

BETWEEN INTEGRITY AND TEMPTATION: RURAL WOMEN'S ROLES IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION RISKS

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ABSTRACT

Corruption in Indonesia, especially in government, is often associated with structural and cultural factors that contribute to corruption. This study aims to describe the knowledge of women in rural areas who play a role in both local government and social activities that intersect with local government in dealing with various corrupt practices that can occur in village government structures. The research approach is quantitative with a descriptive research type. Data were collected by interviewing 50 women who live in Menganti Village, Gresik Regency, East Java. Most of the women who were respondents worked as village government officials and village cadres who ran village government programs. This study began by giving questionnaires to respondents about their understanding of matters related to village fund management and corrupt practices. The second stage, in-depth interviews and observations related to their daily activities, were conducted. The study results showed that 78% of respondents understood corrupt acts, such as abuse of authority and embezzlement. However, 64% admitted to experiencing social or political pressure that influenced their decisions in maintaining integrity. As many as 52% of respondents stated that weak transparency and minimal supervision from the community opened up opportunities for corruption. Meanwhile, 60% of respondents said that rationalization practices—such as considering corrupt acts as “commonplace” in the bureaucracy—still occur in their environment. These findings confirm that although village women know about corruption, their decisions are still heavily influenced by the local social and political context. In addition, the lack of literacy among the general public regarding village fund management also strengthens the occurrence of maladministration and corruption practices at the local level.

Keywords: Anti-corruption Policy, Corruption, Integrity, Local Government, Women

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries with high corruption cases. Until 2025, there have been several corruption cases with fantastic values. Based on the report GoodStats (2025), Indonesia still faces significant challenges in eradicating corruption. The alleged corruption case at PT Pertamina, which caused state losses of up to Rp 1 quadrillion, proves that corruption is still rampant. In addition, data presented by the Indonesian Survey Institute (LSI) on the 100 days of the Prabowo-Gibran government's performance shows that only 44% of Indonesians consider its performance to be good in eradicating corruption (Goodstats, 2025).

Several corruption cases are still in the public eye today. For example, the alleged corruption case at Telkomsigma, a subsidiary of PT Telkom, resulted in state losses of

Article History: Received 22 April 2025, Revised 30 April 2025,
Accepted 15 May 2025, Available online 30 June 2025

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hundreds of billions (KPK, 2025). Corruption case of crude oil and refinery product management at Pertamina and its subsidiaries in 2018-2023. State losses are estimated to reach Rp 193.7 trillion for one year (Kompas, 2025b; Tempo, 2025b). The alleged corruption case of the provision of fictitious credit facilities at the Indonesian Export Financing Institution (LPEI), has the potential to cause state losses of up to IDR 11.7 trillion (Bisnis, 2024). The alleged corruption case related to tin management at PT Timah Tbk, with state losses of Rp 271 trillion, corruption at PT Antam, with losses reaching Rp 3.3 trillion, the sugar import case, and the Minyakita case, which is still under investigation (Candratrilaksana, 2025).

Since the Reformation, especially over the last 20 years, Indonesia has experienced dynamics in efforts to eradicate corruption. Transparency International releases the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) every year to assess the level of public sector corruption in various countries, with scores ranging from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) (Ratmono et al., 2021). One hundred eighty countries in the world are the subject of their research. Indonesia's CPI score from 2005 to 2010 showed relatively good achievements, where Indonesia scored 22 to 28. However, from 2013 to 2024, Indonesia's CPI score stagnated at 34 to 37, and even in 2022, Indonesia's CPI score touched 40 (ranked 115 out of 180 countries considered the most corrupt) (Azwar & Subekan, 2022).

Corruption is a fundamental problem that damages the state's foundations, betrays the public's trust in the government in power, and hinders development and public welfare (Gibbons, 2024). Men dominate most major corruption cases. However, there are also corruption cases involving women (Decarolis et al., 2023). Men dominate most corruption cases. However, there are also cases of corruption involving women (Decarolis et al., 2023). The following cases show that women are not immune to corrupt behavior. Neneng Hassanah Yasin, the Regent of Bekasi who served from 2012 to 2018, was prosecuted by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) on charges of accepting Rp13 billion in bribes from Lippo Group executives related to the Meikarta project.

In a linear context, there is the case of Siti Fadilah Supari who served as the Indonesian Minister of Health from 2004 to 2009, who also did not escape the corruption trap, where she was found guilty of corruption related to the procurement of medical equipment for the Ministry of Health's crisis center in 2005. The Jakarta Corruption Court sentenced her to four years in prison and a fine of Rp200 million, and ordered the return of Rp550 million to the state (Hukumonline, 2015).

Other corruption cases involving women also recorded the name of Angelina Sondakh, a former member of the House of Representatives from the Democratic Party. In 2012, she was involved in a corruption case related to the construction project of the SEA Games athletes' dormitory in Palembang and a procurement project at the Ministry of National Education. She was sentenced to 10 years and a fine of Rp 500 million. Ratu Atut Chosiyah is a former Governor of Banten who served from 2005 to 2014. In 2013, she was arrested by the KPK for a bribery case related to the handling of the Lebak

Pilkada dispute at the Constitutional Court. She was sentenced to 4 years in prison, later increased to 7 years after an appeal (Hukumonline, 2015).

The latest case is Hevearita Gunaryanti Rahayu, who has served as Mayor of Semarang since January 30, 2023, after previously serving as Deputy Mayor. She is the first woman to hold that position in Semarang. On February 19, 2025, one day before her term ended, Hevearita and her husband, Alwin Basri, were arrested by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) on charges of accepting bribes and cutting civil servants' salaries for personal gain. Until now, this case is still ongoing (Tempo, 2025a). The above cases show that women who serve in government or have relationships with political figures have not escaped the spotlight regarding corruption and public ethics issues over the past two decades. Strict law enforcement and transparency are needed to ensure integrity in government and politics.

In this context, female officials in local government have an essential role in corruption prevention efforts. This study seeks to contribute to developing more effective gender-based anti-corruption policies by examining how female officials in local government face these challenges. This research is expected to provide new insights into more inclusive corruption eradication efforts based on women's specific needs and challenges in the bureaucracy.

Donald R. Cressey's Fraud Triangle theory is relevant to understanding the causes of corruption in bureaucratic environments (Van Akkeren, 2023). In this theory, a person can be motivated to commit fraud or financial irregularities due to three main factors: pressure, which is a personal or professional condition that creates the urge to commit fraud; opportunity, which is a gap or weakness in the system that allows corrupt actions to occur; and rationalization, which is a justification or moral justification carried out by the perpetrator to justify his actions (Persulesy et al., 2022). This approach is essential for examining how actors at the local government level—including women who play a role in village structures—face ethical dilemmas and socio-political pressures that can trigger or prevent corrupt behavior.

Corruption in bureaucracy is often associated with cultural, structural, and institutional factors. Becker and Stigler's economic theory states that individuals tend to commit corruption if the benefits obtained are greater than the risks faced (Sulitzeanu-Kenan et al., 2022). On the other hand, the social theory developed by (Klitgaard, 2023) menegaskan bahwa korupsi terjadi dalam sistem yang memiliki kelemahan dalam pengawasan dan akuntabilitas. Dalam konteks ini, perempuan sering kali diasumsikan lebih memiliki integritas dalam pemerintahan karena kecenderungan mereka untuk lebih berhati-hati dalam mengambil keputusan yang berisiko (Mandala, 2024).

In addition to economic and social theories, the Patron-Client Theory is also relevant to analyzing how women in government face corruption. This theory highlights the relationship between patrons (leaders) and clients (subordinates or the community) in a transactional political system (Scott, 1972). In local government, female officials are

often trapped in patronage networks, making it difficult to reject corrupt practices. This hierarchical structure requires female officials to maintain their political loyalty to maintain support from political elites or more powerful groups (Walters et al., 2021).

The principal-agent theory is also the basis for understanding corruption in government. In this theory, corruption occurs because of information asymmetry between the principal (the people or superiors) and agents (public officials) with the authority to manage resources (Cheffins, 2021). When the monitoring mechanism is weak, agents can act in their interests, including committing corruption. In the context of gender, women who serve as agents in local government can experience greater structural pressures than men, both in maintaining integrity and in dealing with a work environment full of corrupt practices (Lambsdorff, 2023).

In various literature, women are often associated with higher levels of integrity in leadership than men (Wijaya Mulya & Sakhiyya, 2021). However, the reality on the ground shows that political pressure, patriarchal culture, and limited access to economic resources make many female officials vulnerable to corrupt practices (Pereira & Fernandez-Vazquez, 2023). In addition, patronage networks in government often hinder women's efforts to act independently and with integrity (Bauhr & Charron, 2018).

A study by (Merkle & Kubbe, 2022b) shows that, although women tend to be more honest in clean government systems, they may engage in corrupt practices if they are in an already corrupt system. Several studies have also highlighted that increasing the number of women in government can reduce corruption. Another survey by (Sundström & Wängnerud, 2016a) shows that women in leadership tend to pay more attention to policies oriented towards public services and social welfare, reducing corrupt practices. However, factors such as political pressure, patriarchal culture, and limited access to economic resources remain major obstacles for women in maintaining their integrity.

This is in line with the study of Winati et al. (2024) shows that women tend to reject corrupt practices more than men. It also shows that the government system is still dominated by patriarchal culture. Women often face social and political pressures that complicate their efforts to maintain integrity. This social reality has negative implications for women in government institutions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive research design. In addition to conducting descriptive research, this research activity is accompanied by providing socialization and understanding of anti-corruption values to provide deeper insight into how patronage structures and social networks influence women's involvement in corrupt practices (Tu & Guo, 2023). This approach also aims to understand the level of knowledge and community involvement in village fund management and efforts to prevent misappropriation of village funds.

Data were obtained by surveying 50 female respondents who play a role in government and as village cadres in Menganti Village, Menganti District, Gresik Regency. Respondents were selected purposively to ensure representation from various community groups. Subject selection criteria included: (1) respondent age; (2) female gender; (3) variation in education level; and (4) variation in respondent profession and social role in society. Respondents were again given a questionnaire after participating in the socialization activities to measure their understanding of anti-corruption values. Data collection was also carried out through observation to directly observe the implementation of counseling and community interaction in discussions related to village fund management.

In this case, observation also helps to understand the level of community involvement in village deliberations and the effectiveness of outreach. In-depth interviews are part of the data collection technique, where direct perspectives from female officials can be obtained regarding their experiences and challenges in dealing with corruption (Osborne & Grant-Smith, 2021). The questions asked include: (a) understanding of anti-corruption policies; (b) social and political pressures in decision-making; (c) strategies used to avoid corrupt practices; and (d) the role of social networks in influencing decisions. (4) Analysis of documents related to anti-corruption regulations and policies, regulations on regional financial governance, and reports of corruption cases involving female officials (Morgan, 2022). Researchers also reviewed regulations related to village fund management, including Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages and government regulations governing the use of village funds.

Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach Braun & Clarke (2023) which consists of several stages: (1) Data Reduction: Filtering relevant information from questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documents. This also includes msummarize the questionnaire results based on the frequency of respondents' answers regarding their knowledge and involvement in village fund management; (2) Comparative Analysis: Compare the level of community knowledge before and after counseling using a frequency distribution table; (3) Categorization: Grouping data based on key themes such as structural pressures, the role of social networks, and oversight mechanisms; (4) Interpretation: Analyzing patterns of findings to understand factors that influence women's involvement or resistance to corruption; (4) Data Triangulation: Validating findings by comparing information from various data sources (questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documents) (Cannella, 2024). Discussion results with community leaders and village officials can be used as an additional perspective in data interpretation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Women in Local Government

Based on survey data, the women who were the sample of this study were, on average, 39 years old, with a respondent age range of 23 to 58 years. Most respondents had completed their education at secondary level or graduated from high school (54%) to

a bachelor's degree (42%). The employment status of the respondents was quite varied, but most worked in village government offices or became village officials (62%), and some were active as PKK cadres (32%), where their main task was to carry out village government programs to improve the welfare of village communities.

Table 1: Respondents' Occupations

| No | Type of work | Amount | %tase (%) |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| 1 | Village Apparatus | 31 | 62 |
| 2 | Public figure | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | Youth Organization Supervisor | 2 | 4 |
| 4 | PKK Members | 16 | 32 |
| Total | | 50 | 100 |

Source: Primary Data

Most women who responded to this study were in the government sector and interacted with the community as government agents. This shows that women have a strategic role in village governance, especially managing village funds. Women's active participation in local government also indicates an increasing awareness of the importance of gender representation in the decision-making process (Hornset & de Soysa, 2022).

Several legal regulations regulate the role of women in local government. One of them is Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. Article 26, paragraph (4) states that the village head must organize the village government with participatory, transparent, and accountable principles, including women's involvement in decision-making. Article 86 emphasizes that women have the right to participate in village deliberations related to development planning.

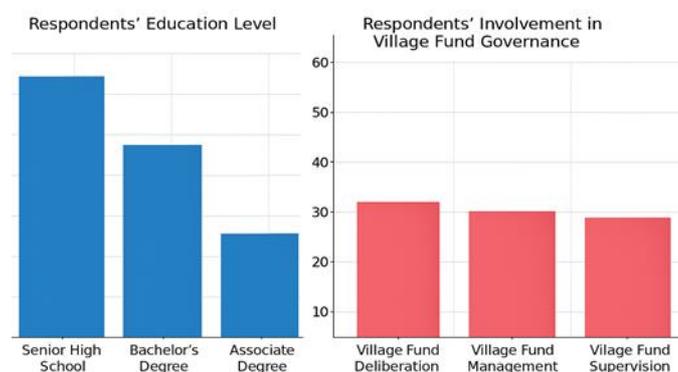
Indonesia is also committed to ensuring gender equality in all aspects of life, including in local government, as stated in Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). There is also the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 67 of 2017 concerning Amendments to the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 83 of 2015 concerning the Appointment and Dismissal of Village Officials. This regulation stipulates that village officials must be selected based on the principle of non-discrimination, so that women have the right to occupy strategic positions in village government.

Another legal regulation is Presidential Regulation 59 of 2017 concerning implementing the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the SDGs' goals is to achieve gender equality and empower women in various sectors, including government. Presidential Instruction Number 9 of 2000 also mentions Gender

Mainstreaming in National Development. This regulation emphasizes that all development policies, including village governance, must consider a gender perspective.

Education is essential in forming integrity and awareness of the risks of corruption (Suharto, 2020). Based on the research results, 54% of female respondents have a secondary education level, and 42% have a higher education level. This level of education reflects a relatively high cognitive potential and ethical awareness in understanding village governance. This aligns with the finding that 78% of respondents understand the main objectives of using village funds, such as improving public services and empowering the village economy.

Graph 1. Level of Education and Involvement in Village Governance



Source: Primary Data

However, education has not automatically been directly proportional to active involvement in the planning, monitoring, and managing of village funds. Data in Graph 1 shows that only 26% of respondents have participated in village fund planning meetings, 20% have been involved in management, and 18% have been engaged in monitoring village funds. This low participation indicates structural barriers that hinder women's substantive involvement, even though they have the cognitive capacity.

This is in line with the principal-agent theory, which states that agents—in this case, female village officials—can still be encouraged to compromise integrity if the monitoring system is weak and there is structural pressure. Study Murat Yildirim (2022) also shows that higher female representation can reduce corruption rates, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the strength or weakness of institutions. This shows that institutions have an important role as a legitimate structural base in encouraging women to be proactive in socio-political activities.

Thus, education is indeed an essential foundation in forming integrity. However, capacity building, active involvement, and structural reform are needed to encourage women to carry out their roles fully in village governance free from corruption. This structural basis positions the village government to create a system free from corruption. In addition, education is also an instrument that can encourage escalation in the context

of human resources quality. With quality education, human resources will have the potential to grow strongly and credibly.

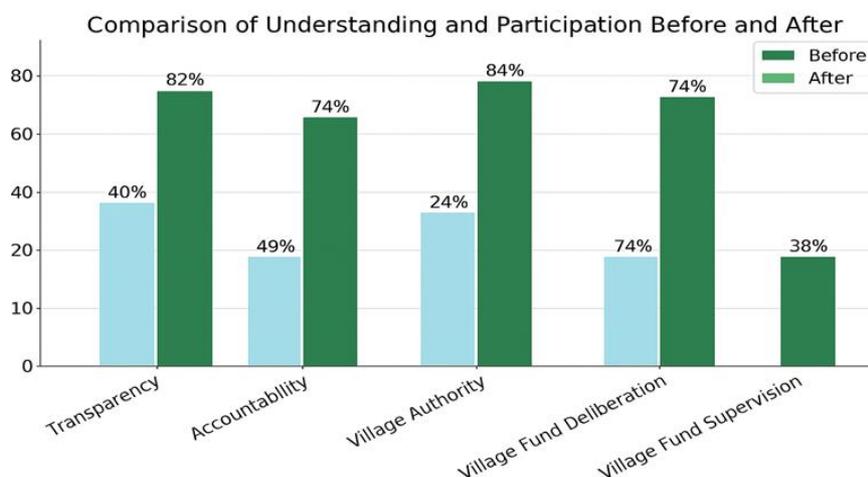
Transparency and Accountability in Village Fund Management

Transparency and accountability are two essential dimensions in creating a social structure with integrity and credibility. The study's results show that public understanding of the principles of transparency and accountability in village fund management is still very low. Only 40% of respondents stated that they understood the principle of transparency, and 32% understood the principle of accountability. These data show a significant knowledge gap regarding the basic principles of good governance at the village level. This reflects the general condition where many communities have not fully obtained adequate access to information related to village financial management, including their right to know the use of public funds.

However, there was a significant increase in understanding after counseling and socialization regarding the principles of good village governance. As many as 82% of respondents stated that they understood the principle of transparency, and 74% indicated that they understood the principle of accountability. In addition, the understanding of village authority also increased from 36% to 84% after socialization. This confirms that public education and participatory approaches can be effective strategies in increasing anti-corruption literacy and encouraging more accountable governance at the local level (Goel & Nelson, 2021; Kompas, 2025).

Applying information technology, such as a digitalization system for village financial reports, can also strengthen transparency. Several studies have shown that technology implementation can increase the effectiveness of supervision and reduce corruption gaps in the management of public funds (DiRienzo, 2019). Countries with better e-government systems tend to have lower levels of corruption. This confirms that the digitalization system in government bureaucracy provides an opportunity to reduce corrupt practices that specific individuals often carry out.

Graph 2: Comparison of Understanding and Participation



In the context of regulation, Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability in managing village funds. Article 24 stresses that the implementation of village governance must be carried out based on the principles of accountability and transparency. Article 68 emphasizes the right of village communities to obtain information related to village government policies, including budget use. In addition, Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 113 of 2014 concerning Village Financial Management emphasizes that every use of village funds must be based on transparency, accountability, participation, and orderly and disciplined budgeting. Article 68 emphasizes the right of village communities to obtain information related to village government policies, including budget use. Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration Number 19 of 2017 concerning Priority Use of Village Funds emphasizes that village funds must be used towards community needs by ensuring transparency in budget allocation.

Presidential Regulation 95 of 2018 concerning Electronic-Based Government Systems (SPBE) encourages digital systems in village government management to increase transparency and accountability. Another regulation is Law 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure. This law mandates that village governments provide the public with access to information regarding village financial management. These regulations are in line with studies by Dipierro & Rella (2024) shows that culture and social norms can influence community tolerance towards corruption. In the context of village fund management, strengthening transparency can be done through active community participation in supervision, implementation of e-government, and optimization of the role of village institutions such as the Village Consultative Body (BPD).

In addition, community involvement in monitoring village funds is also an essential factor in preventing the misuse of funds. Participatory mechanisms such as village deliberations and the involvement of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) in the fund management process can increase accountability and encourage effective budget use. Data from a study in Menganti Village showed that only 40% of the community understood the village's authority in managing village funds before the counseling. Still, after the counseling, this figure increased to 84%.

Furthermore, community participation also increased significantly after the socialization of village funds. Before the counseling, only 26% of respondents had attended village fund planning meetings, while after the socialization, this number increased to 74%. This shows that education and active community involvement play a role in increasing transparency and accountability. Another factor that supports transparency and accountability in managing village funds is implementing a sustainable internal and external audit system. Financial audits conducted periodically by the Audit Board of Indonesia (BPK) and regional inspectorates can help prevent misappropriation

of village funds. In addition, publishing the village's financial reports openly to the public will strengthen public supervision of managing village funds.

However, based on the data, only 32% of respondents were aware of the involvement of regional supervisory officers in supervising village funds, and only 2% were aware that the BPK or KPK also oversee the management of village funds hierarchically. This indicates that there is still a need for socialization and increasing legal literacy of the community regarding these supervisory institutions. Implementing reward and punishment policies for village fund managers is also essential in improving accountability. Village heads and officials who carry out fund management transparently and by regulations can be given incentives as a form of appreciation. On the other hand, administrative and criminal sanctions must be enforced by applicable rules for those proven to have misused funds.

Women's Involvement in Corruption Prevention

Although women dominate village apparatus positions (62% of respondents act as village apparatus and 32% as PKK cadres), they still face obstacles in upholding transparency and integrity in budget management, as seen from their relatively low level of involvement. This phenomenon aligns with the Patronage and Social Network theory, which explains that women are often trapped in a patron-client system that makes it difficult to reject corrupt practices.

The hierarchical structure means that female officials must maintain their political loyalty to maintain support from the political elite (Brown & Lemi, 2021). Furthermore, the masculine culture of bureaucratic organizations tends to marginalize women from strategic decision-making processes, including supervision and integrity enforcement (Marks & Rajagopal, 2021). Women are often given administrative and implementation roles, rather than supervisory or policy control roles.

One of the interesting findings in this study is the low level of women's involvement in village fund supervision. Before the counseling, only 18% of respondents had supervised using village funds. After the counseling, awareness increased, but there are still challenges in encouraging women's active participation in efforts to eradicate corruption. This provides significance to the results of the socialization process and internalization of knowledge regarding women's involvement in efforts to eliminate corruption in the formal bureaucratic environment.

This is in line with research by Merkle & Kubbe (2022) shows that although women tend to be more honest in a clean government system, they can engage in corrupt practices in an already corrupt system. A study by Dipierro & Rella (2024) shows that women are more sensitive to social pressure and are more likely to follow the prevailing norms in a corrupt system. If the system normalizes corrupt practices, then women tend to conform, even if it goes against their principles of personal integrity. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen the monitoring system and increase women's involvement in institutions that handle village fund monitoring.

The research data supports these findings. Many female respondents understand the principles of transparency and accountability (82% and 74% after counseling), but only a small portion are actively involved in the management (40%) and supervision of village funds (38%). This gap between knowledge and actual participation indicates structural and cultural barriers to empowering women as anti-corruption agents at the local level. On the other hand, the disparity in learning and participation is also a social variable that hinders women's active involvement in technical work.

Study by Bauhr & Charron (2021) shows that the presence of women in policy-making positions can significantly reduce corruption, especially in countries with more democratic systems of government. Women are considered social agents with integrity and principles to present a transparent and accountable bureaucratic space. On the other hand, another study from Fauziah & Lubis (2022) examine that women's involvement in village oversight mechanisms, such as the Village Consultative Body (BPD), can increase transparency and prevent misuse of village funds. This is also related to implementing Sound Governance to mitigate corruption in village bureaucratic circles

In addition, studies from Ratu & Rahajeng (2024) explains that anti-corruption policies in corporations and the role of women as supervisors are symmetrical. This has implications for the significance of influencing behavior to commit corruption. Because of this, investors in corporations are required to encourage regulations that encourage transparency and accountability. In this regard, a study from (Bauhr et al., 2025) illustrates that female public officials are more effective in eradicating corruption problems at the bureaucratic and technical levels. However, female public officials are less popular than male public officials, which confirms that the number of female public officials tends to be lower than that of male public officials.

Considering the data and literature, it is essential to increase the number of women in village government and strengthen their capacity, authority, and support systems to be substantially involved in monitoring and preventing corruption. Training programs, enhancing the role of the BPD, and affirmative policies must be continuously encouraged so that women's involvement is symbolic and impacts cleaner and more accountable governance at the village level.

Corruption Cases Involving Women in Local Government

Several corruption cases in the regional government sector show that female officials can also be involved in direct and indirect budget misuse. The alleged corruption cases at the Indonesian Export Financing Institution (LPEI) and PT Timah Tbk, with state losses reaching Rp 271 trillion, show that even though women play a role in financial governance, the challenge of maintaining integrity is still great (Bisnis, 2025).

Research by Martha & Hastuti (2014) in the Yogyakarta DPRD shows that even though women have high integrity values, they can still be involved in corruption if they do not have autonomy in decision-making and are in a corrupt system. This is in line with the economic theory of bribery, which states that individuals tend to commit corruption

if the benefits obtained are greater than the risks faced. In this context, women in patronage networks or under political pressure tend to be more vulnerable to corrupt practices than men.

The findings of this study indicate similar challenges. Although most female respondents (80%) stated that they understood the importance of accountability after the socialization, their involvement in budget monitoring was still low. Only 18% were actively involved in village fund monitoring activities before the outreach, and this increased to 46% after the outreach. In addition, the questionnaire results also showed that only 26% of respondents had attended village fund planning discussions, and 20% were involved in management, while involvement in monitoring only reached 18%. Knowledge of the principles of transparency and accountability was also still limited, where only 40% knew the principles of transparency and 32% the tenets of accountability before the intervention.

Public knowledge of various forms of irregularities is also low. For example, 54% of people do not know a budget mark-up, 56% do not understand the term fictitious project, and 60% do not know the term embezzlement. Regarding corruption cases, most respondents stated that they did not know whether these forms of irregularities had ever occurred in their village, with the percentage of ignorance reaching 74–78% for each type of irregularity.

Therefore, increasing women's capacity through focused anti-corruption training, involvement in village planning and evaluation, and institutional reforms that reduce the dominance of political patronage is essential. Women must be given strategic, not just administrative, space in village government structures. With the increasing representation of women in strategic positions, ensuring that their presence is symbolic and substantial, supported by a transparent, accountable system, and provides space for independent decision-making free from political or cultural pressure. This can only be achieved through institutional strengthening, gender-based anti-corruption education, and community-based monitoring that actively involves women.

Corruption Prevention Strategy Among Female Officials

To overcome the corruption trap that can ensnare women in local government, several strategies can be implemented, including: (1) Capacity Building and Training Special training programs on government ethics and corruption prevention for female officials can increase awareness of the risks and impacts of corruption; (2) Strengthening the Monitoring Mechanism The community needs to be more active in monitoring the use of village funds, by ensuring women's involvement in social control mechanisms; (3) Reward System for Officials with Integrity Providing incentives and appreciation for village officials who demonstrate transparent and accountable performance can be a motivation to uphold integrity; (4) Gender-Based Policies in Corruption Prevention Formulating anti-corruption policies that take gender factors into account can help overcome the structural barriers faced by women in local government.

Study by Sundström & Wängnerud (2016) shows that increasing the number of women in government can reduce corruption rates. However, factors such as political pressure, patriarchal culture, and limited access to economic resources remain major obstacles for women in maintaining their integrity. This is in line with research by Winati et al., which shows that women tend to reject corrupt practices more than men. However, in a government system that is still dominated by a patriarchal culture, women often face social and political pressures that complicate their efforts to maintain their integrity (Winati et al., 2024).

Table 2. Factors Driving and Inhibiting Women's Integrity in

| No. | Driving Factors | Inhibiting Factors |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | High Ethical Awareness | Political Patronage |
| 2. | Values of Honesty and Morality | Patriarchal Culture and Male Dominance |
| 3. | Gender Based Anti-Corruption Training | Lack of Structural Support |
| 4. | Community Support | Limited Access to Public Resources |

Source: Primary Data

Based on the table above (Table 2), this study's results indicate that women given a social mandate to play a role in government tend to be more careful in facing opportunities for corruption than men. However, social, political, and economic pressures can encourage them to engage in corrupt practices. The main factors contributing to women's involvement in corruption include: (1) Political Patronage: Many women who serve in local government have connections to existing political networks, so they face pressure to follow non-transparent practices. (2) Lack of Structural Support: There is no strong protection system for female officials to resist pressure from their colleagues or superiors in a system that men still dominate. (3) Lack of Public Understanding of Budget Transparency: The lack of public participation in monitoring village budgets also contributes to the opportunity for misuse of village funds.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that although women tend to be more careful in corrupt practices, they still face various structural and cultural barriers that can drag them into a corrupt system. Therefore, a more effective gender-based anti-corruption strategy is needed, including through: (1) increasing anti-corruption training and education through education for female officials on strategies for dealing with corruption pressures; (2) strengthening regulations and oversight systems, by encouraging transparency in local government policies to reduce loopholes that allow corruption to occur; (3) increasing community participation, by encouraging active community involvement in monitoring village funds and public policies. Through these steps, it is hoped that female officials can be more effective in carrying out their duties transparently

and become agents of change in efforts to eradicate corruption in local government. Female officials in local government are often faced with the dilemma of maintaining integrity and following the flow of a corrupt system. This study explores the factors that influence women's involvement in corruption and the strategies they use to adhere to the principles of transparency and accountability.

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