

## Corruption as a Deviation from Islamic Economic Values (A Literature Study from a Sharia Ethics Perspective)

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### ABSTRAK

Korupsi merupakan fenomena sosial yang tidak hanya berdampak pada kerugian material, tetapi juga mencerminkan penyimpangan nilai moral dan etika dalam tatanan ekonomi. Dalam perspektif ekonomi Islam, korupsi dipandang sebagai bentuk pelanggaran serius terhadap nilai-nilai syariah yang menjunjung tinggi keadilan ('adl), amanah, kejujuran (ṣidq), dan kemaslahatan umum (maṣlaḥah). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis korupsi sebagai penyimpangan nilai ekonomi Islam melalui pendekatan etika syariah. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kepustakaan dengan menelaah sumber-sumber primer dan sekunder berupa Al-Qur'an, Hadis, kitab-kitab fikih, serta literatur akademik kontemporer yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa praktik korupsi bertentangan dengan prinsip dasar ekonomi Islam, khususnya larangan gholul, risywah, dan khianat, serta merusak tujuan utama syariah (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah), terutama dalam menjaga harta (ḥifz al-māl) dan keadilan sosial. Dari perspektif etika syariah, korupsi tidak hanya merupakan pelanggaran hukum, tetapi juga kegagalan moral dan spiritual individu serta sistem. Oleh karena itu, pemberantasan korupsi dalam ekonomi Islam menuntut pendekatan komprehensif yang mencakup penguatan nilai etika, integritas pribadi, dan reformasi institusional berbasis prinsip-prinsip syariah.

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### ABSTRACT

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#### Keywords

Corruption; Islamic Economics; Sharia Ethics; Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah; Trust (Amanah).

Corruption is a social phenomenon that not only causes material losses but also reflects moral and ethical deviations within the economic system. From the perspective of Islamic economics, corruption is considered a serious violation of Sharia values that uphold justice ('adl), trustworthiness (amanah), honesty (ṣidq), and public welfare (maṣlaḥah). This study aims to analyze corruption as a deviation from Islamic economic values through the lens of Sharia ethics. The research employs a library-based study by examining primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, classical Islamic jurisprudence texts, and relevant contemporary academic literature. The findings indicate that corrupt practices fundamentally contradict the core principles of Islamic economics, particularly the prohibitions of gholul (embezzlement), risywah (bribery), and betrayal of trust (khianat),

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*while also undermining the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah), especially the protection of wealth (ḥifẓ al-māl) and social justice. From the perspective of Sharia ethics, corruption is not merely a legal violation but represents a moral and spiritual failure of both individuals and institutions. Therefore, combating corruption within an Islamic economic framework requires a comprehensive approach that integrates ethical reinforcement, personal integrity, and institutional reform grounded in Sharia principles...*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Corruption is one of the most complex global issues with a wide-ranging impact on various aspects of social, economic and political life. Corrupt practices not only cause material losses to the state, but also undermine public trust, damage the legitimacy of institutions and hinder sustainable development. In an economic context, corruption causes distortions in resource allocation, increases transaction costs, and widens social inequality, thereby hindering the achievement of justice and equitable welfare for society (Transparency International, 2022; World Bank, 2021).

In many developing countries, including Indonesia, corruption has become a systemic and structural phenomenon. Despite various law enforcement efforts, corruption continues to persist in various forms and sectors. This shows that legal and regulatory approaches alone are not effective enough to eradicate corruption in a sustainable manner. Therefore, an alternative approach is needed that can address the root causes of the problem, particularly those related to the values, morals, and ethics of individuals and institutions (Prabowo & Cooper, 2023; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2020).

From an Islamic perspective, economic activity cannot be separated from ethical and moral dimensions. Islamic economics is built on a set of values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, which emphasise the principles of justice ('adl), trustworthiness, honesty (ṣidq), and social responsibility (Aravik & Zamzam, 2020, Aravik, et al, 2022). These values form the main foundation for regulating the behaviour of individuals and institutions in managing economic resources. Therefore, any form of ethical deviation, including corruption, is considered a serious violation of the basic principles of Islamic economics (Chapra, 2021; Haneef & Furqani, 2020).

Specifically, corruption in the perspective of Islamic economics is understood as a form of abuse of trust and betrayal of social responsibility. Practices such as bribery (*risywah*), embezzlement (*ghulul*), and abuse of power are strictly prohibited in Islamic teachings because they contradict the principles of justice and public interest. Corruption not only harms individuals or the state, but also damages the moral order of society and hinders the achievement of the main objectives of sharia (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*), particularly in preserving wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) and social justice (Kamali, 2023; Dusuki, 2021).

A number of previous studies have discussed the issue of corruption from various perspectives, including law, conventional economics, and governance. Several studies emphasise the importance of strengthening institutions, transparency, and accountability as key strategies in preventing corruption. However, these approaches tend to be structural in nature and do not highlight the ethical and moral dimensions as key factors in corrupt behaviour (Klitgaard, 2021; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2020).

In Islamic economic studies, several studies have linked corruption to the weak application of Islamic values in economic and governance practices. These studies emphasise that the internalisation of Islamic ethical values plays an important role in shaping ethical economic behaviour. However, most studies still focus on the normative or legal aspects of Islam and have not yet thoroughly examined corruption as a deviation from Islamic economic values within a comprehensive sharia ethical framework (Beekun & Badawi, 2020; Huda et al., 2021).

The limitations of these studies indicate academic gaps that need to be filled. The Sharia ethics approach offers a more holistic perspective because it not only emphasises compliance with formal rules but also demands moral awareness and spiritual responsibility from individuals. In Sharia ethics, behavioural control does not only depend on external sanctions but also on internal supervision derived from the values of faith and piety. This approach is considered relevant to addressing the multidimensional issue of corruption (Amin et al., 2022; Rahman, 2023).

The urgency of discussing this topic has increased along with the need for a sustainable and value-based model for eradicating corruption. The recurrence of corruption indicates an ethical crisis in the economic and governmental systems. By placing Sharia ethics as the analytical framework, this study is expected to contribute conceptually to understanding corruption not only as a violation of the law, but also as a moral and spiritual failure that has a systemic impact on the economic life of society (Ali & Al-Aali, 2021; Kamali, 2024).

Based on this background, this study aims to analyse corruption as a form of deviation from Islamic economic values through the perspective of Sharia ethics. This study seeks to examine the concept of corruption in Islamic literature, identify Islamic economic values that are violated by corrupt practices, and explain the implications of Sharia ethics on efforts to prevent and eradicate corruption.

The benefits of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study enriches the scientific knowledge of Islamic economics by emphasising the central role of Sharia ethics in economic governance. In practical terms, the results of this study can be used as a reference for academics, policymakers, and practitioners in formulating strategies to eradicate corruption that are not only based on regulations but also rooted in the strengthening of Islamic moral and ethical values. Thus, this study is expected to encourage the realisation of an Islamic economic system that is fair, has integrity, and is oriented towards the benefit of the people.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research methods to analyse corruption as a deviation from Islamic economic values in the perspective of Sharia ethics. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on examining concepts, values, and normative principles found in Islamic teachings and contemporary Islamic economic thought, particularly those related to ethics, morality, and economic governance. Through this approach, the study seeks to gain a deep understanding of the meaning and ethical implications of corrupt practices within the framework of Islamic economics.

The research data sources consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Qur'an, the Hadith of the Prophet, and classical works of Islamic jurisprudence and ethics that discuss the concepts of trust, justice, honesty, the prohibition of *ghulul*, *risywah*, and the principle of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Meanwhile, secondary sources include books, scientific journal articles, and other academic publications relevant to the themes of corruption, Islamic economics, and Sharia ethics. Sources were selected based on their relevance and contribution to the focus of the study.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Corruption as a Deviation from Values in the Perspective of Islamic Economics**

A review of the literature shows that corruption in the perspective of Islamic economics is a fundamental and systemic form of value deviation. Unlike conventional economic approaches, which generally view corruption as a problem of institutional failure or weak oversight systems, Islamic economics considers corruption a serious violation of the moral and ethical values that form the main foundation of economic activity. The values of justice ('*adl*), trustworthiness, honesty (*ṣidq*), and social responsibility are not only normative principles but also moral instruments that determine the legitimacy of an economic system (Chapra, 2021; Haneef & Furqani, 2020, Aravik, et.al, 2023).

Within the framework of Islamic economics, wealth is understood as a trust from Allah that has social and moral dimensions. Individual ownership is relative and limited by the obligation to maintain the public interest (Zamzam & Aravik, 2020). Therefore, corrupt practices involving the abuse of power and the unlawful control of public resources reflect a betrayal of this trust. Beekun and Badawi (2020) emphasise that violations of trust in economic activities have a direct impact on the destruction of individual moral integrity and a decline in public trust in economic and governmental institutions.

Corruption causes serious distortions in the mechanism of wealth distribution. In Islamic economics, fair distribution is a key requirement for achieving social

welfare. When corruption occurs, public resources that should be allocated for the benefit of the wider community are instead concentrated in certain groups through illegitimate mechanisms. This condition reinforces economic inequality and contradicts the principle of distributive justice, which is a key characteristic of Islamic economics (Dusuki, 2021; Kamali, 2023).

A number of contemporary studies also show that corruption is closely correlated with the weak internalisation of ethical values in individual and organisational behaviour. In this context, corruption is often normalised as part of organisational culture or bureaucratic practices that are considered commonplace. This phenomenon reflects a deeper crisis of values, in which materialistic orientations and pragmatic interests shift commitment to moral principles and social justice (Ali & Al-Aali, 2021; Fauzia & Riyadi, 2023, Aravik, et.al, 2022).

Chapra (2021) criticises the modern economic paradigm, which tends to separate economic activity from ethical dimensions. According to him, the failure to control corrupt behaviour is largely due to the reduction of humans to purely rational-economic beings, without considering moral and spiritual dimensions. In contrast, Islamic economics demands the integration of ethical values into the entire economic decision-making process, so that every economic action has moral and social implications.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that corruption is not merely an anomaly in the Islamic economic system, but an indication of structural value deviations. This deviation not only hinders economic efficiency but also undermines social legitimacy and obstructs the achievement of the main objectives of Islamic economics, namely justice, prosperity, and the sustainable welfare of the people (Huda et al., 2021; Kamali, 2024).

## **2. Corruption in the Perspective of Sharia Ethics and Its Implications for Economic Governance**

From a Sharia ethics perspective, corruption is understood as a moral and spiritual violation that has broad implications for the social and economic order. Sharia ethics places humans as moral subjects who are horizontally responsible to

their fellow humans and vertically responsible to Allah (Aravik, et.al, 2021). Therefore, acts of corruption are not only assessed from a formal legal perspective, but also from the dimensions of morality and transcendental accountability (Hasan, 2020; Amin et al., 2022).

The concept of amanah is a key pillar of Sharia ethics that is relevant to economic and governance management (Oktaria, et.al, 2023, Ramadhany, et.al, 2023). Amanah requires every individual who is given the authority to manage public resources to do so honestly, transparently, and responsibly (Aravik, et.al, 2024). Violations of amanah through corrupt practices cause erosion of public trust and delegitimation of state and economic institutions. Beekun (2020) asserts that the loss of amanah in leadership and bureaucracy is the root of various forms of ethical deviations, including corruption.

In addition to trustworthiness, Sharia ethics also emphasises the principles of justice and honesty as the main foundations of economic relations. Corruption creates structural injustice by giving unlawful benefits to certain parties, while harming the wider community. In the long term, this practice widens economic disparities and has the potential to cause social instability, which directly contradicts the objectives of Sharia in maintaining social harmony and justice (Dusuki, 2021; Kamali, 2023).

Corruption is also seen as a major obstacle to achieving maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, particularly in terms of protecting property (ḥifẓ al-māl) and social justice. When economic policy is influenced by narrow interests due to corrupt practices, the orientation towards the common good is marginalised. This shows that corruption is a serious threat to the sustainability of a just and sustainable Islamic economic system (Chapra, 2021; Haneef & Furqani, 2020).

A number of studies confirm that the Sharia ethics approach has strong preventive potential in eradicating corruption. Unlike the repressive and reactive legal approach, Sharia ethics emphasises the formation of moral awareness, self-control, and spiritual responsibility. This approach builds internal control mechanisms that can suppress corrupt behaviour even in conditions of weak external supervision (Amin et al., 2022; Rahim & Sulaiman, 2024).

In the context of economic governance, the integration of Sharia ethics requires institutional reforms that emphasise transparency, accountability, and integrity (Aravik, et.al, 2021). Economic and governmental institutions need to be designed to encourage ethical behaviour and minimise opportunities for abuse of authority. Ali and Al-Aali (2021) show that Islamic ethics-based governance not only improves institutional performance but also strengthens social legitimacy and public trust.

The above discussion shows that corruption in the perspective of Islamic economics and Sharia ethics is a multidimensional issue that requires a holistic approach (Rahmatika, et.al, 2020). The integration of Sharia ethical values into the economic system and public governance is not only normatively relevant, but also strategically important in building a sustainable anti-corruption system. Thus, Islamic economics has the potential to make a significant contribution to formulating a paradigm for eradicating corruption that is oriented towards justice, integrity, and the welfare of the people (Rahman, 2023; Kamali, 2024).

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that corruption in the perspective of Islamic economics is a fundamental and multidimensional form of value deviation. Corruption not only violates positive law, but also directly contradicts the basic values of Islamic economics, which emphasise justice, trustworthiness, honesty, and social responsibility. Corrupt practices reflect the failure of individuals and institutions to internalise Sharia ethics, thereby damaging the economic order and undermining public trust in the economic and governance systems.

Corruption has been proven to hinder the achievement of the main objectives of Sharia (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah), particularly in terms of protecting property and enforcing social justice. The abuse of authority and public resources as a result of corruption causes inequality in the distribution of wealth and neglects the interests of the public good. In this context, corruption cannot be understood merely as an

administrative problem, but rather as a moral and ethical crisis rooted in the weak integrity and spiritual awareness of economic actors.

Therefore, efforts to eradicate corruption within the framework of Islamic economics require a comprehensive and sustainable approach. Law enforcement needs to be accompanied by the strengthening of Sharia ethics through moral education, the internalisation of the value of trust, and the formation of a character oriented towards social responsibility. In addition, institutional reform that emphasises transparency, accountability, and integrity is an important prerequisite in building a clean and fair economic system. By integrating Sharia ethics into economic and governmental governance, it is hoped that an Islamic economic system oriented towards justice, prosperity, and the sustainable welfare of the people can be realised.

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