

# Understanding the Corruption Meaning among Malang City People in a Sociocultural Context: A Communicative Phenomenological Study using the Gadamer Approach

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## Abstract

This research was aimed to reveal the understanding of corruption by Malang City people as the conscious understanding from expressions or statements. These diverse meanings become an important subject matter for evaluation and composition of anti-corruption programs based on effective communication. This research methodology was interpretive phenomenology. The results showed various meanings for term “corruption”. It meant as: 1) taking something or rights that belong to others, that one was not rightfully entitled; 2) behaviors that were encouraged by impulses of personal wishes or desires due to greed, conducted by actors that lack sincerity in what they do as well as good character; 3) taking away public rights for private interests; 4) obtaining personal gains by utilizing existing authority to detriment of others; 5) behaviors usually conducted by political elite; 6) same as theft or stealing but conducted by a perpetrator or the groups. These understandings of corruption among the people were understood through three fundamental questions in revealing the understanding of corruption by people. The fundamental questions involved how corruption occurs, what were the motives of corruption, and who were the corruption actors. Researchers concluded that understanding of corruption among the people was very diverse because it was determined by conscious understanding of each individual; the reveal of these meanings of corruption would make it easier to place them within educative measures for people by related instances, unifying equal meanings in an anti-corruption program based on effective communication referring to normative standards.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Culture, Meaning, Gadamer.

## I. Introduction

Studies on various culture patterns as an organized series of symbols to represents a human instilling and understanding of events were been done. These words were the definition of a cultural study as proposed by Geertz. Geertz expressed that a study that covers individuals or groups was same as a machine. The meanings found in them were a worldly orientation for which Geertz considers as gloomy, difficult, vague, changing, and even complicated, but even so a systematic, empirical investigation on phenomenon could be carried out (Geertz, 2014, p.149-150, p.23).

Bannet (in Teseter, 2003) explained culture as a ritual habit to organizes and determines social relationships based on everyday needs according to existing texts– in form of literature, music, television, and film – and through these things the social and natural world was re-represented or marked-understood in certain ways according to specific conventions. For Geertz, culture was not cults and customs, but it was the various structures of meaning to shape experience; and politics was not the variety of coups d’état and constitutions, but it was an essential arena (Geertz, 1992, p.139).

Culture has a tight relationship with media. This could be proven in everyday life. Media in reality was a facility for communication on one hand, and culture was a formation of media on other hand. This was in accordance with concept of communication expressed by James Carey (1989, p.14)

James Carey (1989) was that process of transmission in communication was the most recognizable event in everyday life, as apparent in culture of industry which tends toward the process of message transmission from one party to another. According to Carey, communication on one hand focused on transmission, being directed to senders, recipients, and content of messages (p.15). On the other hand, communication could also be seen as a ritual process which neither emphasizes on process of message delivery from sender to recipient, nor on implanting of information, but instead emphasizes the process of message maintenance in society, connected with meanings of sharing, participation, association, mutual support, and mutual possession in faith, even communication as the representation of mutual faith (p.18).

Nina Syam (2013, p.78-80) expressed that anthropology was the roots of communication science. One interpretations was the issue of cultural acceptance, where anthropologists see the behavior of humans in a holistic context; it was on this side that model of communication was presented by showing the interrelatedness of communication behavior patterns with cultural anthropology that explains in detail aspects of values, norms, customs, habits, languages, dialects, traditions, works of art, and others.

The topic of corruption in context of cultural acceptance was certainly inescapable from role of

communication. The people of this country face a reality where corruption was prevalent. This was shown by volume of news in mass media. Cases of corruption that fill the pages of Indonesian media not only have become local but also national news. Common individuals were not the only ones involved; law enforcement officials and those in positions of leadership from various levels were also involved. Also, corruption does not just involve individuals personally, but also involves a group of people in a single institution.

The phenomenon of corruption was a serious issue in Indonesia. Indonesia was ranked as the fifth most corrupt country in world; even in Asia-Pacific region Indonesia was first, a record that no one should be proud of. Another piece of data found in news (Kompas.com, 2014) regards statistics published by ICW on corruption cases in Indonesia; in 2012 there were 402 cases and in 2013 the number rose to 560. Even for development of linear corruption cases, in 2010 the number of corruption case suspects reached 1,157 people and up to 2014 this increased to 1,271 people.<sup>1</sup> Malang Corruption Watch even noted Greater Malang as being in a corruption emergency because the value of losses due to corruption have increased by over 100%, where the state losses in 2011 amounted to 20 billion rupiahs, which increased in 2012 to 52 billion, and again in 2013 to 59 billion.<sup>2</sup>

The above data was quite convincing for some groups of people that corruption has become entrenched in this country. The movement to fight corruption has been long since proclaimed, but corruption seemingly continues to grow around us, from trivial cases up to large ones. The differing interpretations among the people were considered as the trigger for this, as corruption was understood differently from one person to another within same society. The different meanings of corruption in society was caused, among others, by differences in experience from one person to another, and may also be caused by different information and knowledge obtained from daily interactions in environment, whether formal or informal.

Corruption was a social phenomenon that was considered deviant and endangers society and country. This was what makes the act condemned by people. The composition of a legal formulation that declares corruptions an act of crime represents a legal manifestation that condemns the act of corruption. However, despite being condemned, the reality on field shows that corruption was indeed difficult to remove from traces of human civilization, then and now. Accordingly, we recognize the concept of tributes in kingdoms of past, which some groups of people consider as a form of corruption in the past. Tributes were as representations of honor to king in power at that time. Another popularly recognized example was the “thank-you” culture; the fact that appearance of corrupt practices could be related to this historical fact shows that there was a process of inheriting values and habits that applied in past.

An investigation of a number of literatures that analyze and discuss corruption as an object has shown that it was not easy to create conceptual limitations in understanding the meaning of corruption. This was because the act of corruption essentially involves a diversity of aspects. It was difficult to depict a single representative understanding for all of these aspects. This issue, according to Robert O. Tilman (in Danil, 2014) was similar to discussing beauty, depending on methods used and the viewpoint taken by a person. Discourses regarding the definition of corruption were very perceptual, resulting in understandings of meaning of corruption that was not always the same from one perspective to another (p.2). As such, the researcher believes that a multidisciplinary approach was very much necessary to obtain a comprehensive understanding of meaning of corruption; this was at least what this research attempts to do.

Many studies on corruption have been conducted by paying attention to both theoretical and practical argumentations that have been presented in prior theoretical researches. As explained by Mauro (2015), in 1970, Jagdish Bhagwati, Anne Krueger, and Susan Rose-Ackerman had produced a research that revealed that primary cause of corruption was where there existed rent as a result of regulations from government and public officials in allocating their policies. As an example, it was mentioned in research that government restrictions cause rent and behaviors of searching for import quota and license rents for civil servants, which in end gave an opportunity to entrepreneurs who were willing to pay bribes.

Luminija Ionescu (2013), in a theoretical research entitled “Perception of Corruption in Emerging Economies”, also had tried to focus on meaning and interpretation of corruption based on actual experiences and perceptions of people toward corruption. This was done by testing and evaluating the relationship between civil perceptions of corruption and street-level experiences of corruption, differences between corruption experience and perception, the individual-level relationship between corruption experience and perception, and the problematic nature of corruption. The most salient result of research was in disclosing that corruption was a behavior that not only has negative effects but also positive effects. It was also found in research that there was a belief that corruption had positive effects, in seeing this behavior as an exercise in seeking public rent, which was considered to have positive effects on social prosperity.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.republika.co.id/berita/koran/opini-koran/14/06/11/n6zu6747-peringkat-korupsi>

<sup>2</sup>Notes from Lutfi J. Kurniawan, Chief of Managing Committee of Malang Corruption Watch (MCW), state that cases of corruption were mostly committed by Regional Apparatus Task Force officials in current government of Malang. Posted by [www.m.hukumonline.com](http://www.m.hukumonline.com)

Still related to studies on corruption, Peter Larmour (2007) also mentioned that reality on field was that ideas on 'culture' were often used to explain or become the excuse for acts of corruption. As in case of giving gifts, it was sometimes said that this was "part of our culture" while at same time outside people realize that it was bribery or corruption. An empirical essay study that Larmour put forward was entitled "Corruption and The Concept of Culture: Evidence from Pacific Islands". The study examined empirical evidence on a series of national integrity system reports in Pacific Islands, using the local domestic national standard. This empirical study involved executive members, legislative members acting as auditors, and also the general public by giving personal comments in relation to role that culture plays on the reality of corruption on field.

A number of theoretical and empirical researches described above showed diversity in understanding corruption. This diversity was certainly the starting point to be able to reveal how a society understands corruption. Quite possibly, this understanding may be uncovered by revealing the views of a number of members of society on just what was corruption and everything related to it.

The efforts to eradicate corruption, which has long been promoted in this country, were proven by presence of KPK (Corruption Eradication Commission) as the foremost institution. Anti-corruption campaigns or discourses in corruption eradication certainly need to be evaluated. The questions that might be posed among others include: how far society interprets the anti-corruption campaign messages as well as the anti-corruption campaign itself; whether or not society understands the campaign the same way as the initiators of campaign intended; and whether or not the people recognize the corruption happening around them. All these questions converge on a single fundamental question, which was how society understands corruption. This was an important question for which the answer needs to be found as a capital for KPK or other law enforcement agencies to create effective anti-corruption or corruption eradication programs based on communication.

This matter requires attention because the diverse understanding of corruption has the potential to create a "lack of clarity" in society. The lack of clarity of standards in understanding corruption would hinder the effort of corruption eradication itself seen from view that there was no equal standard or measure among members of society, which in end creates an opportunity to become unconsciously latent in everyday activities.

Revealing the meaning of corruption in society was intended to be able to see how society interprets corruption. By revealing the meanings of corruption, it was expected that this may lead to a complete understanding of how these meanings were created from a learning process from surrounding environment and becomes accepted in everyday life. As revealed by M.Harris (in Baran, 2012), culture was the result of social learning of traditions and lifestyles by members of a particular society, covering ways of thinking as well as feelings and actions that were patterned and conducted repeatedly (p. 9).

The study on understanding corruption was related to how the people consciously understand corrupt practices around them, as well as the history of their lives in society. As such this research was present in order to scientifically study how corruption was understood among the people of City of Malang. The people of City of Malang were selected in consideration of MCW survey results in 2010, when the City of Malang was ranked fourth from five major regions in East Java with highest numbers of corruption cases.<sup>1</sup>For the same survey, East Java was ranked first with highest number of corruption cases in Indonesia (antaranews.com, 2011).<sup>2</sup>

The researcher assumed that corruption cases that have been revealed and could be accessed by people of City of Malang through a number of print or electronic media have more or less affected the creation of an understanding of corruption in minds of people. In this research of meaning with a cultural context, the researcher focuses on using Gadamer hermeneutics as a razor by considering the historical awareness approach, for which Gadamer hermeneutics was considered able to reveal the understanding of people by limiting the activity of uncovering meaning from language or expressions given by people based on their conscience and life history. How the people of City of Malang understand corruption from their daily experiences was studied using the Gadamer approach.

## II. Research Methods

This research refers to Neumann (2013, p. 560-561) who states that qualitative research attempts to seek out patterns or relationships. This research was conducted by collaborating empirical data and other data from a number of informants that researcher directly obtained through observations in limited group discussions, direct interviews with a number of people of City of Malang, and analyzing recordings of informants in a forum of corruption culture study. This research uses a phenomenology approach that assumes that for individuals who interact with peers, there were many ways of interpreting experiences. The meanings from these experiences were what actually form the reality of actions that were shown or exhibited by each individual (Fatchan, p.89).The triangulation concept of Neuman (2013, p. 186-187) in this research was realized in this manner:

<sup>1</sup>Greater Malang was mentioned in piece as the "favorite" rank since in top 5 ranking of most corrupt regions in East Java, all the regions of City of Malang, Regency of Malang, and City of Batu were included.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.antarnews.com/berita/240467/korupsi-di-kabupaten-malang-tertinggi-kedua-se-jatim>

- 1) Information obtained from conducting direct interviews was collected from 11 informants who were part of people of City of Malang. Additional data for understanding corruption were also obtained from direct interviews with two public figures, a former bureaucrat and a religious leader. In addition, some information was obtained by directly recording explanations by legal experts, the ICW, the attorney general, and the KPK in a national seminar entitled “When Corruption Becomes a Culture”. The recording was fully transcribed and a comprehensive analysis was performed on language.
- 2) Researchers complemented qualitative data with quantitative data obtained throughout the data collection process.
- 3) The data obtained were qualitative and quantitative and examined through comprehensive analysis.

Technically, this research was initiated by general observations of field observations regarding cases of corruption and information regarding corruption among the people of City of Malang. The research focus was to understand the corruption by people of City of Malang. 11 informants were selected from residents of City of Malang who find out about acts of corruption through news media as well as daily conversation. Participant observation<sup>1</sup> was conducted by organizing a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) where the active informants deliver their opinion on corruption.

This research involved primary informants composed of 2 high school students, 1 college student, 1 homemaker, 1 security guard, 1 employee, 1 entrepreneur, 1 state-owned enterprise employee, 1 teacher, and 2 lecturers. The informant who has the profession as an entrepreneur was also the chief of resident group (RW) in neighborhood, while the homemaker informant was also the coordinator of homemaker group (PKK) in neighborhood. The secondary informants in this research were a former bureaucrat and a local religious leader.

### III. Research Results

This research revealed the informants of Malang City residents have diverse meanings for “corruption” term. This shows that there was an influence of knowledge and life experience for each informant. Through daily conversations, they recognized the term “corruption”. One of school students, for example, knew from a teacher at school, while the other sometimes overheard conversations of parents, and homemaker sometimes heard from “*ngerumpi*”<sup>2</sup>(chit-chat) with her fellows. One thing that contributed the most to informants’ knowledge was news in media, primarily television. Most of informants stated that they knew of corruption from television. The experience of informants above was inescapable from reality that television was the media of communication that most people were interested in.

All informants were had a single view that corruption was a bad behavior; corruption occurs due to many factors, and even all informants desired for corruption to vanish. However, differences in views were descriptively found in judging how bad the corrupt behaviors, how and when corruption occurs around them, as well as how to eliminate corruption from their lives.

The most striking aspect from informant interviews was none of primary informants (11 people) from this research understood the definition of corruption based on KPK laws. The informants admitted that information on corruption was only obtained from reading, hearing, and watching news of corruption cases, undercover stings, and the legal trials. Furthermore, the informants obtained knowledge about corruption from everyday conversation with people around them. Even though the knowledge of corruption according to KPK laws was theoretical and definitive by nature, this reality shows that there were different views among the people in understanding corruption itself, though at same time they all agree that corruption must be eliminated.

This understanding of corruption represents the accumulation of reflection of informants as being the people of City of Malang on values and behaviors that exist around them. Their knowledge and life experience very much determined their understanding.

The following was the understanding of corruption as revealed from a number of informants:

1. Corruption was taking something or the rights of others which cannot be rightfully possessed. This understanding comes from informant identification of behavior of taking something that belongs to public. In this case informants see corrupt behaviors as those improper with interests of public or the multitude. At the same time, this shows a limit of meaning of corruption, which was taking something which does not personally belong. This shows that informants understand corruption on a wider scale. An action that takes what belongs to others in this understanding was categorized as corruption. This understanding could be seen in following quote:

“Corruption according to our knowledge was taking something or the rights of others to which someone was not entitled to.” (Questionnaire, 2015)

<sup>1</sup> The researcher participated in FGDs but only in capacity as an observer.

<sup>2</sup> Definition of “*rumpi*” by Dictionary of Indonesian Language (KBBI): **rum·pi**/*k*, **me·rum·pi** mengobrol sambil bergunjing dng teman, biasanya dl kelompok kecil: *telepon terkadang digunakan untuk ~* (to chat while gossiping with friends, usually with a small group) (<http://kbbi.co.id/arti-kata/rumpi>)

2. Corruption was a behavior of actors that were encouraged by impulses of personal wishes or desires due to greed, by way of actors lacking sincerity in what they do as well as good character.

This understanding relied on measure of civility recognized in society, with presence of values of togetherness held high among people, individual service expecting no return for shared interests, as well as demands to stay in good character. The following quotes illustrate this understanding:

“Corruption involved people who intentionally take away the rights of others (not belonging to self) or were greedy. They were lack character and not sincere in their work.”(FGD, 2015)

“I think corruption was something that was not what it should be because of personal impulse or otherwise. So that something was for shared interests but was made for personal interests for some reason and this should not have been done.” (FGD,2015)

3. Corruptions taking away public rights for private interests.

This understanding limits the meaning of corruption more on actions that take away public rights based on a certain purpose or orientation. An action could be said to be corruption if the action was oriented for personal interests, or in other words corruption was meant as the act of taking away public ownership for private interests, and that as long as the act remains oriented to public interests, it was not categorized as corruption. This was reflected in following quotes:

“I think corruption was something that should be for shared interests but was made into personal interests for some reason and this should not have been done.” (FGD, 2015)

“Corruption was taking away rights of public /state for personal/individual interests.” (Questionnaire,2015)

4. Corruption was obtaining personal gains by utilizing existing authority to detriment of others.

This understanding has the focus that authority that was present on someone tends to open up the opportunity for corruption. It becomes corruption if authority was indeed utilized for results that do not cover the interests of public, but only for personal interests. This was seen in following quotes:

“Corruption was obtaining personal gains by utilizing possessed authority by causing losses to others.” (Questionnaire,2015)

“I think corruption was the misuse of funds or position that was prioritized for interests of individuals or certain groups.”

“Corruption was an act of mandate diversion for interests of certain groups/individuals.” (FGD, 2015)

5. Corruption was a behavior usually conducted by political elite.

This understanding assumes that corrupt behaviors predominantly occur among the political elite. This was shown in following quote:

“Corruption was a cruel act that was usually done by political elite to take away people’s rights by utilizing state assets for personal interests.” (FGD, 2015)

6. Corruption was the same as theft or stealing but conducted by a perpetrator or groups thereof.

“Actually, corruption was really like stealing.” (Interview draft, 2015)

“Corruption has the same meaning as theft, but was conducted by people or perpetrators or even groups in a community or group, company, even institutions.” (Questionnaire,2015)

#### IV. Discussion

Corruption was a term that was not unfamiliar to people because it was known through everyday conversation. One of school students, for example, knew from a teacher at school, while the other sometimes overheard conversations of parents, and homemaker sometimes heard from ‘*ngerumpi*’ with her fellows. Even the largest contribution to informants’ knowledge was news in various media, in particular from television. Most of informants stated that they learned of corruption from television. This experience of informants cannot be removed from reality that television was the preferred media for communication by public in general.

The difference between the understanding of corruption by people from watching television and what was understood from everyday conversation in society was only on how much information was obtained; for example, by watching news on television, the informants received more knowledge on corruption cases on a national or international scale. Various information on corrupt action and the names of political figures and officials involved were obtained more from television. In addition, from watching television, the informants obtained knowledge on efforts that have been conducted in this country to combat corruption.

The informants know that various efforts have been conducted by many parties to combat corruption, primarily from law enforcement agencies, but in reality corrupt activities were also committed by a number of people from those agencies. The KPK, which was present as an independent institution and has been known by some of informants, lately have conducted many sting operations on corruptors, which was expected by some informants to be able to create a discouraging effect so that others may not commit corruption.

Other informants see things differently; the sting operations on corruptors by KPK, which have been blown up by media, were not considered discouraging, and even by their experience in watching the news, some corruptors were instead treated similar to celebrities by media, pursued to be asked for information. Some

informants see this as the realization of loss of shame of corruptors toward the public in this country. One piece of evidence shown by one of informants was the reality that corruptors have tried to defend them in front of camera or simply polish their image, despite being named suspects.

The discussion of corruption amongst the people leads to deconstruction of views of each informant regarding the causes of corruption. All the informants agree that there were many factors that cause corruption to occur, not only those internal to any person, but also external factors. Corruption does not just occur because of lifestyles or media exposure; convoluted mechanisms in a bureaucracy were also considered as a cause of corruption. Corruption occurs in a government institution because of a lack of discipline for three things: 1) time; 2) regulations; and 3) commitment. It was said: "Disobedience of regulations and lack of discipline certainly lead to corruption." (Interview, 2016)

The understanding of corruption in society through three fundamental questions was expected to be able to deconstruct that understanding, which in this case according to 11 primary informants as well as 2 secondary informants. The fundamental questions were how corruption occurs, what motives of corruption are, and who the corruption actors are.

#### 4.1 How Corruption Occurs

The process by which corruption occurs was seen from two things: 1) that corruption occurs by itself without the personal interests of actor, or in other words the process occurs because of demands of long-running mechanisms in institution and was considered routine; 2) that corruption occurs as the efforts of certain parties to obtain benefits/advantages abnormally in an institution.

For the former point the field data shown an example of a corruption case mentioned by one of informants, who was a professional lecturer at one of universities in City of Malang, regarding corruption inform of a grant proposal markup from a state institution in order to fulfill administrative procedures for financial accountability. Such was the remarks of informant<sup>1</sup> who stated that there was a demand to create a fictitious project accountability report at education institution where the informant worked. Another informant<sup>2</sup> also disclosed the process of how corruption occurs in company where the informant worked, regarding the customary practice of composing fictitious annual company reports in order to anticipate any difficulties in disbursement of following year's budget. The two aforementioned examples of experience represent behaviors that were indicated to contain corruption as the demands of mechanism and progresses systemically in bureaucracy of institution.

The latter point mentioned above shown the occurrence of corruption as an effort of certain parties to obtain personal gains/advantages abnormally/illegally in an institution. This was revealed by nine other informants. The cases of corruption include illegal fees for cases of traffic violations, fees as passing requirements in every stage of a selection for membership registration of a law enforcement institution, illegal fees at a sub-district office for pretext of buying forms, illegal fees at a government office for traffic ticket administration, personal usage of traffic funds such as for treats among members of an intramural organization, usage of university funds for the interests of certain groups, misuse of funds for school building development, markup in school budget, misuse of social funds, embezzlement of net profits of one of subsidiaries of a clothing retail store, markup of funds through requests of blank receipts stamped as "paid", proposal of fictitious activities for an in-campus organization, and taking advantage by certain parties on distribution of rice aid for poor people (Informant interview, 2015).

#### 4.2 Motives of Corruption

In relation to modus operandi of corruption as revealed in FGD and in-depth interviews, corruption covers many fields. Not only limited to working environment of civil servants, informants believe that in working environment of employees, entrepreneurs, government officials, and even security officials, cases of corruption occur. This covers not just budget markup or financial reports but also lobbies, compromises, even thank-you gifts as bribes and a shortcut to facilitate business in society.

Quoting Johan Budi while still serving as the chief of KPK, he stated:

"...corruption today has spread to various fields and involved many groups, from intellectuals, as KPK detainees number to more or less 4 or 5 suspects with degrees of professor and doctor, to those as religious preachers and pastors. Corruption also involves husbands and wives – there were at least two married couples who have been named suspects by KPK –as well as father and son. Corruption has even reached areas that were once sacral as in procurement of Al-Qur'an holy books and organizing the Hajj. According to data up to April 2015, those with cases involving KPK were of Echelon I, II, and III officials with 116 cases, parliament members with 77 cases, tens of mayors and regents, chief of ministry institutions, governors, attorneys, judges, prosecutors, commissioners, police...all handled by

<sup>1</sup> Informant 5 (a lecturer at one of private colleges in Malang)

<sup>2</sup> Informant 6 (employee of a State-Owned Enterprise)

KPK...”(National Seminar, Law Fair 4, 2015).

#### 4.3 Corruption actors

In regard to corruption actors according to people’s understanding, it was found that 11 informants had an almost uniform understanding that corruption actors were understood as people who possess motives of greed and avarice, individualists who only think of themselves, though to detriment of others.

The understanding of corruption actors using the individual approach takes the view that every individual has the potential for corruption because within self of people there was an impulse. According to a number of informants, this impulse must be able to be controlled by each individual with faith of self, honesty, and sincerity with trust. Corruption actors were believed by informants to be able to originate from any part of society, from homemakers, village officials, government officials, employees, law officials, to government chiefs. As stated by Informant:

“...corruption actors may originate from any background, in every institution; as long as they gather, people have the potential to commit acts of corruption within themselves.” (FGD,2015)

In line with this reasoning, the bureaucrat figure informant considers corruption actors originate from groups of people that lack integrity (Interview with bureaucrat figure informant, 2016)

Another understanding also came from a number of informants who see with pragmatic approach that today if someone intends to commit corruption, it was very easy to just follow the existing rhythm; even if someone does not wish to commit corruption, it would be very hard because according to them corruption has become systematized in existing bureaucracy. The religious figure informant commented on pragmatic view above that reason given by some of these groups was a statement that cannot be approved of.

“Corruption was a travesty because we know what definition of corruption itself is. This means if we regard corruption in a definition, it was not far removed from definition of stealing, only that stealing in a religious viewpoint was wealth that was taken in secret, where those who take tend to strength of running – if they meet then they run. Meanwhile, corruption was not as such, as corruption could be generally said to be the manipulation of data that should be some amount was written as another. The excess of that was taken or enters into personal coffers.” (Interview with the religious figure informant, 2016)

Islam teaches through its laws the difference in form of corruption and stealing. Essentially, stealing and corruption in Islam were violations of words of Allah, which makes them both travesties. The two violations were related to what was termed *‘uqubat*. *‘Uqubat* is coded as a law to prevent people from acts of crime and consists of one of chapters in Islamic justice system that contains discussion of sanctions in Islam. *‘Uqubat* consists of four types: *hudūd*, *jinâyât*, *ta’zîr*, and *mukhâlafât*. The discussion on sanctions of corruption was taken as *ta’zîr*. Thus in Islam the meaning of corruption has clear limits. This meaning becomes the reference for people who understand how Islamic law guides them in recognizing corruption.

#### V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on this research of meaning, the following things could be concluded:

1. The understanding of corruption by people of City of Malang was very diverse, seen from in-depth insight of conscious understanding of informants in this research, which showed 11 primary informants having various meanings, which as a whole could be grouped in six understandings: 1) Corruption was taking something or the rights of others which cannot be rightfully possessed; 2) Corruption was a behavior that was encouraged by impulses of personal wishes or desires due to greed of actors lacking sincerity in what they do as well as good character; 3) Corruption was taking away public rights for private interests; 4) Corruption was obtaining personal gains by utilizing existing authority to detriment of others; 5) Corruption was a behavior usually conducted by political elite; and 6) Corruption was the same as theft or stealing but conducted by a perpetrator or groups.
2. Based on interviews with all primary informants which numbered to 11 people, it was found that none of them understood the definition of corruption from KPK laws, and that they understood the definition of corruption by interpreting what they saw and heard from media as well as daily conversations.
3. The informants as people of City of Malang have not been exposed to a corruption eradication program that specifically focuses on uniting the meaning of corruption inform of political education in society.

Recommendations of this research can be explained below.

1. Law enforcement officials and government administrators need to be able to reinforce the people with adequate knowledge on corruption.
2. The KPK in particular needs to know that programs on corruption eradication, such as anti-corruption education, should consider programs based on unification of meaning of corruption in society. These programs should involve various media present in Indonesia.
3. For academic institutions, anti-corruption education should be supported with an optimization of anti-

corruption studies as a media of learning, to which this research becomes important to be followed up in planning research for program of unifying the meaning of corruption eradication, where this research fits into field of corruption communication studies.

4. For the people, a complete understanding of corruption becomes the basic capital to be able to eradicate corruption. As such they need to supply themselves with sufficient knowledge on corruption in order to support the programs of corruption eradication.

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