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Psychological Perspective on The Role of Anti-Corruption Education in Developing Students' leadership Characteristic

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ABSTRACT

Corruption is a psychological phenomenon involving moral awareness, value internalization, self-regulation, and ethical decision-making. This study explored the role of anti-corruption education in developing students' leadership character in tourism and hospitality education. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali, Indonesia, involving five purposively selected lecturers. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis and analyzed thematically. Six themes emerged: moral awareness, value internalization and self-regulation, lecturer role modeling, ethical decision-making and moral courage, leadership character development, and relevance to tourism and hospitality education. Findings suggest that anti-corruption education fosters ethical leadership through moral awareness, internalized values, self-regulation, and moral courage. Lecturer role modeling and contextual moral dilemmas were key developmental mechanisms, while self-leadership emerged as a foundation for ethical leadership. However, findings reflect lecturers' perspectives rather than direct student behavioral outcomes. Future research should involve students and use longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to assess ethical leadership development.

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is often understood as a legal issue and a form of abuse of power (Sciences et al., 2024). However, from a psychological perspective, corruption is also associated with how individuals make decisions when confronted with personal interests, social pressure, opportunities, social norms, and moral values. Individuals may understand that a particular action is wrong, but

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such knowledge does not necessarily enable them to reject that action when they face pressure or perceive personal benefits. This situation makes anti-corruption education particularly important at the higher education level. Anti-corruption education should not merely teach students the definition of corruption, its various forms, or the legal consequences of corrupt behavior (Hukum et al., 2019). It should also address students' psychological development, particularly how they develop values, make decisions, regulate themselves, consider the interests of others, and maintain their principles when facing difficult situations. UNESCO places integrity education as an important approach to developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values required for young people to reject corruption and become agents of change.

In Indonesia, higher education institutions have a strategic position in developing a culture of integrity (Arrizki et al., n.d.). The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) also emphasizes that an anti-corruption culture needs to be developed within educational environments. Behaviors such as plagiarism, proxy attendance, academic data manipulation, and dishonesty in academic activities should be viewed as integrity-related issues that need to be prevented from an early stage. This issue is particularly relevant for students in tourism education. Tourism graduates will work in environments that rely heavily on trust. They may become hotel supervisors, restaurant managers, destination managers, event organizers, tourism entrepreneurs, or organizational leaders. In these positions, they will deal with financial resources, human resources, vendors, customers, communities, and various stakeholder interests. A tourism leader who possesses strong technical abilities but lacks integrity may create problems that extend beyond individual mistakes. Therefore, leadership character needs to be developed while students are still in higher education (*Siap Berantas Korupsi*, n.d.).

From a psychological perspective, leadership character development is a gradual process. Students first acquire knowledge, then develop awareness, internalize values, learn self-regulation, and eventually apply those values through behavior (Tinggi, n.d.). The expected process can be simply illustrated as: anti-corruption education → moral awareness → moral development → value internalization → self-regulation → ethical leadership character. From this perspective, anti-corruption education is not merely education to prevent corruption; it is also education that develops individuals who are capable of leading themselves before leading others.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach to examine the role of anti-corruption education in developing students' leadership characteristics from a psychological perspective. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to understand how anti-corruption education is perceived and implemented by lecturers, particularly in relation to students' moral awareness, value internalization, self-regulation, ethical decision-making, and leadership development. Rather than measuring anti-corruption education through students' academic achievement or quantitative scores, this study focused on the experiences and perspectives of lecturers who were directly involved in delivering anti-corruption education. The study therefore

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viewed anti-corruption education as a developmental process involving knowledge, moral awareness, values, behavioral regulation, and the development of ethical leadership characteristics.

The study was conducted at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali, particularly within the context of tourism and hospitality education. This context was considered relevant because tourism graduates are expected to work in professional environments that require trust, responsibility, transparency, service orientation, and ethical decision-making. Students may subsequently occupy positions such as hotel supervisors, restaurant managers, event organizers, destination managers, tourism entrepreneurs, or other leadership roles. Consequently, the development of integrity during higher education is considered an important component of professional and leadership preparation. The informants consisted of five lecturers who teach or are directly involved in anti-corruption education at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali. The lecturers were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed direct experience in delivering anti-corruption-related learning and observing students' responses to integrity, ethical decision-making, and anti-corruption issues in educational settings. The inclusion criteria were: (1) lecturers who were actively involved in teaching or facilitating anti-corruption education; (2) lecturers who had experience discussing integrity, honesty, ethical behavior, or anti-corruption issues with students; and (3) lecturers who were willing to participate in semi-structured interviews and share their professional perspectives. The 32 third-semester students of the International Hospitality Management program were not treated as research informants. They were part of the educational context in which anti-corruption learning takes place but were not directly interviewed as sources of research data. Therefore, their number is not included in the participant sample. This distinction was made to ensure consistency between the data sources described in the Methods and the findings presented in the Results. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis, with interviews serving as the primary source of qualitative data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the five lecturers to explore their perceptions and experiences concerning the role of anti-corruption education in students' moral and leadership development.

The interview questions focused on several psychological dimensions, including: (1) students' moral awareness; (2) understanding of integrity and dishonest behavior; (3) value internalization; (4) self-regulation and self-control; (5) ethical decision-making; (6) moral courage; (7) the role of lecturers as behavioral role models; and (8) the relationship between anti-corruption education and students' preparation for future leadership roles. In addition to interviews, relevant educational documents were examined, including course materials, institutional policies, learning materials, and documents related to anti-corruption education. Document analysis was used to provide contextual information regarding how values such as honesty, responsibility, fairness, accountability, and integrity were incorporated into the educational process. The study did not use student interviews as a source of primary empirical evidence. Therefore, statements concerning students' behavior or development in the Results are presented as lecturers' perceptions and interpretations, rather than as direct evidence obtained from students themselves.

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1. Psychological Analytical Framework

The analysis was guided by a developmental psychological framework: Anti-Corruption Education → Moral Awareness → Moral Development → Value Internalization → Self-Regulation → Ethical Leadership Character. The framework assumes that anti-corruption education may initially increase students' knowledge and awareness of unethical behavior. However, knowledge alone is not considered sufficient to produce ethical behavior. Through reflection, discussion, social interaction, and repeated exposure to ethical situations, students may gradually internalize ethical values and develop stronger self-regulation. These psychological processes may subsequently be expressed through leadership characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, fairness, accountability, empathy, consistency, and moral courage. The analysis was informed by concepts from moral development theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and ethical leadership theory. Moral development theory was used to understand how individuals develop their reasoning concerning right and wrong. Social Cognitive Theory helped explain the importance of observation, social environment, role models, self-efficacy, and behavioral regulation. Ethical leadership theory was used to interpret how internalized values may be expressed through responsible decision-making and interpersonal behavior.

The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis consisted of four stages. First, the interview data were organized and repeatedly reviewed to obtain an overall understanding of the lecturers' experiences and perspectives. Second, meaningful statements were coded according to concepts emerging from the data. Third, related codes were grouped into broader themes, including moral awareness, moral development, value internalization, self-regulation, moral courage, role modeling, and ethical leadership. Finally, the themes were interpreted in relation to the psychological framework and relevant theoretical perspectives. Particular attention was given to how lecturers described the developmental relationship between anti-corruption education and students' preparation for ethical behavior and leadership. The analysis did not assume that all students experience the same psychological developmental process. Instead, the findings represent the collective perspectives of the five lecturers concerning how anti-corruption education may contribute to students' moral and leadership development.

2. Trustworthiness

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the study applied data triangulation by comparing information obtained from the five lecturer interviews with relevant educational documents. Emerging themes were also compared across the five informants to identify areas of convergence and variation. Direct quotations from the lecturers were retained during the coding and interpretation process to ensure that the themes remained grounded in the empirical data. The researchers distinguished participants' statements from theoretical interpretation and maintained a reflexive position throughout the analysis. Through this methodological approach, the study sought to explain how anti-corruption education can move beyond the transmission of legal knowledge

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toward the development of students' psychological capacity to recognize ethical problems, regulate personal interests, internalize integrity values, and prepare for responsible leadership.

RESULTS

The thematic analysis of interviews with five lecturers involved in anti-corruption education at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali identified six major themes: (1) anti-corruption education as moral awareness development, (2) value internalization and self-regulation, (3) lecturers as role models, (4) ethical decision-making and moral courage, (5) leadership character development, and (6) the relevance of anti-corruption education to tourism and hospitality education. The findings presented in this section reflect the perspectives and experiences of the five lecturers as the primary research informants

1. Anti-Corruption Education as Moral Awareness Development

The first theme emerging from the interviews was the importance of developing students' moral awareness. All five lecturers described anti-corruption education as broader than introducing students to the definition of corruption, its forms, and its legal consequences. They emphasized that students should also be able to recognize integrity-related problems in their everyday academic lives. The lecturers identified several examples of behavior that may reflect weaknesses in integrity, including cheating, plagiarism, proxy attendance, academic data manipulation, dishonesty in completing assignments, and failure to acknowledge sources appropriately. According to the lecturers, these behaviors may appear relatively minor, but they are relevant to the development of students' attitudes toward honesty and responsibility.

One lecturer explained: "Anti-corruption education should be provided from an early stage, beginning in the first semester of higher education, so that students understand the importance of implementing anti-corruption values in their daily lives as members of society" (Lecturer 1, Interview: August 20th, 2026).

This explain that the implementation of anti-corruption education should also be continuously monitored to ensure that it is properly applied and to prevent any deviations in practice. A second lecturer similarly emphasized the importance of recognizing integrity in students' daily behavior: "Anti-corruption education is a must nowadays. Because we have to practice it in the community to be a wise leadership" (lecturer 2, interview: 28th, 2026).

These statements indicate that the lecturers viewed moral awareness as an initial stage in anti-corruption education. From their perspective, students need to recognize the ethical dimension of ordinary decisions before they can develop stronger personal commitments to integrity.

The lecturers' accounts also suggest that anti-corruption education becomes more meaningful when students are encouraged to reflect on why a particular behavior is considered wrong rather than simply being informed that it violates a rule. Thus, awareness involves both recognition of inappropriate behavior and an understanding of the values underlying ethical conduct.

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2. Value Internalization and Self-Regulation

The second theme concerned the development of internalized values and self-regulation. The lecturers distinguished between students' knowledge of rules and their ability to follow those rules when external supervision is limited.

One lecturer stated:

"Students, as agents of change, must have a thorough understanding of positive values and be capable of implementing them within their surrounding environment. Anti-corruption education must be firmly strengthened because corruption can destroy the future of those who become victims of corrupt practices as well as undermine the future of a country" (Lecturer 3, Interview: August 15th, 2026). Another lecturer explained: "Corruption can grow and develop when individuals lack strong self-control or when activities are carried out without adequate supervision and monitoring" (Lecturer 5, Interview: August 15th, 2026).

The lecturers' responses indicate that they perceived self-regulation as an important psychological component of integrity. Students may encounter situations in which dishonest behavior offers personal convenience or advantage. In such circumstances, ethical behavior depends not only on knowledge of institutional rules but also on the ability to regulate personal interests. The lecturers therefore viewed anti-corruption education as an opportunity to encourage students to move from externally controlled compliance toward internally guided behavior. In this perspective, the important question is not simply whether students know that cheating or dishonesty is prohibited, but whether they are able to maintain ethical behavior when there is little possibility of punishment or detection. The findings suggest that value internalization and self-regulation are closely connected. Values such as honesty, responsibility, fairness, and accountability become meaningful when they influence actual decisions and behavior.

3. Lecturers as Role Models in Integrity Education

The third theme identified from the interviews was the role of lecturers as behavioral role models. The five lecturers emphasized that students learn not only through formal classroom instruction but also through observing the behavior of educators and experiencing the institutional environment.

One lecturer stated:

"Lecturers and institutional leaders should serve as role models, provide motivation, and create opportunities for students to participate in monitoring and preventing potential acts of corruption. In this way, students will feel valued and develop a sense of ownership toward the educational institution in which they study" (Lecturer 2, Interview: August 27th, 2026).

The lecturers described honesty, fairness, discipline, transparency, consistency, and responsibility as behaviors that should be demonstrated by educators. They perceived that the credibility of anti-corruption education could be weakened when the behavior of educators contradicts the values communicated in the classroom.

Another lecturer explained:

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"Community leaders should also demonstrate a high level of integrity and strong commitment to upholding the law, regulations, and various policies related to corruption prevention and violations. This reflects the dedication and consistency of leaders in strengthening and implementing anti-corruption education in Indonesia" (Lecturer 4, Interview: August 30th, 2026.

The findings indicate that anti-corruption education has both an explicit and an implicit dimension. Explicit education occurs through lectures, learning materials, discussions, and assignments. Implicit education occurs when students observe how lecturers respond to mistakes, apply rules, treat students fairly, manage responsibilities, and demonstrate transparency. From the lecturers' perspectives, these two forms of learning should be consistent. The educational environment itself therefore becomes an important component of integrity development.

4. Ethical Decision-Making and Moral Courage

The fourth theme concerned ethical decision-making and moral courage. The lecturers explained that students need opportunities to consider ethical issues in situations where personal interests may conflict with responsibilities toward others.

One lecturer stated:

"Lecturers and students, as adults, should demonstrate sound judgment in decision-making, particularly in determining what is right or wrong and what is good or bad, as well as in imposing appropriate sanctions for any violations of anti-corruption values. This also includes situations involving pressure from other parties and conflicts of interest that may arise in efforts to enforce anti-corruption principles and practices" (Lecturer 4, August 29th, 2026).

The lecturers emphasized that ethical decision-making requires students to consider more than immediate personal benefits. They should also consider fairness, responsibility, consequences, trust, and the interests of other individuals or groups. The interview findings further indicate that moral courage was perceived as an important element of ethical behavior. Recognizing that a behavior is wrong does not necessarily mean that an individual will have the courage to oppose it. Students may experience pressure from friends, organizational groups, or other social environments. Therefore, according to the lecturers, anti-corruption education should provide learning situations that allow students to discuss difficult choices and practice explaining and defending ethical decisions.

5. Moral Dilemmas as Learning Media

The fifth theme related to the use of moral dilemmas as an educational strategy. The lecturers suggested that realistic cases can help students understand the psychological and ethical complexity of decision-making. For example, students may be presented with a situation in which they are responsible for managing the budget of a student activity and discover an unexplained surplus. Rather than simply asking students to identify whether taking the money is permitted, the learning activity can require them to consider responsibility, fairness, trust, accountability, and the potential consequences of their decision.

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One lecturer described the importance of contextual learning:

"As future leaders in the tourism and hospitality industry, students need to develop strong moral awareness and ethical decision-making skills through anti-corruption education. The use of moral dilemmas as a learning medium can provide students with opportunities to critically examine real-life situations involving conflicts between personal interests, professional responsibilities, social pressures, and ethical values. Through such learning experiences, students can strengthen their moral judgment, self-control, and integrity, preparing them to become resilient and ethical leaders who are capable of making responsible decisions and preventing corrupt practices in the future" (Lecturer 3, Interview: August 25th, 2026).

The lecturers' perspectives suggest that moral dilemmas may encourage students to move from rule-based thinking toward ethical reasoning. Instead of asking only, "Is this allowed?", students can be encouraged to ask, "Is this fair?", "Who may be affected?", "What responsibility do I have?", and "What would an ethical leader do in this situation?" This approach positions anti-corruption education as reflective learning rather than simple knowledge acquisition.

6. Anti-Corruption Education and Leadership Character Development

The sixth theme concerned the relationship between integrity and leadership. The lecturers consistently connected anti-corruption education with students' preparation for future professional and leadership responsibilities.

One lecturer explained:

"As future leaders in the tourism and hospitality industry, students need to be equipped with strong anti-corruption education from an early stage. Such education is essential for developing integrity, ethical awareness, and responsible leadership, enabling students to become resilient and trustworthy leaders who are committed to preventing and combating corruption in the future" (Lecturer 1, Interview: August 30th, 2026).

The lecturers associated ethical leadership with characteristics including honesty, responsibility, fairness, accountability, empathy, consistency, and moral courage. They viewed these characteristics as relevant even before students formally occupy leadership positions. According to the lecturers, leadership begins with the ability to manage oneself. Students who learn to take responsibility for their actions, complete tasks honestly, respect rules, and consider the consequences of their decisions are developing behaviors that may become important in future leadership roles. The findings therefore indicate that the lecturers perceived anti-corruption education as part of leadership preparation. Rather than treating integrity as a separate moral requirement, they viewed it as a basic characteristic of responsible leadership.

7. Relevance to Tourism and Hospitality Education

The interviews also revealed the importance of contextualizing anti-corruption education within the tourism and hospitality industry. The lecturers considered this particularly relevant

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because graduates may enter professional environments involving financial resources, suppliers, customers, employees, tourism businesses, and community stakeholders.

One lecturer stated:

"Anti-corruption education is important for the tourism and hospitality business sector to prevent the emergence and development of corrupt practices from an early stage. Through dynamic and sustainable character development, students are expected to become proactive agents who actively participate in various efforts to combat corruption" (Lecturer , Interview: September 2th, 2026).

The lecturers identified several potential professional situations involving ethical decision-making, including procurement, vendor selection, financial management, event organization, customer information, organizational resources, and relationships with external stakeholders. These perspectives suggest that anti-corruption education should be connected to realistic professional situations. Tourism and hospitality students can be exposed to cases involving hotel operations, restaurants, events, destinations, tourism enterprises, and organizational management. Such contextualization may help students understand that integrity is not only an academic value but also a professional competence required in the tourism workplace.

8. Integrated Finding: From Moral Awareness to Ethical Leadership

The six themes identified in the interviews can be integrated into a psychological developmental process. The lecturers' perspectives indicate that anti-corruption education begins with the development of knowledge and awareness, but its broader educational value lies in helping students reflect on moral choices and develop internal standards for behavior. The process emerging from the interview data can be summarized as: Anti-Corruption Education → Moral Awareness → Moral Reflection → Value Internalization → Self-Regulation → Moral Courage → Ethical Leadership. The lecturers did not describe this process as automatic or identical for every student. Rather, they perceived anti-corruption education as an educational environment that provides opportunities for students to develop these capacities through classroom discussion, moral dilemmas, reflection, role modeling, and repeated practice.

The integrated findings indicate that anti-corruption education can be positioned as both preventive education and character education. It provides knowledge about corruption while simultaneously creating opportunities to develop psychological capacities that are relevant to ethical behavior and future leadership. Importantly, these findings represent the perceptions of the five lecturers and should therefore not be interpreted as direct evidence that all students have achieved these psychological outcomes. The findings instead demonstrate how educators involved in anti-corruption education understand its potential contribution to students' moral and leadership development.

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DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that anti-corruption education should not be understood solely as the transmission of knowledge about corruption, legal regulations, and sanctions. Based on the perspectives of the five lecturers interviewed, anti-corruption education represents a broader developmental process through which students are expected to recognize ethical problems, reflect on moral choices, internalize values, regulate their behavior, and gradually develop characteristics associated with ethical leadership.

This finding is important because knowledge about corruption does not automatically result in ethical behavior. An individual may understand that cheating, plagiarism, manipulation, or dishonesty is prohibited while still engaging in such behavior when personal interests, peer pressure, or opportunities for personal benefit arise. Consequently, the psychological effectiveness of anti-corruption education depends on whether ethical principles become part of an individual's internal value system. The findings support the conceptual sequence proposed in this study: Anti-Corruption Education → Moral Awareness → Moral Reflection → Value Internalization → Self-Regulation → Moral Courage → Ethical Leadership. This sequence should not be interpreted as a mechanically linear process. Rather, it represents a developmental pathway identified from the lecturers' accounts. Anti-corruption education provides the initial environment in which students encounter ethical concepts and situations. Through reflection and repeated practice, these concepts may become increasingly internalized and eventually guide behavioral choices.

From the perspective of moral development theory, this process reflects movement beyond simple rule compliance toward a more internally motivated understanding of ethical behavior. The distinction is particularly important in higher education because university students are increasingly expected to make independent decisions. They will encounter situations in which external supervision is limited and personal judgment becomes essential.

One of the important findings is the distinction between recognizing unethical behavior and genuinely internalizing ethical values. The lecturers emphasized that students should not merely know that corruption and academic dishonesty are wrong. They should also understand the reasons why honesty, fairness, responsibility, and accountability matter. This finding extends the conventional approach to anti-corruption education. If learning is limited to definitions, regulations, and punishment, students may develop primarily external forms of compliance. In contrast, value-oriented education seeks to encourage students to understand the moral meaning behind rules.

The psychological distinction can be illustrated by two different forms of reasoning. The first is externally regulated behavior: “I do not cheat because I may be punished.” The second reflects stronger internal regulation: “I do not cheat because it is unfair and inconsistent with my values.” The second form represents a deeper level of value internalization because ethical behavior is guided by personal principles rather than solely by external consequences. Therefore, anti-corruption education should create opportunities for students to discuss why particular behaviors are ethical or unethical. Reflection, discussion, case analysis, and moral dilemmas can help transform abstract values into personally meaningful principles.

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The findings also highlight self-regulation as a central psychological mechanism connecting moral awareness with ethical behavior. The lecturers perceived that students may encounter situations in which they have opportunities to gain personal benefits through dishonest practices. In these situations, ethical behavior requires the ability to control immediate impulses and prioritize long-term values. This interpretation is consistent with Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the interaction between individual cognition, behavior, and the social environment. Ethical behavior is influenced not only by what individuals know but also by their perceived ability to regulate their behavior in particular circumstances.

Self-regulation is particularly important in anti-corruption education because corrupt behavior often involves opportunities. When individuals possess access to resources, information, authority, or decision-making power, ethical conduct depends partly on their ability to resist inappropriate personal benefits. For students, academic situations can provide an early environment in which this capacity is practiced. Decisions concerning cheating, plagiarism, attendance, group responsibilities, academic information, or organizational funds can become opportunities for students to practice self-regulation. These experiences may provide an important foundation for more complex ethical decisions in professional environments. Thus, self-regulation should not be treated as an additional outcome of anti-corruption education but as one of the psychological mechanisms through which integrity may become behavioral practice.

Another significant finding concerns the role of lecturers as role models. The interview findings indicate that lecturers recognize that students learn about integrity not only from formal teaching materials but also from observing how educators behave. This finding can be interpreted through Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, particularly the concept of observational learning. Individuals learn behavioral patterns by observing models in their social environment. Within higher education, lecturers represent important social models because they possess authority and interact with students repeatedly. Consequently, anti-corruption education may lose its credibility when there is a discrepancy between the values communicated through teaching and the behavior demonstrated by educators. Conversely, consistent demonstration of honesty, fairness, discipline, transparency, and responsibility may strengthen the credibility of ethical education.

This suggests that anti-corruption education should be approached as an institutional culture rather than as an isolated subject. The behavior of lecturers, academic procedures, assessment practices, administrative systems, and student activities should communicate consistent integrity values. The implication is particularly relevant for tourism education because students are preparing for service-oriented professions in which trust and interpersonal relationships are central. Ethical behavior must therefore be experienced as part of the educational environment, not merely discussed as classroom content.

The lecturers' emphasis on moral dilemmas also provides an important pedagogical implication. Ethical decision-making becomes more meaningful when students are confronted with realistic situations involving competing values and interests. A moral dilemma can require students to consider personal benefits, organizational responsibilities, fairness, consequences, trust, and the

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interests of other stakeholders. Such situations move students beyond the question of whether an action is formally permitted toward a broader consideration of whether the action is fair, responsible, transparent, and ethically defensible.

This approach is consistent with the psychological understanding of moral reasoning. Ethical development requires individuals to consider not only the consequences of an action for themselves but also the rights, interests, and welfare of others. For tourism and hospitality students, ethical dilemmas can be contextualized through realistic professional cases. Examples include vendor selection, procurement, financial reporting, customer information, event budgets, employee favoritism, conflicts of interest, and the management of tourism resources. Such contextualized learning can strengthen the connection between anti-corruption education and professional preparation. Students can learn that integrity is not an abstract concept but a practical competence required in everyday decision-making.

A central contribution of this study is the interpretation of anti-corruption education as a form of self-leadership education. The findings suggest that ethical leadership begins with the ability to regulate oneself before attempting to influence others. This perspective expands the conventional understanding of leadership. Leadership is frequently associated with authority, influence, decision-making, or the management of other people. However, the lecturers' perspectives suggest that the psychological foundation of leadership is established through individual responsibility and self-regulation. A student who accepts responsibility for mistakes, completes academic tasks honestly, resists opportunities for personal advantage, and respects the rights of others is already practicing forms of self-leadership. When these principles are later applied to the management of employees, organizational resources, customers, suppliers, and communities, self-leadership can develop into ethical leadership.

This relationship can be represented as: Self-Awareness → Self-Regulation → Personal Integrity → Moral Courage → Social Responsibility → Ethical Leadership. The implication is that leadership character should be developed before students occupy formal leadership positions. Higher education therefore provides an important developmental environment for cultivating the personal foundations of ethical leadership.

The findings have particular significance for tourism and hospitality education because tourism is a highly relational industry that depends on trust among employees, organizations, customers, communities, suppliers, and other stakeholders. Graduates may eventually occupy positions involving access to financial resources, procurement decisions, human resources, customer information, event budgets, tourism assets, and organizational decision-making. These responsibilities create opportunities for ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest. Therefore, technical competence alone is insufficient. Tourism professionals also require integrity, accountability, fairness, transparency, and moral courage. Anti-corruption education can contribute to these competencies by connecting ethical principles with realistic professional situations.

The findings support the integration of anti-corruption learning with hospitality and tourism cases. Students could analyze ethical dilemmas from the perspectives of hotel managers, restaurant

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supervisors, event organizers, procurement officers, tourism entrepreneurs, destination managers, and community leaders. Such an approach may transform anti-corruption education from a predominantly preventive subject into a component of professional character development and ethical leadership preparation.

The study contributes a psychological interpretation of anti-corruption education by integrating moral development, Social Cognitive Theory, and ethical leadership into a single developmental perspective within tourism higher education. The findings suggest that anti-corruption education may operate through several interconnected psychological processes: knowledge and awareness help individuals recognize ethical problems; moral reflection encourages individuals to consider why an action is right or wrong; value internalization transforms external rules into personal principles; self-regulation enables individuals to control personal interests; moral courage enables individuals to maintain ethical principles under pressure; and ethical leadership represents the application of these internalized principles in relationships and organizational decision-making.

This integrated perspective provides a conceptual contribution by positioning anti-corruption education not only as corruption prevention but also as a foundation for ethical human development. However, because the empirical evidence was obtained from five lecturers, the framework should be regarded as a conceptual interpretation grounded in qualitative perceptions, rather than a causal model. Future research involving students directly is necessary to examine whether the proposed developmental pathway can be empirically confirmed.

The findings provide several implications for higher education institutions, particularly tourism and hospitality institutions. First, anti-corruption education should move beyond memorization of definitions and regulations toward reflective and experiential learning. Second, moral dilemmas and case-based learning should be used to expose students to realistic situations involving ethical conflicts. Third, lecturers should be recognized as important role models in the development of integrity. Fourth, institutional policies and academic practices should demonstrate consistency between the values taught and the values practiced. Finally, anti-corruption education should be integrated with professional contexts so that students can understand how integrity influences real decisions in hotels, restaurants, events, destinations, and tourism businesses. In this way, higher education can function not only as a place for knowledge transmission but also as a developmental environment in which students learn to lead themselves ethically before assuming responsibility for leading others.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that anti-corruption education can serve as an important psychological foundation for the development of ethical leadership in tourism and hospitality higher education. Based on interviews with five lecturers involved in anti-corruption education at Politeknik Pariwisata Bali, the findings demonstrate that anti-corruption education is perceived as extending beyond the transmission of knowledge about corruption, legal regulations, and sanctions. The

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lecturers' perspectives indicate that the developmental value of anti-corruption education lies in its potential to foster moral awareness, moral reflection, value internalization, self-regulation, moral courage, and ethical leadership. The process can be conceptually summarized as: Anti-Corruption Education → Moral Awareness → Moral Reflection → Value Internalization → Self-Regulation → Moral Courage → Ethical Leadership.

The findings further demonstrate that integrity is strengthened not only through formal classroom instruction but also through the behavior of lecturers and the broader educational environment. Lecturers function as important role models, while moral dilemmas and realistic tourism-related cases can provide opportunities for students to practice ethical reasoning and decision-making. A key implication of the study is that ethical leadership begins with self-leadership. Before individuals can lead others responsibly, they need to develop the ability to regulate personal interests, accept responsibility, maintain integrity, and make ethical choices under pressure. Anti-corruption education can therefore be positioned not only as preventive education but also as an important component of leadership and professional character development. This perspective is particularly relevant to tourism and hospitality education. Future tourism professionals may be responsible for organizational resources, financial transactions, procurement, employees, customers, suppliers, events, and community relationships. Consequently, technical and managerial competence needs to be accompanied by integrity, accountability, fairness, transparency, and moral courage. The study also highlights the importance of contextualizing anti-corruption education within tourism and hospitality situations. Cases involving hotels, restaurants, events, destinations, procurement, vendor selection, financial management, and conflicts of interest can make ethical learning more meaningful and professionally relevant.

The findings should be interpreted within the methodological boundaries of the study. The empirical data were obtained from five lecturers; therefore, the study represents lecturers' perspectives on the potential contribution of anti-corruption education rather than direct evidence of psychological change among students. The 32 third-semester International Hospitality Management students constituted the educational context but were not research informants. Future research should therefore involve students directly through interviews, focus groups, longitudinal studies, or quantitative approaches to examine whether the proposed relationship between anti-corruption education, psychological development, and ethical leadership is reflected in students' actual attitudes and behaviors. Ultimately, anti-corruption education should be understood as more than an effort to prevent corrupt behavior. It can become a process of developing individuals who are capable of recognizing ethical problems, regulating themselves, maintaining their principles under pressure, and taking responsibility for their decisions. In the context of tourism and hospitality education, such development is essential for preparing future professionals and leaders who are not only competent but also trustworthy, accountable, and ethically responsible.

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