follow corruption cases, investigative procedures, government dynamics, and public roles in corruption eradication efforts.

Furthermore, students can exercise creativity in the fight against corruption through the arts—by composing anti-corruption songs, writing short stories, designing posters, or producing campaign-based short films. Many campuses have initiated extracurricular activities focused on anti-corruption, providing a platform for such creative expressions. Active discussions on corruption cases, their root causes, impacts, and anti-corruption efforts in other countries also serve as effective methods to enhance awareness and understanding. The fight against corruption is a collective responsibility of all societal elements. As a key

component of society, students hold vast potential to act as driving forces for change. By focusing on cultivating an anti-corruption culture and actively engaging in education and awareness campaigns, students can make a meaningful contribution to building a cleaner and more transparent Indonesia.

Anti-corruption education not only impacts academic environments but also extends its influence to broader societal settings. Research findings indicate a domino effect stemming from these educational programs. Approximately 65% of students who have participated in anti-corruption courses reported that they began disseminating integrity values within their families and social circles beyond campus. For instance, one student shared an experience of discussing the importance of financial transparency at home with their parents. This exemplifies how students, once equipped with an understanding of the dangers of corruption, actively serve as agents of change within their immediate communities (Punggeti et al., 2024). In general, the anti-corruption education implemented at Bina Bangsa University has proven to make a significant contribution to shaping the character of the younger generation. By employing interactive and contextually relevant teaching methods, students not only gain insight into the detrimental consequences of corruption but are also motivated to embody honesty and integrity in their daily activities. Nevertheless, the implementation of such programs faces several challenges, including limited instructional time and varying levels of student motivation. These issues require serious attention to ensure the effectiveness of the program. With reinforced support from external stakeholders and proactive efforts to overcome existing barriers, anti-corruption education can serve as a solid foundation for shaping a highly principled young generation committed to actively participating in comprehensive corruption eradication efforts.

CONCLUSION

The involvement of youth as agents of change in the fight against corruption is both vital and strategic. By engaging young people in anti-corruption education, outreach, and awareness campaigns, a culture of integrity can be gradually instilled across all layers of society. Despite the various challenges they may face, the enthusiasm and commitment of youth must be consistently supported by the government, civil society, and educational institutions. In the long term, their active participation not only contributes to combating corruption but also enhances regional and national resilience. Therefore, anti-corruption efforts must be seen as a collective responsibility, requiring the collaboration of all sectors of the nation—with youth leading the frontlines in driving transformative change.

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