Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences 41 (2020) 152–159

Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences

journal homepage: http://kjss.kasetsart.org

Can proneness to moral emotions detect corruption? The mediating role of ethical judgment based on unified ethics

Juneman Abraham*, Amanda Giovani Pea

Psychology Department, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, 11480, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:
Received 29 December 2017
Revised 9 June 2018
Accepted 19 July 2018
Available online 4 August 2018

Keywords:
corruption psychology,
ethical judgment,
moral emotion,
proneness,
public officials

Abstract

The psychological process of corruption that integrates the role of moral emotions proneness, and ethical judgment remains unclear, as for example in the placement of antecedent, mediator, and outcome variables. This study tested the hypothetical framework that moral emotions proneness can indirectly predict corruption through mediation by ethical judgment. The research participants were 100 public officials who held leadership positions in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. We used a correlational-predictive design with path analysis. The results showed that most of the hypotheses were supported. This study contributes in providing extensions to the proposition that proneness to moral emotions (guilt-negative behavior evaluation and shame-negative self-evaluation) might detect corruption. It does, the results revealed, but first needs to influence ethical judgment.

Introduction

Corruption—the abuse of public resources or public power for personal gain (Corruption Watch, 2017)—has a thick ethical content. Napal (2006) indicated that: (1) corruption might be justified by the ethics of consequentialism because a certain degree of corruption generates *good impact* for business; (2) corruption is clearly unjustified from the ethics of deontology, since there are *rules and obligations* that prohibit corrupt practice for maximizing profit; (3) corruption might be acceptable according to the ethics of relativism if the local *cultural context allows corruption* as a business method or improving someone's career. Thus, these three ethical perspectives might conflict in providing an ethical assessment of possibly corrupt behavior. This also means that taking one side of ethical arguments still leaves spaces of tolerance for corruption.

The present study challenges the assumptions of Napal's study by reinforcing the existence of *unified ethics* (Garofalo, Geuras, Lynch, & Lynch, 2001). Garofalo et al. (2001) claimed that corruption violates a fundamental ethical principle (upheld by deontology), which is trust. Meanwhile, utilitarianism/consequentialism posits also that the absence of moral concern over trust (appreciated by consequentialism) harms the realization of human potential as a whole. Furthermore, Garofalo et al. (2001) argued that no situational ethics or cultural traits support corruption (a transgression against trust). Even if a culture seems to support corruption, it is actually a functional-reactive expression toward uncertainty. Montigny (2015, para. 3, 9) stated, "Corruption is not a cultural issue …. Instances of corruption are at their highest in countries where there is a profound economic or political transformation under way."

On the other hand, the study of corruption in Indonesia increasingly has unique challenges and various colors of emotions and behavior. For example, recently the Regent of Purbalingga, Central Java, was arrested by the Corruption Eradication Commission, but he exhibited metal greeting

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: juneman@binus.ac.id (J. Abraham).
Peer review under responsibility of Kasetsart University.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kjss.2018.07.013
2452-3151/

poses thrice that semiotically demonstrated his "courage against" the grip of law enforcement (Fadhil, 2018). In addition, lots of moments have been recorded in Indonesia where corrupt suspects and defendants smile or laugh freely in front of television cameras, even giving a harassing expression to the law and court. Another unique symptom in Indonesia is the bystanders' behavior. Bystanders who have a close relationship with corruptors (usually singers or sinetron actors) use the situations of the corruptors' legal cases as instruments to promote themselves on television (HukumOnline, 2013). The whole phenomenon shows that in the multicultural context of Indonesia, it is urgent to examine the ways Indonesians, especially public officials, perceive, evaluate, or judge corrupt actions, and their effects on corruption behavior. It is also necessary to examine the predictors that contribute to such judgment.

Literature Reviews

The present study posits ethical judgment based on unified ethics as a predictor of corruption. This article first posits that from the ethical point of view, corruption should be judged as unfair, unjust, and culturally unacceptable. It comes from the argument of humanity's moral unity. Moral practices that vary by culture are tips of icebergs. In contrast, the large, hidden part of the iceberg is humanity's basic quality that seeks to satisfy universal moral virtue (Garofalo et al., 2001). Thus, cultural expressions are relative and might differ between geographies, whereas universal virtues are fundamental or even "absolute." In relation to present-day corruption, Abraham and Pradipto's (2016) cross-cultural study in Indonesia (Sumatera, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Jakarta) found that relational meaning (harming others, stealing) emerged as the most remembered meaning of corruption. This result showed that in line with the moral unity viewpoint, in any culture, corruption at an esoteric level is unacceptable. So, it was hypothesized that the higher the ethical judgment that corruption is ethical, the higher the corruption (*H1*).

Furthermore, the present study suggests that ethical/moral judgment is predicted by moral emotion proneness. This study takes the position that moral emotion is the determinant of ethical judgment, with the basic assumptions that: (1) moral emotion is an informational, motivational, or strong affective reaction and regulates sources that guide moral action or decision-making; (2) moral emotion facilitates greater capacity to focus on deepening a moral problem; (3) for human beings to escape the reality of situations that evoke affective reaction is difficult or nearly impossible (Pizarro, 2000). Ugazio, Lamm, and Singer (2012) conclusively conveyed that the type of moral emotion (for example, disgust, anger) is one determinant of ethical judgment. Because of their urgency in preventing unethical deeds, the moral emotions chosen for study here are shame and guilt (Cohen, Panter, & Turan, 2012; Cohen, Wolf, Panter, & Insko, 2011). Many people know and logically think that a certain action is unethical but still perform that action. Proneness to shame and guilt is considered a person's predispositional trait to perform or not to perform unethical deeds.

Proneness to guilt is compatible with the unified ethics approach, since proneness to guilt positively and simultaneously correlates with deontology (perspective taking, empathy), features of consequentialism/utilitarianism (consideration of future consequences), and features of virtue ethics (moral identity; see also Jeong & Han, 2013; Cohen et al., 2012). Therefore, it can be expected that insensitivity or unproneness to guilt as moral emotion lowers one's ethical judgment (that corruption is unethical). Low proneness to shame is associated with antisociality (a feature of utilitarianism), risky behavior, and illegal behavior (a deontology feature) (Cohen et al., 2011), thus lowering one's ethical judgment (that corruption is unethical).

Ethical judgment is often seen as having an effect on the guilt moral emotion, as it appears in the statement, "Guilt feelings are lower for those consumers skeptical of advertising and who perceive the appeal as manipulative but higher for those with positive beliefs about and affective evaluation of the charity" (Chen & Moosmayer, 2018, p. 6). This present study has the assumption that in the opposite direction, Guilt-NBE and Guilt-REP can inform ethical judgment. Recently, Kim (2018) in his systematic literature review found that "moral emotions in Mèngzǐ, basically understood as concern-based construals, are often an insufficient source of moral action, and an additional source of moral motivation, specifically a conviction or judgment of what is the right thing to do in a certain situation in question, is often necessary for one to complete a moral action" (p. 51). Kim did not do an empirical test on his proposition. However, the logic of the statement partially could be understood. According to Kim (2018), the guilt contains "some sort of propositional thought" (p. 62) as its central constituent. However, ethical judgments or beliefs also have it. Therefore, moral emotions (such as guilt) and ethical judgments need to be mutually "communicating". This present study posits that one of the forms of communication is: Guilt provides a construal perspective to ethical judgment, and ethical judgment needs to respond to inputs from the guilt by using its reflective ability. Thus, ethical deliberation to act corruptly or not is a sequential product of moral emotion proneness (for example, Guilt-NBE, Guilt-REP) and ethical judgment. The reflective element of ethical judgment, according to Kim (2018), will bring up moral courage because ethical judgment is capable of carrying a "sense of bringing about good by going against the normal way of acting" (Kim, 2018, p. 70). By implication, congregated corruption in an organization that is considered "normal" could be prevented by experiencing guilt which activates ethical judgment that corruption is unethical. However, it should be noted that in Kim's study, moral emotion (concern-based construal) and ethical judgment are two mutually exclusive factors, and ethical judgment provides a resolution for the competition between moral emotions as well as between moral emotion and ethical judgment.

Shame plays a greater role in Asian societies, like Indonesia, because most are collectivist (Louie, 2014). Shame has virtues of concern and care for fellow human beings, involving the continuous comparison between one's internalized values or standard, character perspective, and reputation management in the eyes of (significant-) others (Teroni & Bruun, 2011). The negative self-evaluation (Shame-NSE) is

related to self-concept and self-awareness of the inner core. This present empirical research provides an original contribution to the studies on moral psychology because while "shame is often perceived as meeting the … definition of heteronomy in which it can be triggered by aversive judgments or expressions of disgust with which one disagrees" (Teroni & Bruun, 2011, p. 255) (centripetally directed), this present study alleges that there is a centrifugal way. Negative self-evaluation of shame (Shame-NSE) can self-monitor and elicit evaluative judgment that is retrospective on the immoral behavior consequence or anticipatory to future moral behavior, for example, withdrawal (Shame-WIT) to maintain or advocate one's sense of moral integrity. This conjecture stands on the assumption that shame as a moral emotion can provide feedback to one's moral cognition before and after doing a moral behavior (Abraham, Suleeman, & Takwin, 2018).

In those veins, it was hypothesized that the higher proneness to moral emotions, that is, the Guilt-Negative Behavior Evaluation (Guilt-NBE) (*H2*), Guilt-Repair (Guilt-REP) (*H3*), Shame-Negative Self-Evaluation (Shame-NSE) (*H4*), and Shame-Withdrawal (Shame-WIT) (*H5*) the lower the ethical judgment that corruption is ethical. In addition, converging H1 to H5, it is also hypothesized that the ethical judgment mediates the relationships between moral emotions proneness and corruption (*H6*).

Methods

Participants and Data Collection

The participants in this study were 100 married civil servants/public officials (75 males, 25 females, $M_{age} = 42.11$ years old, $SD_{age} = 7.13$ years) working in a Regency in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, recruited using the purposive sampling technique. Prior to data collection, all study participants provided informed consent. The highest position structurally was *Echelon II* (7 participants), and the lowest was *Echelon IV* (22 participants); there were also 71 at *Echelon III* (see also, United Nations, 2005, to understand structural positioning). All public officials were in leadership positions.

The descriptions of Echelon II, III, and IV (Eivellyn, 2014; Hidayat, 2015) are as follow: Echelon II is the second highest level in the structural hierarchy of Indonesian public officials. They foster and develop those who hold positions under them in order to implement the principal policies of the province that are designed and established by Echelon I. However, unlike Echelon I (such as a Regional Secretary), Echelon II are not the top leaders or people in charge of a province. They are directors and people in charge of working units. Examples Echelon II positions are Mayor, Head of Provincial Service, City Secretary, Head of Bureau, Head of Center. Analogously, in a company, Echelon I are the President, Directors and Managing Directors (top management), while Echelon II are the Directors (top management) and Deputy Directors (middle management). Echelon III, a structural position under Echelon II, consists of General Managers and Senior Managers (middle management) responsible for preparing and realizing programs derived from the Echelon II's set of agency/unit strategies. Examples of positions of Echelon III are Secretary of the Agency, Head of Field, Head of Department, Head of Sub-Directorate, and Head of (Sub-) District. Echelon IV are Managers and Supervisors (low management) who work under the guidance of Echelon III. They are responsible for activities which are the operationalization of the programs set by Echelon III. Examples of positions of Echelon IV are Head of Sub Division, Head of Section, and Head of Village.

The measurement scale for corruption was adapted from that constructed by Park and Blenkinsopp (2011), which in turn was adapted from Barker and Carter (1994), consisting of three dimensions: (1) misuse of public employee's position, (2) violations of law, rules, regulations, or ethical standards, and (3) direct or indirect benefits received from such wrongdoing (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011, p. 260). The authors modified this scale by adding the sentence "*I see that my current actions and work as a Civil Servant/Public Official ….* " The scale contains five items/statements to which participants responded, for example: (1) "contains malpractices associated with subcontract in managing the construction and engineering of public works"; (2) "involves the participation of contractors who are under required standards in public works projects". Response options ranged from *Strongly Disagree* (score 1) to *Strongly Agree* (score 6) ($\alpha = .77$, Corrected item–total correlations/$r_{it} = .402 - .748$).

For ethical judgment, the authors constructed a scale of nine items. The scale's components are vignettes of moral dilemmas that mimic the *Moral Dilemma Measure* used by Rock (2013). Vignettes were cited by the authors from two main sources: Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (2006) and Puspito, Elwina, Utari, & Kurniadi (2011), both from the Indonesian context, thus increasing their ecological validity. For example.

- "A civil servant promises a judge the sum of 500 million Indonesian rupiahs (IDR) if the judge hands down a verdict that benefits the civil servant. The civil servant was caught in an embezzlement case. He argued that he took that action only to pay for his wife's immediately needed surgery. The judge considers accepting the sum because he thinks that, despite breaking the law, the civil servant's embezzling funds to pay for his wife's surgery should be tolerated."
- "An honorary employee in a government office once rescued the Governor from a car accident. Afterward, the honorary employee appealed to the Governor to give him a higher position, with the promise that he would assist the Governor in any political affairs. The Governor feels indebted, so he intends to grant the honorary employee's request, even though such an action does not accord with the rules."

After reading each vignette, participants were asked to respond to nine semantic differential scale points. Item 1 states, "*In your opinion, how serious is the behavior of the actor (judge/Head of Office/etc.), depending on the context of the vignette above?*" Responses range from *Not at all serious* (score 1) to *Very serious* (score 6). This scale is adapted from a case scenario assessment option that measures police integrity by

Klockars, Ivkovich, Harver, and Haberfeld (2000). Items 2 to 9 (8 items) were adapted from the Multidimensional Ethics Scale developed by Reidenbach and Robin (1988, as cited in Napal, 2006), with the initial question, "*How do you evaluate the behavior of the actor* (judge/Head of Service/etc., depending on the context of this vignette) *above, regarding matters below?*" The response poles are "Fair" (score 1) and "Unfair" (score 6). Item 3: The second response poles are "Just" (score 1) and "Unjust" (score 6). Item 4: The third response poles are "Culturally acceptable" (score 1) and "Culturally unacceptable" (score 6). Item 5: The fourth response poles are "Violates an unwritten contract" (score 1) and "Does not violate an unwritten contract" (score 6). Item 6: The fifth response poles are "Traditionally acceptable" (score 1) and "Traditionally unacceptable" (score 6). Item 7: The sixth response poles are "Morally right" (score 1) and "Not morally right" (score 6). Item 8: The seventh response poles are "Violates an unspoken promise" (score 1) and "Does not violate an unspoken promise" (score 6). Item 9: The eighth response poles are "Acceptable to family" (score 1) and "Unacceptable to family" (score 6).

To discover whether someone has an ethical judgment that *favors* or is *pro-corruption*, we *reverse* each item's score: Score 1 becomes 6, score 2 becomes 5, score 3 becomes 4, score 4 becomes 3, score 5 becomes 2, and score 6 becomes 1. Note, however, that this is with the *exception* of two scales: Item 5 and Item 8 ($\alpha = .859$, $r_{it} = .341 - .800$, after eliminating 1 item). The higher these scale's total score, the more participants judge that *corruption is ethical.*

The measuring tool developed in this study is a new, alternative instrument that combines vignettes of corruption cases (using moral dilemmas in the Indonesian context) with Reidenbach and Robin's ethical judgment instruments (1988, as cited in Napal, 2006).

Consisting of 25 items, the measurement scale for moral emotions proneness was adapted from Cohen et al. (2011), with 16 items translated directly from the original scale. The authors constructed nine items by contextualizing them in office situations. This scale's items are preceded by: "*In this questionnaire, you will read about situations that people are likely to encounter in day-to-day life, followed by common reactions to those situations. As you read each scenario, try to imagine yourself in that situation. Then indicate the likelihood that you would react in the way described*" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 966).

Scale response options ranged from "*Very Unlikely*" (score 1) to "*Very Likely*" (score 7). The reliability test shows that the Guilt-NBE, Guilt-REP, Shame-NSE, and Shame-WIT scales had Cronbach's alpha internal consistency indexes of $\alpha = .886, .797, .847$, and .385, respectively. Thus, the Shame-WIT scale was not reliable because $\alpha \leq .600$. Corrected item −total correlations (r_{it}) ranged from .522 to .760 (Guilt-NBE), .410 to .710 (Guilt-REP), .421 to .753 (Shame-NSE).

Data Analysis

This study used a quantitative, correlational-predictive design. Predictors (independent variables) are moral emotions proneness, such as, Guilt-NBE (Negative Behavior Evaluation), Guilt-REP (Repair), Shame-NSE (Negative Self-Evaluation), and Shame-WIT (Withdrawal). The mediating variable is ethical judgment (*that corruption is an ethical act*) and the criterion (dependent variable) is corruption (dishonest or fraudulent, behavior).

Results

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations between variables. These correlations were calculated based on the total score of each variable. The function of calculating the correlations was as an early detection of necessary conditions for doing regression and path analysis. Based on the results from Table 1, it appeared that Guilt-NBE ($r = -.275$, $p < .01$), Guilt-REP ($r = -.238$, $p < .05$), and Guilt-NSE ($r = -.254$, $p < .05$) correlated with ethical judgment that favors corruption. It also appeared that the ethical judgment ($r = .288$, $p < .01$) positively correlated with corruption. In addition, Table 1 showed that Guilt-NBE ($r = -.19$, $p > .05$), Guilt-REP ($r = .024$, $p > .05$), and Guilt-NSE ($r = .07$, $p > .05$) did not significantly correlate with corruption. Based on all the results of this correlation, there were indications that moral emotions proneness is not able to directly predict corruption. To follow up those results, data processing was done by implementing path analyses.

The path analyses results showed that the proposed hypothetical models were a good fit for the empirical data (p for the Test of Close Fit > .05, *RMSEA* < .05, *SRMR* < .08, *AGFI* ≥ .90) (See Figure 1). Specifically, the higher the Guilt-NBE ($B = -.18$, $p < .01$), Guilt-REP ($B = -.22$, $p < .01$), and Shame-NSE ($B = -.17$, $p < .01$), the lower the judgment that *corruption is ethical* (See Table 2: *Model 1*, *Model 2*, and *Model 3*). The lower that kind of ethical judgment ($B = .14$, $p < .01$), the lower the likelihood of corruption. In other words, the lower the Guilt-NBE/Guilt-REP/Shame-NSE, the higher the judgment that corruption is ethical. The higher that kind of ethical judgment, the higher the likelihood of corruption. The indirect effects of Guilt-NBE ($B = -.03$, $p < .05$) and Shame-NSE ($B = -.02$, $p < .05$) on corruption behavior via ethical judgment were detected. However, an indirect effect of Guilt-REP ($B = -.03$, $p > .05$) was not found.

Hence, the proposed hypotheses *H2, H3* and *H4* were supported by the empirical data. *H5* could not be tested because the measurement instrument of Shame-WIT was not reliable.

Table 1
Descriptive and correlational statistics between variables, related to corruption

($N = 100$)

	Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1	Guilt-NBE	39.85	10.001	1				
2	Guilt-REP	37.47	10.016	.702**	1			
3	Guilt-NSE	32.45	7.046	.819**	.696**	1		
4	Ethical Judgment (that corruption is an ethical act)	21.29	6.546	−.275**	−.238*	−.254*	1	
5	Corruption	7.20	3.098	−.019	.024	.007	.288**	1

Notes. Guilt-NBE = Guilt-Negative Behavior Evaluation Proneness, Guilt-REP = Guilt-Repair Proneness, Guilt-NSE = Shame-Negative Self-Evaluation Proneness
*$p < .05$
**$p < .01$

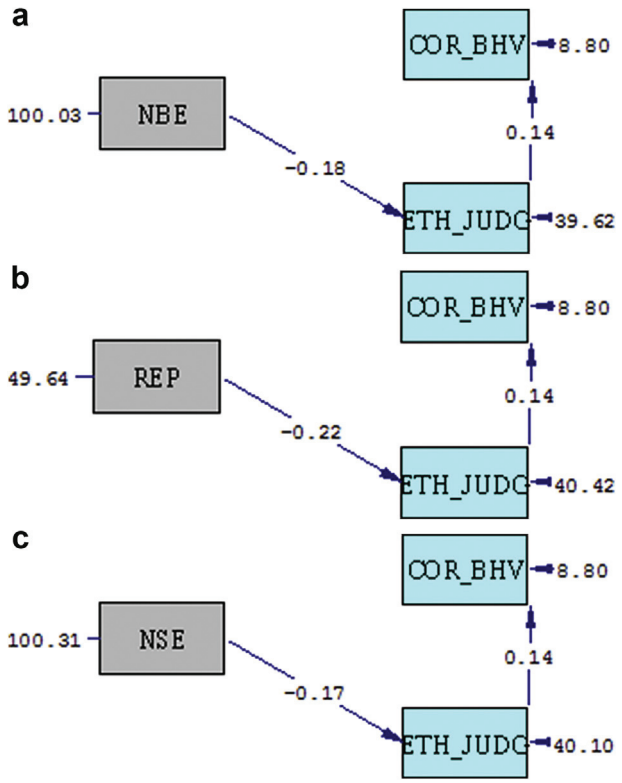

Figure 1 Theoretical models (estimated values presented). Notes. NBE = Guilt-Negative Behavior Evaluation Proneness, REP = Guilt-Repair Proneness, NSE = Shame-Negative Self-Evaluation Proneness, ETH_JUDG = Ethical/Moral Judgment that Corruption is Ethical, COR_BHV = Corruption, (Figure 1-a): χ^2 (1, $N = 100$) = .43, p = .513, *RMSEA* = .000, *SRMR* = .025, *AGFI* = .98, (Figure 1-b): χ^2 (1, $N = 100$) = .98, p = .321, *RMSEA* = .000, *SRMR* = .038, *AGFI* = .96, (Figure 1-c): χ^2 (1, $N = 100$) = .73, p = .392, *RMSEA* = .000, *SRMR* = .033, *AGFI* = .97

The mediation hypothesis, *H6*, without involving Shame-WIT, was supported by the empirical data for Guilt-NBE and Shame-NSE.

Discussion

This study's results indicated that *moral emotions proneness (Guilt-NBE, Guilt-REP, and Shame-NSE) can predict ethical judgment (that corruption is an ethical act) in a negative direction*. This study's results fill theoretical gaps in resolving the following issue:

"… emotions arise in the context of moral judgment. This may seem obvious, but empirical work is needed to confirm causal observation and to clarify the specific roles that emotions play … (A) further pair of possibilities is that moral emotions are emotions that are either constitutive of moral judgments or causally related to moral judgments in a special way" (Prinz & Nichols, 2010, pp. 114, 119).

This present study confirmed that moral emotions proneness does evoke moral/ethical judgments. Ivimey (1949) argued that the sense of what is right and what is wrong generated by the guilt will induce values (re-) formulation and (re-)orientation leading to constructive doing and realistic pursuing toward a healthier lifestyle. What should be satisfied, according to Ivimey, is that the guilt is acknowledged and understood, and should not be one's neurotical burden, so the guilt could improve "a conscience or a capacity for moral judgment" (p 12). That kind of acknowledgment and understanding will bring negative behavior evaluation and suffering brought by the guilt moral emotion to "the sense of wanting and being able to change" (Ivimey, 1949, p. 14) (behavior repair responses or amendment). It is the Guilt-REP in this present study. Through the moral judgment generated by constructive guilt, there is more hope to produce moral behavior achievement.

More recently, with the phenomenological approach and autobiographical memory methodology, Knez and Nordhall (2017) found that guilt acts as a driver for ethical judgment. They argued that guilty feeling is an emotion that is emulated, processed, perceived, and experienced by self, especially through self-reflection with parameters of personal, social, and cultural standards. Guilt is an integral emotion with self to evaluating (blaming, condemning, accusing, berating, belittling; Ivimey, 1949) unethical behavior or moral short-comings. It is the functional dimension of Guilt-NBE in this present study. Since autobiographical memory is connected to the moral self, it is reasonable to see how the memory, that is self-defining moral memory (associated with events identified and nuanced with moral behavior in the past), motivates self-reconstruction sustainably in one's morality dimension. They found that the guilty reparative function reduces the probability of intention or willingness of a person to participate in immoral actions. As an implication, Knez and

Table 2
Results from path analysis

($N = 100$)

Model 1 (Figure 1-a)	*B*		*SE*	*T*	R^2	*Error var.*
	NBE	ETH_JUDG				
Direct						
ETH_JUDG	−.18		.06	−2.83**	.075	39.62
COR_BHV		.14	.05	2.98**	.083	8.80
Indirect						
COR_BHV	−.03		.01	−2.05*	.006	9.54
Model 2 (Figure 1-b)	*B*		*SE*	*T*	R^2	*Error var.*
	REP	ETH_JUDG				
Direct						
ETH_JUDG	−.22		.09	−2.43*	.057	40.42
COR_BHV		.14	.05	2.98**	.083	8.80
Indirect						
COR_BHV	−.03		.02	−1.88		
Model 3 (Figure 1-c)	*B*		*SE*	*T*	R^2	*Error var.*
	NSE	ETH_JUDG				
Direct						
ETH_JUDG	−.17		.06	−2.60**	.064	40.10
COR_BHV		.14	.05	2.98**	.083	8.80
Indirect						
COR_BHV	−.02		.01	−1.96*	.005	9.54

Notes NBE = Guilt-Negative Behavior Evaluation Proneness, REP = Guilt-Repair Proneness, NSE = Shame-Negative Self-Evaluation Proneness, ETH_JUDG = Ethical/Moral Judgment that Corruption is Ethical, COR_BHV = Corruption, R^2 = Effect size (coefficient of determination), *SE* = Standard error
*$T \geq |1.96|$ when $p < .05$
**$T \geq |2.58|$ when $p < .01$

Nordhall (2017) argued that the more intensive the guilt, the more a person experiences self-defining memory as real (having elaborated sensory experience), and thus less willing the person is act unethically in the moral dilemma situations.

This present study provides confirmation and clarification of the findings of the guilt roles covered in studies over almost 70 years (1949–2017), from Ivimey (1949) to Knez and Nordhall (2017), by applying guilt proneness (Guilt-REP and Guilt-NBE) in the context of corruption by public officials.

This present study also found the role of Shame-NSE in predicting corruption by public officials via their ethical judgment. Shame covers the whole self (Shame-NSE), that is the body, the psyche, and the soul which provides reflective responses to a moral stimulus (such as moral temptation) and is a remnant of the last stage of instinct advancement aimed at perfecting one's action (Heller, 2003). The perfection of a moral action occurs via ethical judgment due to the following socio-psychological paths:

"That prospective shame or the sense of shame, much like conscience, serves as a private, internal monitor, and not merely as a judge of a moral conduct …. [T]he emotions [including shame] are feelings that affect judgment and are attended by pain or pleasure …. [F]or the moral agent, the shame experience has ethical significance, because it is an avowal of responsibility of a personal character fault …. [B]eing ashamed … pragmatically imply negative ethical value judgments …. [A] mere violation of a rule of proper conduct cannot be regarded as ethically blamable unless the judgment can be shown to have a basis in the rightness …." (Cua, 2003, pp. 151–153, 160, 167).

This study's results also show that *ethical judgment can predict corruption in a positive direction.* The more participants judge that corruption is ethically permissible, the greater the chances of corrupt behavior. With the finding that *ethical judgment mediates between moral emotion proneness (Guilt-NBE and Shame-NSE) and corruption,* we now have one more explanation of corruption's psychological process. People with higher proneness to moral emotions can more easily see and feel corruption's damaging effects on the principals of personal, interpersonal, and social ethics. They also see and feel corruption's incompatibility with both rule-based and consequence-based ethics. But people with less proneness are less able to capture corruption's esoteric, destructive essence and might still be able to justify it. For example, people with lower proneness might be more willing to hold the opinion that in their environment, petty corruption is permissible or legitimate. Perhaps there is no real victim, perhaps gratuities in reciprocation are just natural, or perhaps corruption within an institution is a reasonable method of revenge by an unfairly treated employee.

These findings' practical implication is that to detect a person's tendency toward corruption (as for example in Abraham & Pane, 2014), measurement of moral emotions' proneness toward young people, company employees, and public service employees is not sufficient. It should be followed by measurement of their ethical/moral judgment. Mapping public officials and civilians' tendency toward corruptibility is a very urgent task for corruption prevention and character education. This can be done using the measurement tool developed by the authors, and social intervention should be conducted in two stages, first developing ethical judgment and then having the appropriate proneness to shame and guilt.

The absence of indirect effect of Guilt-REP on corruption behavior via ethical judgment could be explained by applying Cohen et al.'s (*the creators of the Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale*/GASP) argument: GASP is psychometrically better at capturing affective symptoms of the unethical disposition of individuals than measuring their behavioral tendencies (such as Guilt-REP and Shame-WIT). Cohen et al. (2012) found "the relationship between guilt-repair and lying was marginal" (p. 960). Those explanations invite the next researchers to improve the sensitivity of the Guilt-REP scale.

The study had two limitations. First, it was not able to investigate the predictive power of Shame-WIT proneness against the corrupt behavior. The Shame-WIT instrument had low reliability ($\alpha < .6$), presumably because it had a double meaning, that is gently resign (positive) or escape from responsibility (negative). This sub-scale has been problematical many times (for example, Abraham & Berline, 2015; Abraham & Gunawan, 2014). In Indonesia, therefore, conducting analysis to test the existence of these two hypothetical sub-factors (resign and escape) would be advisable.

The second limitation—but also, paradoxically, a plus—of this research lies in the number of participants—still relatively limited ($N = 100$). This study would be better if the future researcher recruited more

participants to achieve more power in the study. Additional methods may be needed to account for these limitations for testing a mediation model, such as the bootstrapping method. However, the risk of inconsistency and potential bias of bootstrapping (Beasley & Rodgers, 2009) decided the authors not to implement it. Inflated observed relationships between variables may be a critical side of this study due to the common method used of data collected from a single source, at a single time, using a single method (Juneman, 2013).

Nevertheless, the bright side of this present study is that we can safely assume that gaining direct access to public officials in the leadership positions in Indonesian bureaucratic culture willing to participate in socially desirable research (such as into corruption) is very difficult. Therefore, this study might be used as a contributing initial baseline for the development of corruption psychology studies among public officials in Indonesia and other Asian countries.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study concludes the existence of a psychological mechanism that brings people to corruption. They might begin with little or no proneness to moral emotion, follow with ethical judgment favoring corruption, and eventually taking up corrupt behavior.

This study contributes to psychological studies of corruption in two ways. First, the study results establish ethical judgment as a mediating variable between moral emotion and corruption. Additionally, the study provides empirical support that the role of moral emotion in predicting corruption is indirect. This also clarifies the claim of Cohen et al. (2011, p. 947): "The *Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale* has the potential to be an important measurement tool for detecting individuals susceptible to corruption and unethical behavior." Indeed, moral emotion cannot directly detect and reduce corruption, but instead, must first travel through ethical judgment. Second, this study makes the ethical judgment a totality or "gestalt" of unified ethical theories as the mediating variable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

References

Abraham, J., & Berline, R. P. N. (2015). An investigation on organizational charlatan behavior and moral identity as predictors of shame: Importance for education. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn), 9*(2), 135–144.

Abraham, J., & Gunawan, H. (2014). Moral emotions, income sufficiency, family self-sufficiency, and selflessness. *Proceedings of SGEM 2014 - International multidisciplinary scientific conferences on social sciences and arts* (pp. 241–248). https://doi.org/10.5593/sgemsocial2014/B11/S1.032.

Abraham, J., & Pane, M. M. (2014). Corruptive tendencies, conscientiousness, and collectivism. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences, 153*, 132–147. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.048.

Abraham, J., & Pradipto, Y. D. (2016). Corruption: Its representations and psychology in Indonesia. *Proceedings of the Asian conference on psychology and the behavioral sciences 2016* (pp. 357–369). Retrieved from http://papers.iafor.org/papers/acp2016/ACP2016_27337.pdf.

Abraham, J., Suleeman, J., & Takwin, B. (2018). Psychological mechanism of corruption: A comprehensive review. *Asian Journal of Scientific Research*. Retrieved from https://scialert.net/abstract/?doi=ajsr.0000.90096.90096. Advance Online Publication [Online First].

Barker, T., & Carter, D. L. (1994). *Police deviance* (3rd ed.). Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.

Beasley, W. H., & Rodgers, J. L. (2009). Resampling methods. In R. E. Millsap, & A. Maydeu-Olivares (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of quantitative methods in psychology* (pp. 362–386). London, UK: SAGE.

Chen, Y., & Moosmayer, D. C. (2018). When guilt is not enough: Interdependent self-construal as moderator of the relationship between guilt and ethical consumption in a Confucian context. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3831-4.

Cohen, T. R., Panter, A. T., & Turan, N. (2012). Guilt proneness and moral character. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 21*, 355–359. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721412454874.

Cohen, T. R., Wolf, S. T., Panter, A. T., & Insko, C. A. (2011). Introducing the GASP scale: A new measure of guilt and shame proneness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 100*, 947–966. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022641.

Corruption Watch. (2017). *What is corruption: Our definition of corruption*. Retrieved from http://www.corruptionwatch.org.za/learn-about-corruption/what-is-corruption/our-definition-of-corruption/.

Cua, A. S. (2003). The ethical significance of shame: Insights of Aristotle and Xunzi. *Philosophy East and West, 53*(2), 147–202.

Eivellyn. (2014, June 11). Golongan kepangkatan dan golongan eselon pada PNS. *Wordpress*. Retrieved from https://eivellyn.wordpress.com/2014/06/11/golongan-kepangkatan-dan-golongan-eselon-pada-pns/.

Fadhil, H. (2018, June 6). Salam metal 'sok berani' Bupati Purbalingga. *DetikNews*. Retrieved from https://news.detik.com/berita/4055252/salam-metal-sok-berani-bupati-purbalingga. [in Indonesian]

Garofalo, C., Geuras, D., Lynch, T. D., & Lynch, C. E. (2001). Applying virtue ethics to the challenge of corruption. *The Innovation Journal: The Public Sector Innovation Journal, 6*(2). Retrieved from http://www.innovation.cc/peer-reviewed/virtue-ethics-corruption.htm.

Heller, A. (2003). Five approaches to the phenomenon of shame. *Social Research: An International Quarterly, 70*(4), 1015–1030.

Hidayat, R. (2015, December 8). Eselon (yang) menjadi incaran pejabat. *Kompasiana*. Retrieved from https://www.kompasiana.com/rachmatpapinerazijed/eselon-yang-menjadi-incaran-pejabat_566688d5339373d8268a2828. [in Indonesian]

HukumOnline. (2013, October 24). *Tersangka masih tertawa-tawa, itu pelecehan hukum*. Retrieved from http://www.hukumonline.com/berita/baca/lt5268747a1555c/tersangka-masih-tertawa-tawa–itu-pelecehan-hukum. [in Indonesian]

Ivimey, M. (1949). Neurotic guilt and healthy moral judgment. *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 9*(1), 8–16.

Jeong, C., & Han, H. (2013). Exploring the relationship between virtue ethics and moral identity. *Ethics & Behavior, 23*, 44–56. https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2012.714245.

Juneman. (2013). Common method variance & bias dalam penelitian psikologis. *Jurnal Pengukuran Psikologi dan Pendidikan Indonesia, 2*(5), 364–381. [in Indonesian]

Kim, M.-S. (2018). Emotion and judgment: Two sources of moral motivation in Mèngzǐ. *Diseases of Aquatic Organisms, 17*(1), 51–80. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11712-017-9597-z.

Klockars, C. B., Ivkovich, S. K., Harver, W. E., & Haberfeld, M. R. (2000). *The measurement of police integrity: NIJ research in brief*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

Knez, I., & Nordhall, O. (2017). Guilt as a motivator for moral judgment: An autobiographical memory study. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*, 750. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00750.

Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi. (2006). *Memahami untuk membasmi: Panduan untuk memahami tindak pidana korupsi.* Jakarta, Indonesia: Author. Retrieved from https://www.kpk.go.id/gratifikasi/BP/buku_saku_korupsi.pdf.

Louie, S. (2014, July 29). Asian shame and honor. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/minority-report/201406/asian-shame-and-honor.

Montigny, P. (2015). Is corruption a cultural issue? *Ethic-Intelligence*. Retrieved from http://www.ethic-intelligence.com/blog/8291-corruption-cultural-issue/.

Napal, G. (2006). An assessment of the ethical dimensions that impact on corruption. *EJBO-Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies, 11*, 5–9.

Park, H., & Blenkinsopp, J. (2011). The roles of transparency and trust in the relationship between corruption and citizen satisfaction.

International Review of Administrative Sciences, 77, 254–274. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852311399230.

Pizarro, D. (2000). Nothing more than feelings? The role of emotions in moral judgment. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 30*, 355–375. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5914.00135.

Prinz, J. J., & Nichols, S. (2010). Moral emotions. In J. M. Doris (Ed.), *The moral psychology handbook* (pp. 111–146). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Puspito, N. T., Elwina, M., Utari, I. S., & Kurniadi, Y. (Eds.). (2011). *Buku pendidikan anti korupsi untuk perguruan tinggi.* Jakarta, Indonesia: Kementerian pendidikan dan kebudayaan RI, direktorat jenderal pendidikan tinggi, bagian hukum kepegawaian. [in Indonesian]

Reidenbach, R. E., & Robin, D. P. (1988). Some initial steps toward improving the measurement of ethical evaluations of marketing activities. *Journal of Business Ethics, 7*, 871–879. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00383050.

Rock, M. S. (2013). *New insights into corruption: Paradoxical effects of approach-orientation for powerholders* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst.

Teroni, F., & Bruun, O. (2011). Shame, guilt and morality. *Journal of Moral Philosophy, 8*(2), 223–245. https://doi.org/10.1163/174552411X563574.

Ugazio, G., Lamm, C., & Singer, T. (2012). The role of emotions for moral judgments depends on the type of emotion and moral scenario. *Emotion, 12*, 579–590. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024611.

United Nations. (2005). *Republic of Indonesia: Public administration country profile*. Retrieved from http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan023233.pdf.