

# The role of education in curbing corruption: A comparison of Indonesia and Hong Kong

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**Abstract:** Indonesia has been dealing with corruption for a long time. Several strategies are applied to address the complexities of corruption, one of which is anti-corruption education (ACE). Some countries have tried implementing ACE, with Hong Kong being one of the most successful. Using a comparative method, this study seeks to examine the impact of ACE on corruption, analyse how Hong Kong and Indonesia differ in implementing ACE, and develop suggestions for Indonesian leaders based on the best practices found in Hong Kong's way of approaching ACE while still considering the Indonesian context. Improved collaborations among stakeholders (KPK, Ministries, and private parties), empowerment of schools and teachers, use of public media, and adequate political support are all found to be relevant to improving ACE in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Education; Anti-corruption; Indonesia; Hong Kong

**How to Cite:** Sanjaya, A. P., & Trifena, I. (2023). The role of education in curbing corruption: A comparison of Indonesia and Hong Kong. *Integritas: Jurnal Antikorupsi*, 9(2), 241-256. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32697/integritas.v9i2.992>

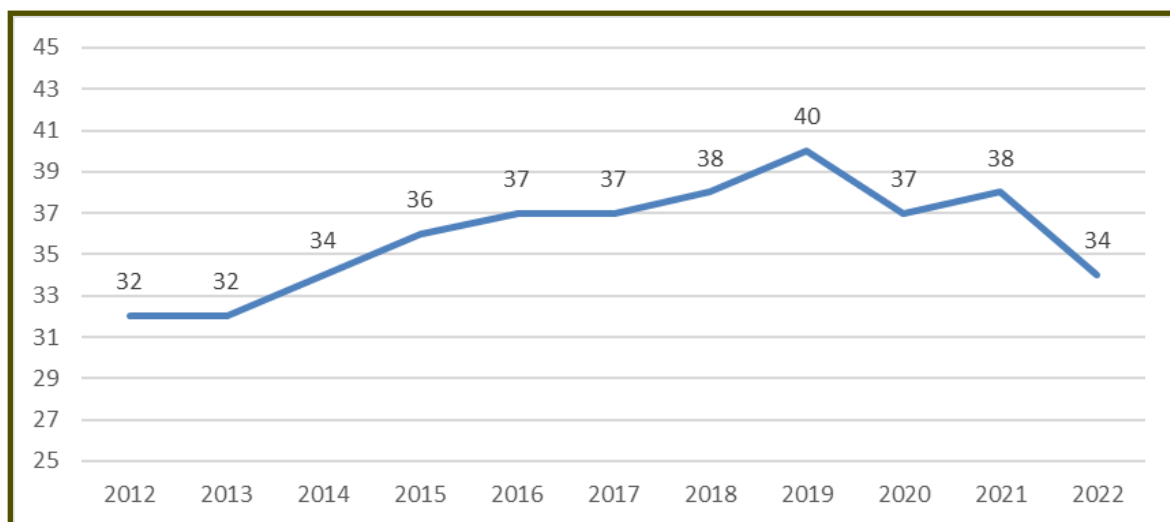


## Introduction

The problem of corruption has always been a part of Indonesia's long history. Corruption has become a serious illness that has permeated and harmed every sector. For example, the education sector, which is believed to contribute to the morality of the nation, is entangled in corruption issues. Indonesia Corruption Watch (2021) even claims that corruption in the education sector has consistently been in the top five sectors with the most corruption cases from 2016 to 2021. Then, although some definitions of corruption strongly relate to the public sector, corrupt behaviour is also found in the private sector (Gopinath, 2008; Tanzi, 1998). This claim is reinforced by the fact that there were 670 corruption actors from the private sector in the period 2001–2015 in Indonesia (Pradiptyo & Partohap, 2016). Some of these facts illustrate the severity of the corruption plague in Indonesia.

Responding to this issue, several strategies have been implemented to curb corruption, including the establishment of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). However, the results have not been significant. As illustrated in **Figure 1**, Indonesia's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) has never exceeded 50, and the country is still classified as corrupt (Transparency International, 2022a). The current strategies are still considered curative and partial, failing to address the root cause of corruption.

Apart from inadequate solutions, corruption itself is an intricate problem. Despite being a common problem, Wathne (2021) contends that corruption does not have a universal definition and has complex drivers and manifestations. This vagueness makes corruption exceedingly difficult to address. Wathne (2021) even claims that completely eliminating corruption is unrealistic. In addition, the nature of corruption is being concealed, making its measurement incredibly challenging. These characteristics are in line with the characteristics of a "wicked problem," coined by Rittel and Webber (1973), for which there is no single panacea. It necessitates a multi-dimensional approach to reducing corruption, not only in the short term but also in the long term. Not only radically, but incrementally as well.



**Figure 1.** Indonesia's CPI scores (2012-2022)

As corruption seems to be a prevalent and urgent problem to be solved, Indonesia has turned to education as one of the means to combat corruption (Pusat Edukasi Antikorupsi, 2021). This initiative is also endorsed by the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which emphasise education as an anti-corruption tool and provide resources for teachers to work on (Munro & Kirya, 2020). Many nations have incorporated anti-corruption concepts and teachings into their educational structures or curricula and have shown progress in lowering the corruption rate (Assegaf, 2015; Gans-Morse et al., 2018; Munro & Kirya, 2020; Quah, 2018).

Hong Kong is one of the countries that has been showing significant progress in combating corruption through education. Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), founded in 1973, has included community education as one of the three-pronged strategies in its anti-corruption campaign, with the other two being law enforcement (curative) and the systemic preventive system (ICAC, 2022). ICAC's anti-corruption messages are embedded in the school curriculum and adapted to students' developmental stages, starting with simple yet fundamental virtues (e.g., honesty and fairness) at pre-primary and primary school levels, up to more complex materials such as lessons on work ethics for tertiary education students (Wong, 2018). Within ten years of ICAC's establishment, there had been a significant decline in corruption practices; anti-corruption values were restored; and Hong Kong had a much cleaner culture (Scott & Gong, 2015). This achievement has been maintained over the long term, as proven by Hong Kong's rank in its current CPI. Out of 180 countries surveyed in 2021, Hong Kong is placed 12<sup>th</sup> in the CPI conducted by Transparency International, whereas Indonesia is ranked at 96<sup>th</sup> position (Transparency International, 2022a).

Given Hong Kong's success story in curbing corruption, it is beneficial to learn from Hong Kong's success in implementing ACE (ACE). Using a comparative approach, this study aims to examine the role of education in curbing corruption practices, compare the existing ACE regulations in Hong Kong and Indonesia, and assess their impact in the respective countries. This study will also develop suggestions for Indonesian educators and policymakers about designing and implementing ACE.

### Corruption and Education

Although it is widely acknowledged that corruption has been a common problem, there is not yet a well-agreed definition to explain corruption. The concept of corruption is also getting wider. Starting with corruption that is limited to only occurring in the public sector, The World Bank (1997) defines corruption as an abuse of public office for private gain. Transparency International (2022b) defines corruption more broadly. Corruption is defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. This means that corruption can occur anywhere, not only in the public sector. Several studies have also begun to raise the topic of corruption in the

private sector (Gopinath, 2008; Gutmann & Lucas, 2018; Troisi et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the definition of corruption in Indonesian anti-corruption law remains closely tied to the public sector (Indonesian Law No. 30 of 2002), where there is a state financial or economic loss as an element of corruption, although the perpetrators can be from the public or private sector.

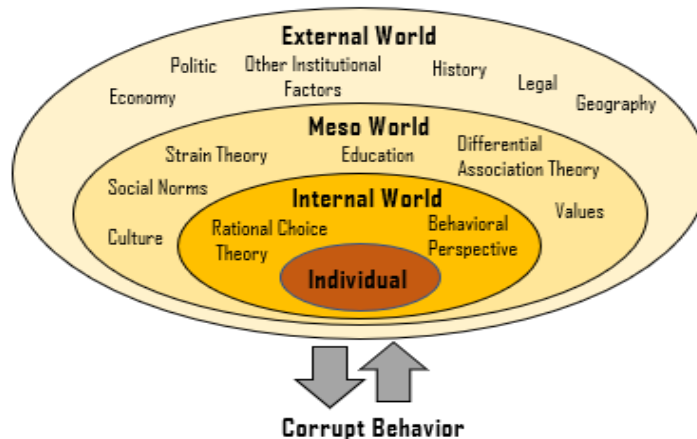
Several recent studies show that widespread corruption also has negative effects in various sectors. In the economic sector, Alfada (2019) claims that corruption brings an economic growth-deteriorating effect to Indonesia, with the higher the level of corruption in a province, the greater the impact of corruption. Then, money politics and corrupt practices in the political sector in Indonesia undermine the value of democracy in public elections (Sjafrina, 2019). According to Warren (2004), corruption creates a disconnection between public power and collective decisions or actions. As a result, many public decisions have been made that are contrary to the aspirations of the public. Also, the education sector is not immune to the negative effects of corruption. According to Handayani (2009), corruption reduces the quality and inclusiveness of education, which has an impact on human development in Indonesia. Furthermore, Muslihudin et al. (2018) demonstrate a causal relationship between environmental damage and corrupt practices, such as bribery of officials in the granting of environmental permits. According to these studies, corruption is considered the root cause of problems in a variety of sectors in Indonesia.

As a complex phenomenon, corruption is also problematic in its measurement (Shacklock & Galtung, 2016). Because corruption is concealed, most measurements are based on perceptions rather than data from real phenomena. Internationally, the CPI is widely used as a reference to determine the level of corruption in a country. Indonesia remains a country with serious corruption issues, with the latest CPI value (2021) of 39 out of 100 and ranking 96 out of 180 countries. Nationally, the Indonesian Statistics Bureau (BPS) has developed the Anti-Corruption Behaviour Index (IPAK) to assess the rate of corruption. Based on perceptions and experiences, IPAK assesses the level of community permissiveness towards corrupt behaviour (BPS, 2021). The most recent IPAK score (2021) is 3.88 out of 5. In contrast to the CPI which has fluctuated in the last four years, the IPAK shows an upward trend.

Theoretically, efforts to explain corrupt behaviour are also crafted in multiple disciplines. Corruption is explained in economic terms by assuming that the perpetrators of corruption are economic men who maximize their own interests (Qingguo & Min, 2018). Several economic approaches such as cost-benefit analysis, game theory, and rent-seeking are also used to explain corruption (Glass & Wu, 2002; Macrae, 1982; Nye, 1967; UNODC, 2022). Then, in terms of psychology, Dupuy and Neset (2018) summarize the explanation of when and why corruption occurs based on the existing literature related to the psychological influence of power, personal gain, rationalization, and emotion. In a broader sense, Heath et al. (2016) argue that the sociological approach has great potential in explaining corruption. Social factors such as ethnic diversity, national education level, and culture are presumed to have an impact on whether corruption is encouraged or discouraged. However, the explanations for corruption in each discipline remain isolated from one another. We believe that an incomplete understanding of corruption will also result in an incomplete anti-corruption strategy.

To bridge that gap and get a more comprehensive picture, Modesto and Pilati (2020) used a multilevel analytical model to explain corruption. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective from Dimant and Schulte (2016), Modesto and Pilati (2020) divide the explanation of corruption into three levels: the internal world, the meso world, and the external world, as shown in **Figure 2**. The internal world, such as rational choice theory and behavioural perspectives, contributes to an individual's decision-making and active participation in corrupt activity. Meanwhile, the meso world has a broader scope that includes external variables, albeit limited to social interaction. Among the factors present at this level are social and criminological elements (Dimant & Schulte, 2016). Lastly, the external world represents various external elements in the form of opportunities that directly and indirectly impact corrupt behaviour, such as the economy, law, history, and politics. The model also illustrates a two-way relationship between these variables and corrupt behaviour where corruption occurs also influences the variables to make corruption more permissible. For example, corrupt behaviour in the formulation of regulations will tend to secure

the regime's existing corrupt acts even more. Through this model, it is hoped that the problem of corruption can be understood and its solutions can be formulated more holistically.



**Figure 2.** Interdisciplinary perspectives on corruption

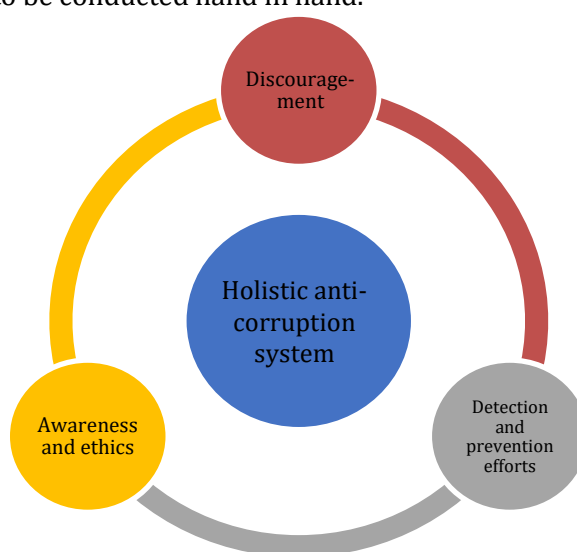
As illustrated, rational choice theory and behavioural perspectives are used to explain corruption in the internal world, though not limited to other perspectives. Oppenheimer (2008) proposes that rational choice theory attempts to explain behaviour by focusing on the processes that underpin individual decisions. This theory relates closely to the economic nature of human beings, who weigh the costs and benefits of a decision. Juraev (2018) developed a model that combines utility functions and budget constraints to explain corruption from an economic perspective. Juraev (2018) derived the following four assumptions from this model. First, corruption is a rational choice phenomenon. Second, corruption offers direct financial benefits. Third, there is a linear moral distinction between the corrupt and the honest. Finally, a rational individual is risk-neutral. The rational choice theory, according to Oppenheimer (2008), is also important in the development of the cognitive process theory in psychology. The term "moral decay" is used by Qingguo and Min (2018) to describe an internal moral factor that causes a person to be biased in determining the outcome and framing the effect of corrupt acts. In line with Lord Acton's words, "*power tends to corrupt*", Qingguo and Min (2018) also mention that power also psychologically leads to self-serving bias in the decision-making process. On the other hand, despite having a tight relationship with rational choice, Prabowo and Cooper (2016) explain corruption in Indonesia from a behavioural perspective. They claim that the normalisation of corruption occurs through rationalisation, institutionalisation, and socialisation. The two latter processes also indicate an external world influence on the internal world.

As mentioned above, external factors through social interactions also play a significant role in the decision-making process of a corrupt act. Humans as an individual tend to follow the pattern of their community. Dimant and Schulte (2016) divide these external factors into two factors: sociological factors and criminological factors. Numerous aspects, including culture, values, and education, are examined from a sociological standpoint. Some studies suggest a correlation between a country's culture and level of education, and its degree of corruption. For instance, countries with a strong culture of masculinity and power distance tend to have greater levels of corruption (McLaughlin, 2013). Meanwhile, although it has a strong relationship with sociological factors, a criminological perspective is also used to study corruption as a crime. Huisman and Walle (2010) used a multi-level approach to explain corruption as organized, corporate, state, and occupational crime. Interestingly, they also argue that the law by itself is insufficient to combat corruption and that social control is also necessary.

The last and broadest level is the external world, where all other factors may influence corrupt behaviour. Dimant and Schulte (2016) mention five factors at this level, namely economic, legal, political, historical, and geographical factors. The economic factors here are different from the economic processes in the internal world since they focus more on macro perspectives. For example, the growth of wealth (GDP per capita) is claimed to have a positive impact on reducing corruption (Moiseev et al., 2020). Then, the quality of government can represent legal and political

factors that externally influence the creation of an environment that supports or inhibits corrupt behaviour (Dimant & Schulte, 2016). The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGIs) are widely used to describe a country's government quality (The World Bank, 2022). Several studies claim that WGI components have a substantial association with the national level of corruption (Park & Kim, 2020). Lastly, the other two aspects are historical and geographical factors. Owen and Vu (2022) found an inverted U-shaped relationship between history and the level of corruption in a country. Albeit debatable, some researchers believe that there is a link between corruption and a region's geographical attributes. For example, the latitude of the capital city of a country turns out to have a strong correlation with the corruption index (Rahimian, 2021).

As corruption is a prevalent and complex problem, the solution needed to address this problem should be holistic. Basabose (2019) defines the holistic anti-corruption system as one that includes deterrence through law (e.g. legal penalties), detection and prevention efforts, as well as efforts to raise awareness and ethics in society. These three elements are indispensable, equally important in the system, and need to be conducted hand in hand.



**Figure 3.** Basabose's (2018) Holistic Anti-Corruption System

As seen in the diagram, punishment by law alone is insufficient to combat corruption. A comprehensive strategy to probe corruption must include efforts to change people's perspectives, instil an anti-corruption mentality among all citizens of all generations; and raise knowledge of the wrongdoings and harms caused by corruption (Gans-Morse et al., 2018; Munro & Kirya, 2020; Quah, 2018). In Basabose's (2018) model, this refers to 'awareness and ethics', whose goal is to alter social values so that unethical behaviour becomes unacceptable.

By its nature, education is not a "quick fix" to prevent corruption, as it is rather a long and repetitive process. However, education is still valued as a powerful tool to pass on norms and core values that underpin anti-corruption behaviours in young people, aiming to create a society that upholds integrity (Munro & Kirya, 2020). It is feasible to promote attitudes that do not tolerate corruption and develop abilities that allow individuals to withstand social and cultural pressures when confronted with corrupt activities by increasing knowledge of what corruption is and its impacts through ethics education (Gong & Xiao, 2017). Anti-corruption initiatives are more effective when the ethical environment is positive, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is explicitly recognized, legal and illegal activities are made public, standards are upheld, and ambiguity about what can and cannot be done is removed. These concepts are teachable through well-planned ethics or moral education (Basabose, 2019), which should be methodical, thorough, and deliberate in instilling moral principles, covering the process by which students learn about the idea of right and wrong as well as how to manage their behaviour to follow socially acceptable norms (Birhan et al., 2021).

Moral education should start during early childhood, as this is the most formative stage when individuals develop their character, personality, and core moral and ethical values, which have a lasting impact on them (Birhan et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to teach young students about the customs and moral principles like truthfulness, empathy, integrity, dignity, trust, and responsibility that adults exhibit throughout the golden period in the early stage of children's development. For younger students, teachers can show their pupils what moral learning looks like in real life by introducing, discussing, and modelling integrity behaviours such as fairness, honesty, and respect as a part of the classroom and school culture (Bleazby, 2020). As they grow in their learning, students can be introduced to more complex issues, such as citizenship, law, and work ethics (Scott & Gong, 2015). Morals and ethics are studied in the same manner that we study any other skill—we move from simpler concepts or tasks to more complicated but consistent conduct.

Although there is not much research on the direct impact of moral education on the declining rate of corruption among countries, positive results have been shown by countries that have implemented moral education in their educational systems. For example, a study across 38 participating countries across the globe by the International Civic and Citizenship Study (ICCS) found that students who learn about civic and societal values are more likely to concur that abiding by the law is an essential quality of a responsible citizen, consistent with the goal of ACE (Schulz et al., 2018). In Singapore, students who learn integrity education are better equipped to uphold their ethics in society, committing themselves to not abusing their power and doing misconduct (Quah, 2018; Wong, 2018). In Hong Kong, the corruption rate was significantly decreasing after a decade of ICAC's establishment, which also included education as one of their strategies (Scott & Gong, 2015). From the surveyed literature, it is clear that an anti-corruption-focused education can support sustaining and establishing ethical ideals and, as a result, help its recipients build resistance toward corruption. Only by instilling moral and character education in young people can the continuity of a society's values and standards across generations be ensured (Birhan et al., 2021) Education is often expressed as an effective and powerful tool to transform people's thinking as well as societal values and beliefs.

This paper aims to bridge the gap between the previous studies, which mainly had a small research scope, and develop suggestions for the Indonesian government in its effort to conduct ACE as one of the ways to curb corruption.

## Methods

This paper uses a comparative study, which Coccia and Benati (2018) define as studies to examine and assess a phenomenon and/or facts among different areas, subjects, and/or objects using quantitative and qualitative approaches to make comparisons. This method will be applied to see and compare the application of education as an anti-corruption strategy in two particular countries, Indonesia and Hong Kong. Hong Kong was chosen as a role model for the success of eradicating corruption through education, while Indonesia is still struggling to handle corruption problems. Information about the differences and similarities in the implementation of ACE is expected to provide input for improving the ACE system in Indonesia. The comparison includes background, strategies, implementation, key factors, and the results of ACE in both countries.

## Result and Discussion

### ACE in Hongkong

Since the establishment of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in 1974, education has been embraced as one of the three main approaches to fighting corruption in Hong Kong, along with law enforcement and prevention (ICAC, 2022). In the ICAC's ordinance, it is stated that one of the commissioner's responsibilities is to "educate the public against the evils of corruption" (Kamil et al., 2018). Educational approaches were employed to shift social attitudes from "passive acceptance" to "zero tolerance" toward corruption (Wong, 2019). The inception of ICAC itself was a decisive action from the government as a response to the severity of corruption in Hong Kong at that time. Corruption flourished in tandem with the rapid expansion of the population and industries during the period. Hong Kong had become one of the most corrupt

countries in the world; corruption was pervasive in all aspects of life and happened "from the womb to the grave" (Man-Wai, 2017). Almost all public services needed bribes to work, including ambulances, schools, police, and other services, and the government appeared impotent to address the social problem of corruption. At its peak, a police corruption case in 1973 sparked public outrage and prompted the government to take concrete action, one of which was the establishment of the ICAC (ICAC, 2022).

The ICAC, particularly through its Communication Relations Department (CRD), devises four strategies for ACE, which are target-oriented, all-around communication, partnership, and engagement; abbreviated as "TAPE" (Wong, 2019). First, a target-oriented strategy is implemented, with appropriate tactics or services provided for each target group. This is done to increase the degree to which the education of each group is accepted. In more detail, Wong (2019) explains the target-oriented strategy by showing several tactics based on the target audience, as shown in Table 1. Second, ICAC employs an all-around communication strategy to disseminate anti-corruption messages across all media platforms. CDR employs a wide range of communication products, including writing, voice, animation, and video. ICAC was also the first government organisation to produce ACE television advertisements. It continues to update the media used, including social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook. Then, partnership strategies and engagement strategies are also implemented to foster collaboration and gain support from all stakeholders for promoting integrity and other anti-corruption efforts. This can be seen in Table 1, where collaborative approaches are used for each tactic in each targeted strategy.

**Table 1.** ICAC's ACE tactics

No.	Target	Tactic	Activities
1.	Young Generation	Promoting positive values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cultivation of positive values at different developmental stages</li> <li>2. Co-creation and Engagement</li> <li>3. Alignment with school curricula</li> <li>4. Collaboration with stakeholders</li> <li>5. Ambassador programme</li> <li>6. Integrity fest programme</li> </ol>
2.	Public Sector	Promoting clean civil service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partnership</li> <li>2. Leadership</li> <li>3. Ownership</li> <li>4. Ethical leadership programme</li> </ol>
3.	Business Sector	Promoting business ethics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Public-private partnership</li> <li>2. Client-focused service</li> <li>3. Ethics resources</li> </ol>
4.	General Public	Promoting "All for Integrity"	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partnering with civil society</li> <li>2. Engaging passionate citizens</li> <li>3. "All for Integrity" programme</li> </ol>

Note. Summarized from Wong (2019)

In addition to the Table 1, ICAC employs a tiered approach by aligning educational levels with Kohlberg's theory of moral growth (Chiu, 2021). As a result, there are three stages: (1) pre-primary and primary education (pre-conventional); (2) secondary education (conventional); and (3) post-secondary and tertiary education (post-conventional). This classification impacts the messages and activities used. Chiu (2021) employs numerous ICAC strategies, including instilling positive values, co-creating and engaging, aligning with the school curriculum, and collaborating with stakeholders.

Furthermore, Kamil et al. (2018) citing (Man-Wai, 2017), state that the media and schools play critical roles in anti-corruption initiatives. ICAC integrates anti-corruption messages into TV dramas and cartoons, for example, by telling success stories in disclosing corruption cases. Through media publicity and education, ICAC aims to raise public awareness of corruption and its consequences. It creates and distributes anti-corruption materials for all levels of education. It also provides assistance for teachers, schools, and universities in integrating the materials with their curricula.

In more detail, ACE is delivered through the curriculum and extracurricular activities in Hong Kong's formal education (Kamil et al., 2018). The time and the formality of the activity distinguish the two forms. Curricular ACE refers to the content of school subjects. ICAC acts as a collaborator by providing materials and assistance in modifying the curriculum in each school. In other words, schools play a key role in providing ACE to students. Through its website, *me.icac.hk*, ICAC provides materials in the form of teaching materials, children's books, and cartoons. Meanwhile, for extracurricular activities, ACE is delivered through visits from ICAC and interactive dramas.

In general, there are no major political or social issues in the implementation of the anti-corruption strategy, though the high-level scandal at the ICAC in 2012 may have had a negative influence on public trust and the sociocultural context (Scott, 2017). However, there are some practical challenges that arise. At least two difficulties were discovered by Kamil et al. (2018). First, teachers face challenges in constructing and delivering content that is age-appropriate for their students. This may lead to the ineffectiveness of the strategies used to reach the targeted student groups. Second, the difference between values promoted by the school and the social environment in which students live challenges the development of students' moral values. These challenges require the creation of curricula and extracurricular activities that are more interesting and understandable to students.

On the other hand, there are some keys to the success of Hong Kong's ACE system. First, education, which is one of the three-pronged strategies, has long been regarded as the primary strategy for eradicating corruption (ICAC, 2022). High awareness of the importance of education indirectly supports the amount of effort put forth through this strategy. Second, the education strategy is inclusive, involving a variety of stakeholders such as the community, schools, and media (Wong, 2018). The participation and support of numerous parties contribute to the strategy's effectiveness and breadth in instilling anti-corruption values. Third, there is strong political support from the government to eradicate corruption (Quah, 2018). This is critical in establishing a conducive environment for strategy implementation.

As aforementioned, a long-term result of an anti-corruption education strategy is a shift in societal attitudes toward corruption. By not only focusing on students as the sole target, Hong Kong's comprehensive anti-corruption education has created anti-corruption as a core value in its mainstream society. Hong Kong is even regarded as one of the international success stories in the fight against corruption. Some evidence of this success is found in several survey results related to support for ICAC and the level of intolerance to corruption, which showed high numbers (Lai, 2002). In the last decade, Hong Kong's CPI has been higher than 73, while the global average was 43 in 2021 (Transparency International, 2022a).

### **ACE in Indonesia**

KPK, established in 2002, is entitled to organise an ACE at every educational level in Indonesia (Indonesian Central Government, 2002). This move was evidence that education had started to be considered one of the preventive anti-corruption strategies. However, there was no indication of a clear strategy on how to conduct the ACE at that time, and KPK's tasks were mostly centred on coordination, supervision, monitoring, investigation, and law enforcement rather than preventive measures.

In 2012, the Indonesian government published a National Strategy for the Long-Term Prevention and Eradication of Corruption for 2012–2025. The long-term vision is "the realization of a nation that is free from corruption with the support of cultural values with integrity" (Indonesian Central Government, 2012). Six key components were devised: prevention, law enforcement, laws and regulations, international cooperation and asset recovery, reporting mechanisms, and ACE. In this strategy, the aim of ACE is (1) to empower individuals to make ethical decisions and show integrity; and (2) to create a culture of zero tolerance against corruption. Hence, the community is expected to be active actors in preventing corruption, to influence ethical decisions and integrity in their environment, not just in the individual domain. Accordingly, ACE becomes a channel to internalise anti-corruption values and establish a culture that resists corruption in the community.

According to the reviewed literature, ACE is implemented at Indonesian schools and universities in two ways. First, it is integrated into daily subjects rather than becoming a stand-alone



subject. For example, a study discussed how anti-corruption values such as honesty, discipline, independence, and justice were integrated into the teachers' lesson plans so these values could be taught during classroom activities (Kristiono et al., 2020). Other studies analyse the incorporation of anti-corruption values in social studies (Suwanda et al., 2018) and citizenship education (Hakim & Pradityayudha, 2021; Hasanah et al., 2020). In early childhood education, anti-corruption values are taught through songs, storytelling activities, watching educational videos, playing games, and classroom interactions (Rahayu, 2020; Ratih et al., 2022). Second, ACE is taught as a stand-alone subject using KPK modules (Fajar & Muriman, 2018). In Kamil et al. (2018), it is also discussed that not all schools are required to implement ACE. Some schools self-initiated it, and some are being pointed out by the government as a part of a pilot study and government grant recipients.

There are some enabling factors for ACE to be conducted in Indonesia. First, it is being explicitly regulated by the law and determined as one of the strategies to curb corruption. Until 2020, 271 Regional Head Regulations have been issued, consisting of 13 Governor Regulations, 53 Mayor Regulations, and 205 Regent Regulations that make ACE compulsory. Secondly, KPK and the Ministry of Education have shown an ongoing commitment to implementing ACE. Based on KPK's 2020 annual report, 4.604 tertiary educators have joined the professional development programs to deliver ACE, and 955 tertiary education institutions have implemented ACE. Thirdly, KPK has set up an Anti-Corruption Learning Centre (*Pusat Edukasi Anti-Korupsi*) as a research institution intended to monitor and evaluate KPK's initiatives in combating corruption, including ACE. This learning centre also provides adequate online resources for the public to learn about anti-corruption.

Aside from the enabling factors, there are some impediments to implementing ACE. First, there is a gap between what is taught in ACE and the actual societal condition. Since corrupt actions have existed in Indonesia for a long time, there is still widespread ignorance, a lack of awareness, and permissiveness and pessimism in society toward corrupt perpetrators (Indonesian Central Government, 2012). Students become demotivated to learn when they discover that anti-corruption values are rarely reflected by a still corrupt society, undermining the meaningfulness of the values and causing skepticism among students (Kamil et al., 2018). Secondly, there are still some concerns regarding the delivery method of the ACE. The absence of effective strategies for communicating anti-corruption messages and campaigns to the public has been a challenge (Indonesian Central Government, 2012). Also, it is worth noting that not all schools and teachers in Indonesia have the necessary infrastructure and devices to freely access the internet and digital materials, which may inhibit the spread of ACE, whose resources are mostly online. Thirdly, the training provided by KPK is not enough to equip educators to implement ACE. Even though some studies and reports indicated that some teachers had received ACE training, it was revealed that not all teachers are capable of doing the planning and implementation well, and they too are limited in transferring their knowledge to fellow teachers (Handoyo, 2021).

Two decades after the establishment of KPK, the CPI for Indonesia has not reached 50, hence it is still considered a "corrupt nation" (Transparency International, 2022b). However, despite not being able to reach 50, Indonesia's CPI has been rising from 2012 to 2022, even though the result is still inconsistent due to political constellations. Considering the index, the strategies that have been started by the Indonesian government to combat corruption (including the implementation of ACE) may be heading in the desired direction, although they need to be more effective and efficient so Indonesia can progress faster. Reviewed literature shows that ACE in Indonesia is showing a positive result. Contextual anti-corruption learning could increase students' knowledge about justice and corruption and, most importantly, contribute to honesty and integrity-forming among students (Fajar & Muriman, 2018; Hakim & Pradityayudha, 2021; Suwanda et al., 2018).

## Discussion

In comparison, both Indonesia and Hong Kong seem to have similar backgrounds. They began the development of ACE along with the establishment of their respective anti-corruption organisations, KPK in Indonesia and ICAC as the Hong Kong counterparts. The problem of corruption at that time was considered to have become a serious public problem. Corruption, such as bribery, has become a culture that is considered normal by society. Using a multilevel analysis (Modesto &

Pilati, 2020), corruption had infiltrated all levels, including culture, politics, regulations, and education. Responding to that condition, KPK seems to have adopted three main strategies from ICAC for eradicating corruption: enforcement, prevention, and education. However, KPK has a relatively more complex background than ICAC. KPK was established not only in the context of corruption but also in the context of Indonesia's multidimensional crisis at that time. In contrast to Indonesia, Hong Kong does not experience political turmoil, economic hardship, or constitutional changes that are related to the corruption issue. Due to those conditions, it seemed that KPK received less support than ICAC. Then, in terms of age, ICAC was founded much earlier, in 1974, while KPK was founded nearly three decades later, in 2002. Given these circumstances, it is unsurprising that ICAC is more established than KPK.

When it comes to anti-corruption strategies, Indonesia and Hong Kong are somewhat similar. To some extent, the three elements of a holistic anti-corruption strategy have been included, both in the ICAC's three-pronged strategy and in KPK's National Strategy for Long-Term Prevention and Eradication of Corruption 2012-2025. Both countries have discouraged corrupt acts by upholding legal penalties. Preventive measures are taken by examining and advising on the procedures and practices in the government and private sectors to reduce corruption opportunities. ACE is also conducted as a means to raise awareness about anti-corruption values. In ACE itself, both KPK and ICAC provide rooms for young people in the private and public sectors, as well as the larger society, to access ACE through various opportunities. Despite the limitations, one of the enabling factors in both countries is that education goes hand in hand with legal punishment and preventive measures, so the anti-corruption strategies can be holistic and touch different layers of society, as described by Dimant and Schulte (2016).

However, whereas ACE in Indonesia is more significantly concentrated in formal education, training, and seminars for the public, Hong Kong is more adept at utilising media to raise awareness of anti-corruption. The "all-around communication strategy" gives the impression that the ACE in Hong Kong is more inclusive of the general public rather than focusing on students or workers that become targets of ACE courses. Also, the tactic in regards to engaging the public is more visible in Hong Kong, as evidenced by the initiatives to include passionate citizens and partner with civil society in conducting anti-corruption campaigns and gaining support from society as a whole. Although the grassroots movement to increase citizens' participation is one of KPK's strategies (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, 2020), limited practical evidence can be found in the literature on how this is explicitly enacted. In addition, the partnership to foster collaboration done by KPK is mostly with government institutions and branches, universities, and schools rather than the general public. While cooperating with the regional government in conducting ACE may produce good results, it also has the potential to complicate the bureaucracy, especially when there is no clear role division among the agents. This may contribute to the different results of how the anti-corruption message is embedded and promoted in Hong Kong's and Indonesia's societies, where Hong Kong is more successful.

In terms of resources and partnerships, both ICAC and KPK provide free access to resources for the public to study anti-corruption values through their websites and portals, so the public can get knowledge and information about anti-corruption values anytime and anywhere. As part of their service in raising awareness about corruption, they also provide various types of training cooperating with educators, government officials, private institution personnel, and even the general public. ICAC, on the other hand, employs a higher level of inclusivity and partnership strategies for ACE than KPK. As mentioned above, the spirit of involving the general public seems to be stronger in Hong Kong compared to Indonesia, and more stakeholders and political support are involved. This is the part that Indonesian policymakers might want to explore.

Indonesian and Hong Kongese educators are in agreement with regards to the limitations on how to deliver ACE effectively, relevantly, and interestingly for students. This implies that the effort to monitor, evaluate, research, develop, and innovate contextual materials and teaching strategies has to be consistently conducted by ICAC and KPK. Making sure that teachers are trained to deliver ACE is important, as is creating accommodating educational policies and practices, such as regulations about curriculum mapping and contents and how ACE is implemented, grants, and reporting strategies for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Other than the provided materials

and training, teachers should also be encouraged to utilise, or create, their teacher forums. This is a venue where teachers can exchange fresh ideas and best practices and support each other in developing relevant content and methods suitable for their teaching.

Interestingly, both Indonesian and Hong Kongese students express a similar view that becomes a challenge in conducting ACE: the gap between what they learn and what they see in society. According to Kamil et al. (2018), Hong Kong has attempted to mitigate this issue by involving parents in supporting schools' efforts so that schools and home work together to instil anti-corruption values. If we connect it to Dimant and Schulte's (2016) socio-ecological circle, collaborating with parents is crucial since family is among the closest social circles surrounding an individual, hence the influence tends to be stronger. Both parents and teachers can help students understand why integrity is important despite the failings they see; moreover, they should be the ones who bring change to society. This approach can also be considered by Indonesian educators, so more support can be gained in promoting anti-corruption values.

Considering the different standings of ACE in Indonesia and Hong Kong, it is unwise to blindly compare how ACE is implemented and its results in both countries. It is worth noting that Hong Kong has a longer history of combating corruption, and ICAC was long established before KPK. Currently, the level of institutional readiness in Hong Kong is better than in Indonesia, and Hong Kong has moved on from the *education period* to the *consolidating period* (Kamil et al., 2018). Meanwhile, ACE in Indonesia is relatively new, and policymakers are still working on how to best conduct it. Kamil et al. (2018) also assert that it might be harder to organise, manage, and monitor the anti-corruption strategies in Indonesia due to the much larger territory and the complexity it entails compared to Hong Kong. Systemic and contextual approaches, more human resources and funds, and clear responsibilities among stakeholders are necessary for Indonesia to cater to its large area.

As we realise that Indonesia and Hong Kong are not 100% apples to apples, we must also be wise in deciding which of Hong Kong's practices to follow, since what is relevant in Hong Kong may yield different results in Indonesia. We propose that one of the ways that Indonesian policymakers can try is to enhance the grassroots movement and listen to what citizens have to say about what might work to combat corruption. Considering that Indonesia consists of different religions, cultures, and traditions, combining legal knowledge with indigenous or religious beliefs may be more effective and relatable to (Kamil et al., 2018).

As aforementioned, a long-term impact of an ACE strategy is a shift in societal attitudes towards corruption. Considering that the anti-corruption strategies (legal consequences, prevention, and awareness building) are interrelated and work together holistically, it is rather difficult to analyse the impact of ACE alone. However, from the surveyed literature, it is clear that ACE may contribute to promising results in both Hong Kong and Indonesia.

Although positive results are shown in both countries, it has been discussed that the anti-corruption message is more visible in Hong Kong as the country used mass media and partnerships to reach not only students but also the community as a whole. Hong Kong's efforts in combating corruption cover both the holistic approach described by Basabose (2019) and the socio-ecological circles described by Dimant and Schulte (2016); hence, the impact of its anti-corruption efforts is more profound. Indonesia must learn from Hong Kong's commitment to continuous improvement to make anti-corruption messages clear to citizens through mass media. The ACE should touch not only formal education, so not only students but also the general public will be exposed to the messages. To achieve this, it must broaden its partnership, which means cooperating with non-government institutions is also needed.

## Conclusions

This research has examined the role of education, both theoretically and practically, in overcoming corruption problems in Hong Kong and Indonesia. ACE, according to research, has an effect on changing corrupt behaviour. Education, through a multi-level approach, is believed to play a role in the formation of ethical ideals, both at the personal and social levels, both directly and indirectly. ACE practices in both Hong Kong and Indonesia have had a positive impact in assisting

efforts to eradicate corruption, confirming this finding. Although it did not produce immediate results, education became the primary long-term strategy adopted by both countries. Following that, a comparison of practices in the two countries revealed several key factors that distinguished the effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy in each country, namely time, comprehensive collaboration, and adequate political support.

There are several recommendations for the Indonesian government to consider to improve the ACE's effectiveness. First, the government must improve collaboration among various parties. Government institutions in charge of ACE implementation (KPK, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs) must collaborate to develop synchronised and standardised strategies and programmes. The government should also empower schools to be collaborators in programme preparation and implementation rather than just executors. Second, just like Hong Kong, the Indonesian government must embrace the media as a catalyst and intermediary in instilling anti-corruption values not only in schools but also in the wider community. For example, the government can collaborate with movie producers to create movie clips for different target audiences about anti-corruption values to be accessed by schools, families, and the general public, and relate them to religion and societal norms. Finally, and yet most importantly, the government must provide adequate political support, including leadership commitment, supportive regulations, and resources for ACE implementation.

As anti-corruption in Indonesia is still an evolving issue, there is only a limited amount of rigorous research currently available. Also, this study relies on secondary data, and various sampling methods are used. As there is no direct observation, the data obtained may not represent the actual condition in reality. However, using secondary resources from different contexts has enabled this study to capture a broader idea of how anti-corruption is implemented in different contexts, both in Hong Kong and in Indonesia. Furthermore, because the social, economic, cultural, and historical contexts of Indonesia and Hong Kong are different, the metrics used to contrast similarities and differences may not be validly comparable and can legitimately be used outside their particular settings. However, comparing different contexts provides an improved understanding of the subject matter across different systems, offers richer perspectives on looking at the problems, and helps in developing alternative predictions and ideas. While we must be cautious in selecting a solution that will work to improve Indonesia's ACE, comparison with Hong Kong provides various strategies for Indonesia to follow and modify based on Indonesia's unique circumstances.

Future researchers may want to look for primary data to gain first-hand information that is closest to the research subjects, which improves the accuracy and reliability of the research. Also, as this study seeks to only compare the implementation and impact of ACE in Hong Kong and Indonesia, it may not provide a robust analysis as may be achieved in longitudinal studies that follow the implementation of ACE over a longer timeframe. Future research may consider conducting longitudinal studies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how ACE is implemented in specific contexts and to examine its long-term impact on the population being studied.

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