

Strengthening Meritocracy and Multidisciplinary Education: Preparing Youth for a Corruption-Free Indonesia Towards the 2045 Golden Era

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Abstract: . This research addresses the pressing need for a merit-based and morally grounded education system in Indonesia, particularly in the context of rampant nepotism and the placement of officials in sectors misaligned with their qualifications. Such practices contribute to an environment characterized by power tyranny and the distribution of positions based on personal connections rather than merit, undermining institutional efficiency and accountability. The current political landscape is marred by corruption and inefficiency, emphasizing the necessity for educational reform that prioritizes moral integrity and competence. By focusing on moral education and meritocracy, this study aims to cultivate a generation of youth equipped with integrity and ethical values, essential for combating corruption and enhancing the quality of human resources. As Indonesia approaches its demographic bonus era, the urgency for a well-prepared youth capable of contributing positively to society cannot be overstated. This paper explores innovative strategies for curriculum enhancement that integrate moral education and merit-based assessments, ensuring that students not only acquire knowledge but also develop a strong ethical foundation. Furthermore, the paper will present recommendations for policymakers and educational institutions to implement multidisciplinary approaches that promote collaboration and critical thinking. The findings will demonstrate that fostering a robust ethical framework in education can significantly contribute to creating a corruption-free Indonesia and ensuring sustainable development towards the 2045 Golden Era. Ultimately, this research highlights the vital role of education in shaping the future of the nation, advocating for systemic changes that align with the principles of meritocracy and moral responsibility.

Keywords: Education, integrity, meritocracy, multidisciplinary, sustainable development

Introduction

Indonesia, in 2030, will enter its demographic bonus period, which refers to an increase in the productive age population (15-64 years) compared to non-productive individuals (under 15 years and over 65 years old). The Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) projected in 2022 that by 2045, 69.3% of the population will be of productive age. This year is also significant as it marks Indonesia's 100th year of independence, hence being dubbed the "Golden Indonesia 2045." Millennial and Generation Z generations are now spread across various professional fields, from academia, literature, and

economics to government and politics areas previously overlooked by many young generations. Therefore, this momentum must be carefully prepared so that the young generation continuing the relay from previous generations becomes individuals with high-quality human resources in terms of both scientific knowledge and personal conduct. This is not impossible to create if appropriate preparation is immediately implemented. As a window of opportunity, the demographic bonus will also serve as a pillar for increasing productivity and a source of economic growth with the help of qualified human resources. However, this demographic bonus can be a double-

edged sword - on one side, an opportunity for national economic development, but on the other, a potential source of massive unemployment (Maryati, 2015).

However, alongside Indonesia's journey towards its golden era in 2045, we are still confronted with a problem that threatens all aspects of social, national, and state life: corruption. Indonesia ranks high as one of the most corrupt countries, ironically despite having an independent institution to handle corruption cases, namely the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), which has existed since 2002. The KPK has its own specific regulations, namely Law Number 30 of 2002 concerning the Corruption Eradication Commission (Einstein & Ramzy, 2020). In reality, corruption cases and corrupt activities persist. Indonesia ranks 96th out of 180 countries as one of the most corrupt nations (Transparency International, 2021). The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released by Transparency International reveals the high level of corruption in Indonesia, caused by various factors including individual character, social, cultural, and political influences, weak organizational structures, and economic factors. These corrupt actions ultimately have implications for losses in both internal and external environments (Butt, 2017). Corruptive behavior emerging from weak individual integrity is exacerbated by inadequate systems and ineffective oversight, causing state budget leakages. Increased education, training, and instillation of moral principles have not successfully controlled corrupt behavior in Indonesian society, let alone eliminate corruption entirely. Therefore, corruption eradication needs to be approached through a multidisciplinary approach that includes strong monitoring systems and the implementation of existing regulations (Dirwan, 2019). Currently, corruption in Indonesia is not just a financial or legal problem but is often reinforced by a deeply rooted culture of patronage and nepotism across various governmental and non-governmental institutions. In environments that prioritize relationships and loyalty, often determining opportunities, it becomes difficult for merit-based systems - which assess based on ability and achievement - to develop and become a new culture. In Indonesia, the merit system has been implemented through Law

Number 5 of 2014 on State Civil Apparatus and strengthened through Civil Service Commission Regulation Number 5 of 2017 on Independent Merit System Assessment in Government Institutions. This can be used as a tool to eliminate patron culture, ensuring positions are held by experts in their respective fields. To have a significant and sustainable impact, meritocracy principles need to be integrated into education that prioritizes morality and ethics. Through multidisciplinary education based on meritocracy, young generations can be shaped into competent, integrity-driven individuals, far from the corruptive mentality rooted in nepotism culture.

Materials and Methods

The researcher in conducting this study uses a qualitative descriptive method, which is a type of research aimed at describing phenomena that are either natural or human-engineered. (sugiyono, 2010). In data collection, the researcher used documentation techniques by gathering data through various types of existing literature, whether in the form of books, online journals, articles, written statements, and other scientific works. Furthermore, in data analysis, the researcher employed content analysis techniques, where the previously obtained data will be identified for its meaning or content, and subsequently presented in a systematic and objective manner. (soengeng, 2016). From the data collection using the literature review that has been conducted, the researcher limited the scope of the discussion, resulting in two articles that were used as the literature review in this study. First, a study conducted by Adam Nurfaizi Rosyan and Eko Prasojito in the form of a journal titled "Elections And The Culture Of Patronage: The High Cost Of Politics Amid The Development Of A Meritocratic System." in this study, it is revealed that in the democratic process in indonesia, specifically in elections, there are various ways for candidates to win political contests. In the field, many patronage practices are found, influenced by high political costs, weak regulations in managing campaigns, and the lack of political education and public

awareness. Researchers mention that the merit system actually exists, but its implementation is still low. This is due to the continued presence of violations within it, prioritizing personal relationships in the selection of positions. Second, a study conducted by Kurniawan Jabar Malik and Eko Prasajo in the form of a journal titled "Determinant Factors In The Implementation Of Merit System: An Overview Of Indonesian Case." Based on the results of the conducted research, it can be concluded that the implementation of the merit system is expected to be able to change patronage and prevent the potential for corruption, especially related to nepotism. Efforts to strengthen the merit system can be carried out through effective leadership, accompanied by the enhancement of capacity and capability, transparency and impartiality, and empowerment. In addition, the presence of a merit system in the workplace will impact the quality of professional employees and promote better societal conditions.

Results and Discussion

Corruption in Indonesia

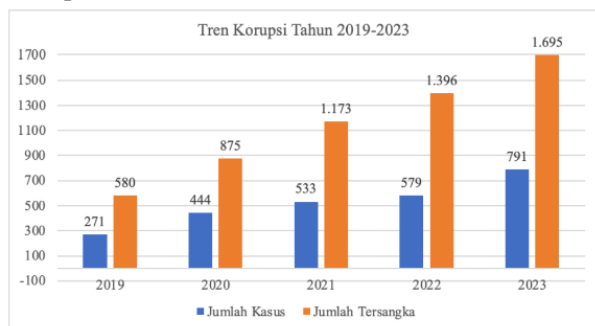


Figure 1. Corruption Trends 2019-2023 by Indonesia Corruption Watch.

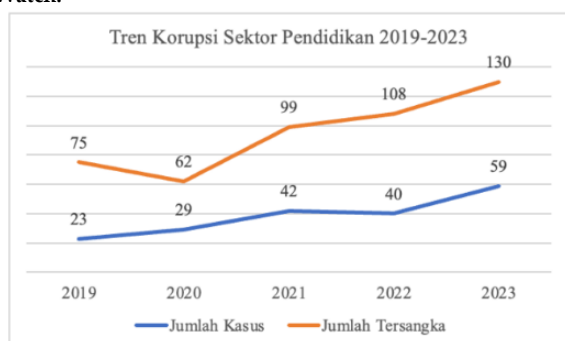


Figure 2. Corruption Trends in the education sector 2019-2023 by Indonesia Corruption Watch.

According to the report from Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW), the trend of corruption cases has

shown a fairly consistent increase over the past five years. In 2023, both in terms of the number of cases and the number of suspects, with 791 corruption cases and 1,695 suspects recorded. According to ICW's analysis, there are two factors that cause the increase in corruption cases from year to year. First, the anti-corruption strategy implemented by the government has not been optimal, particularly in law enforcement by the relevant authorities, as the average prison sentences and additional penalties in the form of restitution payments have not yet provided a sufficient deterrent effect. Next, preventive measures to combat corruption have also not been maximized. Although the government has launched preventive instruments with Presidential Regulation No. 54 of 2018, namely the National Strategy for Corruption Prevention (Stranas-PK), the data on the ground tells a story, showing a significant surge in corruption cases.

As shown in the data in Figure 2, the education sector is no less tragic; it often ranks 5th among sectors prone to corruption. The Corruption Trend in the Education Sector 2019-2023 shows that in 2023, law enforcement handled 57 corruption cases with 128 individuals designated as suspects in this sector. From the total of 57 monitored cases, ICW categorized these cases into two sub-categories. The first category is based on the types of identified educational assistance programs, such as School Operational Assistance (BOS), Special Allocation Funds (DAK), Educational Operational Assistance (BOP), grants/social assistance, student aid funds, and the Smart Indonesia Program (PIP). Meanwhile, the second category includes aspects of school facilities and infrastructure, including the construction of infrastructure such as school buildings or classrooms, salaries or incentives for educators, and so on. The former Deputy Chairman of the KPK, Laode M. Syarif, stated that the majority of corruption perpetrators caught by the KPK have a high level of education, with master's degrees being the most dominant, followed by bachelor's and doctoral degrees. Meanwhile, those with only junior high and high school education tend to be involved as participants, not the main perpetrators. To reduce corruption practices, Syarif emphasized the importance of anti-corruption education starting

from the educational sphere. He proposed that this learning be made at least an insertion, an elective course, or even a mandatory course. In addition, anti-corruption education should not only teach theory but also provide real examples and role models. Syarif added that corruption prevention must start with oneself, because although it is theoretically simple, its implementation is difficult if the environment does not support it and individuals still tolerate corrupt actions (Purnama, 2019).

Meritocracy system

In his book *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, Michael Dunlop Young introduced meritocracy as a concept that prioritizes performance and competence in achieving certain positions or roles. However, the meritocracy system was actually known much earlier in Islam, since the time of Prophet Muhammad, who established this system among his companions, especially in conducting wars. There is a verse that discusses the merit system, namely Surah Al-Baqarah verse 148:

وَلِكُلِّ وُجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيٰهَا ۖ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ
 اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Meaning: "And for every community there is a direction to which it turns. So hasten towards good deeds. Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent." (Q.s. Al-Baqoroh Ayat 148)

In this context, there is a phrase, *Fastabiqul khairat* (فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ), which means "Compete in doing good deeds." Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) taught about the application of competing in goodness in one of the war events, namely the Battle of Khandaq, where in the war that took place in winter and darkness, the condition of the Prophet's companions was one of extreme hunger, thirst, and fear, yet they had to fight against the strongest enemy forces at that time. Next, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) wanted one of his companions to infiltrate the enemy's ranks to gather the necessary information. Then, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) offered a challenge, saying, "Who among you dares to infiltrate the enemy's ranks and gather the information I need, he will surely be my

companion in paradise." Methods like this (meritocracy) were often implemented by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). (Muharrom, 2023).

In Indonesia, meritocracy includes several main components, such as needs planning, procurement, career development, promotion and transfer, performance management, information systems, payroll, rewards, and discipline, as well as protection and services. The National Anti-Corruption Commission (KASN) is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the meritocracy system and overseeing compliance with the code of ethics and conduct. (Sabani, 2023). The implementation of the meritocracy system in Indonesia has been present for a decade, established in Law Number 5 of 2014 and Law Number 20 of 2023 concerning the State Civil Apparatus (ASN). The merit concept is known as a system that prioritizes an individual's achievements or abilities. This system is widely used in guiding modern civil service globally, reinforcing the view of equality and competence as it does not recognize patronage, nepotism, corruption, or incompetency of individuals in civil service and government. (Malik & Prasojo, 2023). However, unfortunately, in 2023, according to data from the State Civil Apparatus Commission (KASN), 189 government agencies out of a total of 587 have been assessed as having poor ratings, followed by 84 agencies in the less satisfactory category. In the sector of career development, promotion, and transfer, it is still considered the aspect with the lowest achievement level based on the average calculation from 587 agencies until November 2023. Additionally, data on violations categorized as merit system violations in job appointments until November 2023 amounts to 391 cases, with 111 of them proven to be violations. (KASN, 2023).

This data shows that, although the meritocratic system has been formally implemented within the Indonesian bureaucratic structure, its implementation still faces various significant challenges. These constraints reflect a gap between regulations and practices on the ground, where the application of merit principles, which should prioritize individual achievements and competencies, is often overshadowed by less

transparent practices, both in career development processes and in employee promotions and transfers. This indicates that the implementation of meritocracy not only requires a strong legal foundation but also the commitment of all elements of the government to eliminate the culture of nepotism, patronage, and practices that hinder professionalism in the bureaucracy. In addition to improving the quality of professionalism, this system also serves as a driver of the investment climate and the country's economy. (Kurniaawan dan Eko, 2023).

Beyond the unsatisfactory "report" from KASN, we are recently confronted with the emergence of political dynasty practices. This began when the Constitutional Court, an institution with the authority to examine laws against the Constitution with final and unappealable decisions, created controversy through Constitutional Court Decision Number 90/PUU-XXI/2023 regarding the age requirements for presidential and vice presidential candidates. This decision became problematic as it was deemed laden with personal interests. The core of the decision states that individuals under 40 years old are permitted to run for president and vice president based on their experience serving as regional heads or officials elected through elections. At first glance, when discussing the merit system, this appears highly meritocratic. After all, certain positions would be based solely on an individual's achievements and capabilities, without considering ethnicity, religion, race, or even age—especially given the large number of Millennial and Gen Z generations, which could potentially lead to political contests dominated by young people.

However, unfortunately, this regulation emerged during a moment saturated with interests and nepotistic nuances, where the sitting president was involved in "promoting" a presidential candidate whose running mate was his own son. Moreover, the Constitutional Court judge who decided this case was the uncle of the said vice presidential candidate. In the legal and constitutional realm, this action is considered to tarnish the Constitutional Court's dignity as Indonesia's highest and supposedly independent judicial institution. Furthermore, in the governmental sector, placing officials in positions incompatible with their field or expertise can create

significant problems. This was evident during the recent "Bjorka" incident that exposed Indonesia's weak data protection. Bjorka claimed to have obtained personal data of 26 million IndiHome customers, 1.3 billion SIM Card registration data containing ID numbers and mobile numbers, and 105 million voter-related data from the General Election Commission (KPU). Additionally, Bjorka leaked confidential documents for the President, including information from the State Intelligence Agency (BIN), and performed doxing on several public officials, such as former Minister of Communication and Information Johnny G. Plate, on Telegram.

These cases reveal serious vulnerabilities in government data security. The Bjorka hacking incidents highlight the critical importance of placing officials in positions that align with their expertise and competence. Such occurrences demonstrate that implementing meritocracy where positions are based on ability and achievement is crucial to ensuring the quality of professional national leaders and maintaining public trust.

The Relationship Between Meritocracy and Multidisciplinary Education in Strengthening Anti-Corruption Character

The merit system is not only important in government and bureaucracy but also crucial in education. This system is expected to shape the character of young generations with integrity and a high work ethic. We can observe the success of Singapore's education system, which also implements a merit system, as educational advancement there is influenced by high-quality educators selected through an extremely rigorous process.

After selection, educators must undergo intensive training to develop comprehensive knowledge and skills. In Singapore, educators receive high salaries, and teaching is a respected profession, stemming from strict selection and guaranteed salaries, allowances, and bonuses from the government. The salary for secondary school teachers can even reach twice Singapore's GDP. The Singaporean government has a policy of covering 100 hours of professional development learning costs for teachers. The success of their education system, which has produced high-

quality students, is attributed to effectively implementing educational policies to develop teacher professionalism. Providing quality training, conducting strict teacher selection, and ensuring continuous professional development significantly enhance educators quality.

Singapore serves as a concrete example of implementing a strict meritocracy system to support corruption eradication. By consistently and impartially imposing severe punishments on corruptors, the country has created a deterrent effect, minimizing corruption. This approach protects citizens and ensures governmental system integrity. Singapore is the only ASEAN member in the top 10 least corrupt countries, thanks to effective law enforcement. This proves that a properly applied meritocracy system can close opportunities for privilege-giving to family members, colleagues, or as political favors, which often involve bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, patronage, and similar activities. With pure meritocracy based on multidisciplinary education, individuals selected for strategic positions will be evaluated based on competence and integrity, not connections or personal interests. First, the poverty factor, where poverty is often used as an excuse to commit corruption in an effort to meet unmet needs. Second, the power factor, where access to the leader's policies becomes a "gem" that facilitates the abuse of power, in accordance with the expression "power tends to corrupt." Third, culture, especially high solidarity in the typology of extended families in Indonesian society, which sometimes tolerates corruption because success is considered a shared property, so that unfair distribution of profits often occurs. Fourth, the ignorance factor, which is caused by the lack of transparency in the government system, makes public officials unaware or unaware of the proper allocation of funds, resulting in illegal deviations. Fifth, the low quality of public morals, which is influenced by poverty, low quality of education, and the negative influence of the mass media that presents inappropriate modern values. Sixth, weak state institutions, including inconsistent law enforcement, inadequate incentives for employees, and mechanisms for interaction between institutions that open up loopholes for corrupt

practices such as bribery. Seventh, "mass pathology", namely corruption that has become a habit and is widely accepted in society, so that it is considered normal or permissible for personal or group gain (Sofhian, 2020). This phenomenon arises due to weak law enforcement, distrust of institutions, and low moral and ethical education in society. To overcome the root causes of corruption that have been explained previously, the implementation of a meritocratic system and multidisciplinary education must be carried out comprehensively at all levels of education, from elementary to college. This approach is designed to create a generation that is not only academically competent but also has strong moral integrity, so that it is able to close the gap for corrupt practices in the future. In its application, this education system will be divided into two, namely at the elementary-secondary level and college level.

1.) Primary and Secondary Education Level

At this level, the education system must focus on character building, increasing equity of access, and optimizing student potential. The steps include:

a. Teachers as Murabbi

The Independent Learning Curriculum that has been initiated by the government, in fact, still experiences various obstacles, which in this case refer to educators. The problems of its implementation include: limited understanding of teachers in compiling and utilizing Independent Learning-based Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), many teachers have not fully mastered the learning model that is by the principles of Independent Learning so the teaching and learning process is less than optimal. Innovation in teaching methods is also still limited, causing a lack of variation in learning approaches. This impacts the minimal development of student creativity, which has not been realized optimally according to expectations (Rusmiati, 2023). Meanwhile, Islamic education experts have also set strict standards for the character and role of an educator, as explained by Imam al-Ghazali who outlined eight qualities that a teacher must have, first, the teacher must have a sense of sincere affection, because this builds courage and a sense of security in students towards their teacher, which is essential for successful learning. Second, a teacher should not

expect rewards or praise for his efforts, because educating is a moral obligation of every knowledgeable individual. Third, the teacher must deliver lessons in stages and ensure students understand the previous material before moving on to a higher level. Fourth, the approach used by the teacher should be full of love and affection, avoiding violence or ridicule in guiding students. Fifth, the teacher must have tolerance and openness to various sciences, without slandering or belittling areas that are not his expertise. Sixth, the teacher must understand the differences in students' intellectual abilities and adjust the teaching material so that it can still be understood, avoiding the delivery of knowledge that is too complicated which can cause confusion or demotivation. Seventh, a teacher needs to understand the psychology of students, providing clear and simple expertise to students with lower abilities to prevent anxiety or misunderstanding. Finally, teachers must practice the knowledge they teach to be good role models, because if not, they will lose their authority and influence over their students (Tamuri, 2015).

These qualities are the important foundations for teachers in applying multicultural education to strengthen anti-corruption characters in students, especially at elementary and secondary levels. From the Islamic perspective, the Prophet Muhammad SAW is an ideal role model as an educator, who in his role as Murabbi tries to emulate the great qualities of God. Educators who are "Murabbi", meaning they are an alternative source in strengthening the character of their students. Teachers are not only educators, instructors, facilitators, but they must become murabbi, namely guides, maintainers, protectors and directors for their students. This means that teachers do not only stop at their teaching duties but must also include the task of guiding and maintaining. The Murabbi concept not only emphasizes the commendable attitudes that educators must have, but also requires them to instill these noble values in students. The role of Murabbi includes broad responsibilities, including fostering the physical and spiritual aspects of students (Izzati, 2023). By making the Prophet Muhammad as a role model, teachers are expected to be able to carry out this role holistically, not only

as teachers, but also as moral guides and character developers of students. Through the Murabbi approach, teachers can educate the younger generation to grow with strong values of integrity, responsibility, and moral awareness. In the context of multicultural education, teachers not only act as academic teachers but also as guardians of harmony in diversity and builders of universal moral values such as honesty, responsibility, and integrity. With an approach full of love, tolerance, and respect for differences, teachers can create an inclusive learning environment while strengthening students' awareness of the importance of justice and transparency. This concept emphasizes the importance of personal relationships between teachers and students to support the formation of moral values, such as honesty, responsibility, and anti-corruption awareness. In order for this to be effective, the government needs to hold a moral pedagogy-based training program that equips teachers with the ability not only to teach but also to monitor the development of student character on an ongoing basis. In addition, psychological assistance must be an integral part of the education system, especially to help students who come from environments vulnerable to bad influences such as a culture of corruption or injustice, so that education not only produces intelligent generations, but also those with integrity which is very relevant to building anti-corruption character from an early age, because elementary and secondary levels are crucial phases in the formation of students' mindsets and morality. Teachers who are able to consistently instill these values will help create a young generation that has strong character and is able to reject the culture of corruption in the future.

b. Meritocracy-Based Zoning System Reform

In the curriculum implemented by Nadiem Anwar Makarim, the Minister of Education and Culture, in his speech to commemorate National Teachers' Day, said that the concept of "Independent Learning" refers to the freedom to think and innovate. The core of this freedom of thought lies in the role of educators. Independent learning emphasizes the freedom of students to learn more independently and also develop their creativity. Teachers are used as drivers in taking the best actions for their students. However, in reality, the

ideals expected from the Independent Learning curriculum cannot be as they should. Various obstacles were found in its implementation, both from the factor of educators, inadequate infrastructure, student motivation which is still relatively low, and an environment that does not support learning motivation. In the parameters of success, there is a global assessment indicator called the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Recently, in 2022, PISA was held again. This agenda is carried out every 3 years, and was postponed for one year because previously this assessment was hampered by the pandemic. As a result, based on PISA published on December 5, 2023, Indonesia is ranked 68th out of 81 participating countries with scores in mathematics (378), science (398), and reading (371) (PISA 2022). This study represents the measurement and comparison of the quality of education in the international world. The purpose of PISA is not only to measure academic achievement, but also as a holistic study of the strengths and weaknesses of the education system in each country that is part of it. This reflects the low competence of 15-year-old children in Indonesia in terms of critical thinking, problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). The quality of learning implemented in schools has in fact been less successful in producing students who are able to think HOTS, even their score level is below the threshold of 400, equivalent to level 2-3. The presence of this Merdeka curriculum has actually tried to answer the challenges of problems related to the unification of each student, where schools are given the freedom to determine learning that is in accordance with the potential and needs of students in each school. However, due to the lack of preparation, socialization and training from the government to educators, it seems that this curriculum was implemented in a hurry so that the existing design does not match what happens in the field, which has implications for the suboptimal and uneven implementation of this Independent Curriculum (Wismiron, 2023).

In this curriculum, there are many new breakthroughs in changing the existing education system, one of which is in terms of changing the new student admission system with the presence

of zoning. The term "zoning" was introduced in 2017 in the New Student Admissions (PPDB) system, based on the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 14 of 2018 concerning New Student Admissions at the Kindergarten, Elementary School, Middle School, High School, Vocational School, or equivalent levels. Zoning is defined as the division or separation of an area into several parts according to the purpose and function of its management (Big Indonesian Dictionary). Through this system, state schools are expected to be able to provide quality education services evenly to the community in certain areas, so that students who excel do not need to look for the "best school" which is far from home. The implementation of zoning in PPDB has an impact on the need to prepare schools that have the same quality as superior schools (Hidayaturrahman, 2023). Although it aims to address inequality in access to education, this zoning system is often considered a controversial program by some policy observers, teachers, parents, and even students themselves. The government and policy initiators should not turn a blind eye to the fact that education in each region is indeed full of disparities. Some of the problems encountered with the presence of the zoning system for students, prospective students whose distance between home and school is quite far, then the opportunity to be accepted is very small even though their exam scores are good, so prospective students are forced to look for schools that are close rather than quality ones, this is a problem because the government has not been able to equalize each school and has not been able to overcome the disparity in quality between schools. Meanwhile, in teaching and learning activities, with this zoning, teachers will experience confusion in teaching, this especially happens to teachers who teach in favorite schools, these teachers were initially in a comfort zone because they were used to teaching students who were already superior in academic and non-academic fields, after the new policy was implemented, the teacher had to work extra hard to adapt to students who have different abilities so that teachers must have the right teaching tips and strategies in terms of the different characteristics of students. Another

impact is decreased learning motivation. The implementation of zoning also has an impact on children's learning motivation, students will lose their motivation and competitiveness to achieve maximum grades because they know that whether their grades are good or not, they will still be accepted at a school near their domicile so that prospective students will relax in learning and lack enthusiasm to be the best among their friends (Widyastuti, 2020).

c. Improving Teacher Competence and School Facilities

Singapore has successfully recorded the highest PISA score in ASEAN, while successfully implementing a meritocratic system and effectively handling corruption cases. The Singapore government understands that quality teachers need opportunities to develop their professionalism. The Ministry of Education (MoE) supports this development by providing funding for Professional Development (PD) that allows teachers to take part in training programs for up to 100 hours per year. Available professional development formats include online and offline training programs, workshops, postgraduate studies (masters and doctoral), conferences, seminars, symposiums, action research, mentoring, training, and collaboration with schools and universities. In order for PD programs to be relevant to the needs and roles of teachers in schools, teachers need to get approval from their superiors, and the type of development undertaken must be tailored to their career level and chosen specialization path (Susanti, 2024). In Singapore, the Ministry of Education gives teachers the freedom to choose a professional career path based on their interests and expertise. Teachers can choose three main paths: teaching, leadership, or specialization (Lee, 2011). Teachers who want to improve their pedagogical skills can follow the teaching track, with the highest position being Principal Master Teacher. The leadership track is designed for individuals with strong managerial skills, with the highest position being Cluster Superintendent. Meanwhile, the specialist track allows teachers to focus on developing expertise in a particular field, with the highest position being Head Specialist (Susanti, 2024). In addition, teachers are allowed to switch career paths

according to their needs and the criteria set, as long as they meet the requirements. The highest position in the Ministry of Education, namely Director General of Education, is also open to all career paths, allowing teachers who previously taught in schools to become policy makers. This shows the importance of professional development in supporting the progress of each individual teacher and their contribution to education (Susanti, 2024). Therefore, the government needs to launch a comprehensive teacher quality improvement program, including ongoing training and competency certification to ensure that teachers are able to educate students with diverse academic needs, including students with learning difficulties or high potential. In addition, improving educational facilities must be a top priority. Laboratories, libraries, and learning technology need to be provided evenly in all schools, especially in 3T areas, to reduce the gap in education quality between remote and urban areas. This step is very important because the zoning policy currently implemented often does not create the expected fairness. Students from 3T areas, where school facilities and infrastructure are still very limited, do not have the opportunity to access better education outside their zone. Therefore, before implementing a comprehensive zoning system, the government should first focus on equalizing the quality of education and facilities throughout Indonesia. As an alternative, zoning can still be implemented at the elementary school level to provide closer access to education for early childhood, while for middle and high school levels, a merit-based system can be an option. The zoning system can still be implemented in the future after educational disparities have been successfully overcome in various regions. With this approach, fairness in access to education can truly be realized, without sacrificing the rights of students from areas with inadequate educational facilities.

2.) College Level

At the university level, the application of the principles of meritocracy and multidisciplinary education has a crucial role in shaping students as professionals who not only have cross-disciplinary expertise, but also a high moral commitment to the values of integrity. To achieve this goal, every university can integrate anti-corruption education

into the compulsory curriculum, both State and Private Universities. This course needs to be designed to provide a deep theoretical and practical understanding of the impact of corruption, which is oriented towards the application of a meritocratic system and multidisciplinary education, education in Indonesia can become a tool of transformation to overcome the culture of corruption. At the university level, the application of the principles of meritocracy and multidisciplinary education has a crucial role in shaping students as professionals who not only have cross-disciplinary expertise, but also a high moral commitment to the values of integrity. The strategies that can be implemented are as follows:

a. Anti-Corruption Curriculum as a Compulsory Course

Every university is expected to integrate anti-corruption education into the compulsory curriculum. This course should be designed with the aim of equipping students with in-depth knowledge about the impact of corruption, this course should be able to explain how corruption damages the social and economic structure of a nation and reduces public trust in government institutions, which can be integrated with learning with case studies or by using real examples from various sectors, students can be trained to analyze cases of corruption that have occurred, understand the dynamics that contributed to the incident, and learn ways to identify and prevent potential corruption in their environment. This can encourage them to have discussions and raise awareness of the importance of integrity values and the importance of maximizing their potential because in a merit system, opportunities to develop are open to anyone who is talented, not confining "ordal" or insiders which are a form of nepotism and patronage.

b. Increasing Campus Involvement

Corruption is caused by internal factors, originating from the individual themselves, and external factors, emerging from the environment or system. Efforts to prevent corruption should actually be focused on eliminating or at least reducing these two causal factors. Internal factors are greatly influenced by how strongly anti-

corruption values are embedded in each individual. These values include honesty, independence, discipline, responsibility, hard work, simplicity, courage, and justice. To overcome external factors so that corruption does not occur, each individual must apply these anti-corruption values. In addition, to prevent external factors, individuals also need to have a deep understanding of anti-corruption principles, such as accountability, transparency, fairness, policy, and control in organizations, institutions, or society. Thus, the relationship between anti-corruption principles and values is an inseparable unity (H Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that heredity, environment, and human freedom are several factors that play an important role in individual self-development. In developing individual potential, the three concepts are an inseparable unit. Although there are several experts in education, psychology, and biology, until now they are still debating about the factors that most influence human development, namely heredity and environment. Some consider heredity to be the most superior, while others argue that education in the sense of the environment has a very large influence. In the end, a stream came to mediate the two contradictions, namely convergence flow. Convergence flow seeks to combine these two factors in human development, especially in the formation of personality and potential. Then, freedom appears to utilize heredity with environmental facilities so that students' creativity can be developed.

Therefore, through this research, the authors offer the concept of a democratic school that prioritizes the freedom of students in developing heredity which is supported by their environment (Santana, 2018). In order to strengthen the meritocratic system and multidisciplinary education to prepare the younger generation towards a corruption-free Golden Indonesia 2045, universities have a strategic role in developing comprehensive anti-corruption education programs. The implementation of this program needs to be designed through the development of a curriculum and learning modules that integrate various disciplines - from ethics, law, sociology, to economics. This multidisciplinary approach is very

important because corruption is a complex problem that requires understanding from various scientific perspectives. As a concrete step in realizing an academic environment with integrity, universities also need to form an independent anti-corruption monitoring and education institution, whose role is as: first, as a complaint service center (whistleblowing center) that handles various reports related to alleged corrupt practices in the campus environment, ranging from misuse of funds, gratification, to academic fraud. The reporting system that is managed must guarantee the confidentiality of the reporter's identity and provide adequate protection (Humas, 2024). Second, acting as an educator agent who actively carries out the function of socialization and anti-corruption education to the entire academic community. Educational programs can be carried out through various forms of activities such as periodic seminars and workshops on early detection of corrupt practices, integrity campaigns through social media and campus digital platforms, integrity leadership training for student organizations, peer mentoring programs in anti-corruption supervision, and periodic publications on prevention and handling of corruption cases. With the existence of this independent institution, it is expected to create a transparent and accountable campus ecosystem, while strengthening the role of universities as the vanguard in forming an anti-corruption generation. A comprehensive approach that targets curriculum development and the presence of this independent institution is expected to strengthen the meritocratic system by creating an academic environment with integrity, but also building a solid foundation for the formation of a generation of future leaders who have a strong commitment to anti-corruption values. Through synergy between multidisciplinary education and systematic supervision, universities can optimally carry out their role as catalysts for change towards an Indonesia free from corruption practices in 2045.

Conclusions

The systemic transformation of Indonesian education towards the Golden Era 2045 requires a

holistic approach in building national meritocracy. This research identifies three key interventions: (1) Reform of educational structures through the elimination of discriminatory zoning, with the main focus on equalizing the quality of education between regions as a foundation for social justice, (2) Reconstruction of the role of teachers as agents of social transformation through a comprehensive professional development system, including high-quality, inclusive training and strengthening capacity in instilling anti-corruption values from an early age, as well as (3) Developing a multidisciplinary education model in higher education that systematically integrates anti-corruption curricula and establishes independent institutions to study and prevent corrupt practices. The aim is to produce a young generation of Indonesians who not only have academic excellence, but also have strong character, high integrity, a hard work ethic, and a fundamental commitment to building a corruption-free social order. In this way, the demographic bonus can be transformed into capital for sustainable, competitive and productive national development. The implications of this research go beyond conventional approaches by offering a comprehensive educational transformation framework, which not only focuses on academic achievement, but also holistic character formation. This approach emphasizes that the quality of human resources is determined not only by intellectual ability, but also by integrity, work ethic and high social commitment.

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