



RECONSTRUCTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICS AND MORAL EXAMPLE IN BUILDING AN ANTI-CORRUPTION CULTURE AS A BASIS FOR FORMATION BUREAUCRATIC HUMAN RESOURCES WITH INTEGRITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the urgency of reconstructing administrative ethics and strengthening moral exemplarity as a foundation for building an anti-corruption culture within the Indonesian bureaucracy. Corruption remains a systemic problem that weakens public services, erodes public trust, and undermines the integrity of state apparatus human resources. This condition reflects not only weak oversight and accountability systems but also a crisis of ethical values and moral role models in bureaucratic governance. Using a qualitative approach with a literature review method, this study synthesizes theories and research findings related to administrative ethics, civil service integrity, and ethical leadership practices in the public sector. The analysis shows that ethical reform must go beyond formal regulatory compliance and focus on internalizing moral values such as integrity, honesty, and responsibility. Effective bureaucratic ethics rests on three pillars: personal integrity, institutional accountability, and exemplary leadership. Moral exemplarity functions as a social learning mechanism capable of shaping ethical organizational culture and suppressing corrupt behavior. The study also highlights its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Overall, reconstructing administrative ethics and strengthening moral role models is a substantive strategy to build bureaucratic integrity and establish a sustainable anti-corruption culture.

Keywords: Administrative Ethics, Moral Exemplarity, Anti-Corruption Culture, Bureaucratic Integrity, Public Administration, Ethical Leadership, SDGs.

INTRODUCTION

Corruption remains one of the most systemic and persistent problems in Indonesian public administration. Despite various reform efforts, Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) score in 2023 stagnated at 34/100, placing the country at rank 115 worldwide. This condition indicates that corruption is not merely an issue of weak law enforcement but is rooted in deeper structural and cultural problems within bureaucracy. Corruption in procurement, budgeting, and public services continues to involve government officials at various levels, reflecting the fragility of institutional integrity and the ongoing crisis of public trust.

One of the fundamental causes of this situation is the weakening of administrative ethics and the erosion of moral values within the state apparatus. Instead of being guided by the principles of honesty, accountability, and public responsibility, bureaucratic behavior is often influenced by patronage practices, political interests, and organizational cultures that tolerate unethical conduct. This condition demonstrates that administrative ethics has not been fully internalized as the foundation of public service behavior. Ethical violations occur not merely because of gaps in regulation but because of a lack of moral awareness among civil servants.

In this context, the role of moral exemplarity becomes crucial. Leaders in bureaucratic institutions act not only as policymakers but also as moral agents whose behavior shapes organizational norms. When leaders demonstrate integrity, transparency, and consistency between words and actions, they create a positive ethical climate that discourages corruption. Conversely, when leaders show tolerance toward unethical behavior, weak supervision, or misuse of authority, such attitudes tend to be replicated by subordinates, creating a cycle that perpetuates corruption. Therefore, strengthening moral leadership is essential in developing an ethical bureaucratic culture.

Although various studies have discussed ethics in public administration and strategies for preventing corruption, the integration between administrative ethics, moral role models, and the formation of an anti-corruption culture has not been widely examined in a comprehensive conceptual framework. Most research focuses on legal, institutional, or managerial approaches, while the moral dimension—which plays a decisive role in shaping daily behavior—often receives less emphasis. This gap underlines the importance of reconstructing bureaucratic ethics that combine moral values, institutional accountability, and exemplary leadership.

This study aims to analyze the urgency of reconstructing administrative ethics and strengthening moral exemplarity as a basis for building an anti-corruption culture within the Indonesian bureaucracy. Using a qualitative literature review approach, this research synthesizes theories and empirical findings related to ethical governance, civil servant integrity, and moral leadership. The focus of the analysis lies in understanding how ethical values can be internalized into bureaucratic systems and how moral exemplarity can function as a social learning mechanism capable of reducing corrupt behavior.

Strengthening bureaucratic ethics and moral leadership is aligned with Indonesia's commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). The development of civil servants with integrity is not only a national agenda but also a global mandate in realizing accountable, transparent, and corruption-resistant public institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Administrative Ethics in Government Bureaucracy

Administrative ethics relates to a set of values that guide state officials to carry out government functions correctly, fairly, and oriented towards the public interest. These ethics include honesty, accountability, objectivity, transparency, and respect for the law and public rights. (Cooper, TL (2012) Administrative ethics not only serves as a moral guideline, but also as an internal control mechanism that limits the potential for abuse of power. In the context of Indonesian bureaucracy which often experiences political intervention and patronage practices, strengthening administrative ethics becomes increasingly important. Hummel asserts that a bureaucracy that is detached from ethics will lead to dehumanization, namely services that no longer place citizens as subjects to be served, but as mere

administrative objects. (Hummel, RP 2008) Therefore, the reconstruction of administrative ethics is not merely the formulation of new rules, but the internalization of integrity values into the management system and organizational culture.

Moral Exemplarity in Bureaucratic Leadership

Moral exemplarity is a leader's ability to demonstrate behavior consistent with the organization's ethical values. Leadership based on moral example is important because employees tend to imitate the behavior patterns demonstrated by their superiors. In a transformational leadership model, leaders are required to be able to provide inspiration, demonstrate integrity, and foster trust through concrete attitudes and actions. (Bass, BM, & Riggio, RE 2006) Brown and Treviño explains that a leader's ethical behavior can shape the apparatus' perception of prevailing norms within the organization, thereby strengthening internal compliance without external coercion. (Brown, ME, & Treviño, LK 2006) If bureaucratic leaders exhibit corrupt, permissive, or tolerant attitudes toward violations, then the value of integrity will be difficult to grow. Therefore, bureaucratic reform requires leaders who are not only competent in managerial aspects, but also have strong moral character.

Anti-Corruption Culture in the Bureaucratic System

An anti-corruption culture is a condition where the value of integrity is used as a shared standard of behavior within an organization, and is supported by a consistent policy system, oversight structure, and organizational climate. The formation of an anti-corruption culture cannot be done instantly, because it involves changing the mindset and behavior of the apparatus. Schein stated that organizational culture is built through a long social process, which occurs through shared learning, collective experience, and the example of leaders. (Schein, EH 2017) The OECD emphasizes that an anti-corruption culture will only be successful if supported by: (a) systematic integrity education; (b) a clear reward and punishment system; (c) independent internal oversight; and (d) a safe and transparent violation reporting mechanism. (OECD. 2017) If any of these components are weak, the organizational culture will easily revert to entrenched corrupt patterns.

Development of Human Resources with Integrity

Human resource development for civil servants is not only about increasing competence technical skills, but also character and ethical awareness. The modern HR development approach includes integrity as a basic competency that must be built through education, habituation, mentoring, and value-based performance evaluation. (Armstrong, M. (2020) In a global context, this approach is in line with the commitment of SDG 4 (Quality Education) which encourages value-based training; SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) which demands a corruption-free work environment; and SDG 16 (Strong and Equitable Institutions) which aims to build governance with integrity. Thus, strengthening

the moral character of civil servants is not only a national agenda, but part of a sustainable development strategy.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research method. This approach was chosen because the study focuses on understanding abstract concepts such as administrative ethics, moral exemplars, and anti-corruption culture that cannot be measured through quantitative instruments. (Creswell, JW 2014) Library studies allow researchers to examine theoretical thinking and empirical findings from various scientific sources to be constructed into a comprehensive conceptual argument. (Zed, M. 2018) Thus, this study not only describes the phenomenon but also conducts a critical analysis of the condition of the Indonesian bureaucracy from a moral and governance perspective. The data sources used include primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consist of official reports from state institutions and international institutions, such as Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International, the Annual Report and Performance Report of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), and bureaucratic reform documents from the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN- RB). Meanwhile, secondary sources include scientific books, national and international indexed journal articles, and governance documents from the OECD and UNDP that provide a global comparative perspective on the integrity of public institutions. (Neuman, WL 2014) Source selection was carried out strictly based on relevance, publisher credibility, and year of publication, with prioritizing literature from the last ten years.

Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation and systematic literature review. Researchers searched for scientific articles and documents through databases such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, Garuda, Scopus, and Web of Science, using keywords including ethical leadership, bureaucratic integrity, public ethics, Andanti-corruption culture All data obtained was then compiled and recorded in an initial coding table to facilitate the thematic analysis process. The data was analyzed using content analysis. The analysis process began with Data reduction, namely sorting information relevant to the research focus, followed by categorization of themes, such as bureaucratic ethics, exemplary leadership, moral development, and organizational oversight systems. (Krippendorff, K. 2018) The next stage is interpretation, namely the compilation of meanings and patterns of relationships between themes within the framework of organizational theory and administrative ethics theory. This interpretation is also directly linked to the sustainable development goals, namely SDG 4, SDG 8, and SDG 16, to demonstrate the scientific and policy relevance of the formation of a bureaucratic culture with integrity.

To maintain the validity of the data, the study used source triangulation, namely a comparison of data from academic journals, policy documents, and international agency reports, to avoid interpretation bias. (Miles, MB, Huberman, AM, & Saldaña, J. 2014) In addition, the researcher applied audit trail, namely recording the literature search process and

analytical decisions systematically so that the research process can be replicated or verified by other researchers. Through this methodology, this research is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of a bureaucratic ethics framework, as well as a practical contribution in formulating strategies for establishing an anti-corruption culture to strengthen the quality of human resources in the bureaucracy with integrity in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Condition of Corruption in the Indonesian Bureaucracy and Its Impact on the Quality of Institutions

Corruption in the Indonesian bureaucracy is still a structural problem. and systemic, which directly impacts the weak quality of public institutions and low public trust. According to a 2023 Transparency International (TI) report, Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) score was 34 out of 100, placing it 115th out of 180 countries worldwide. (Transparency International, 2024) This score indicates a high level of perceived corruption and indicates that anti-corruption efforts have not shown significant improvement.

According to the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), more than 70% of corruption cases uncovered between 2018 and 2023 involved government officials, particularly in the areas of procurement of goods and services, budget misuse, and the practice of buying and selling positions. (Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). 2024) This shows that corruption is not just an individual act, but reflects a weak oversight system and culture of integrity within the bureaucracy. The following data reflects the condition of corruption eradication in Indonesia:

a) Data on the Development of Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index (2019–2023)

Year	GPA score	Ranking World	Vital Records
2019	40	85	The highest achievement in the last decade
2020	37	102	Decline consequence weakness reform institutional
2021	38	96	A slight improvement, but not yet significant
Year	GPA score	Ranking World	Vital Records
2022	34	110	Stagnant institutional reform
2023	34	115	Stagnation and declining public confidence

Source: Transparency International,Corruption Perceptions Index 2023.

Data on the development of Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) from 2019 to 2023 shows a worrying downward trend, from a score of 40 to a stagnant 34, with its global ranking dropping from 85 to 115. This condition reflects the weakening of institutional reforms, stagnation in the implementation of the integrity system, and the low

effectiveness of law enforcement against corrupt practices in the public sector. The decline in public trust in the bureaucracy also indicates that anti-corruption policies have not been strongly internalized in the organizational culture of government, indicating the need for a more substantial reconstruction of administrative ethics and moral leadership to rebuild bureaucratic integrity.

b) Visualization of Indonesia's Corruption Perception Index Trends (2019–2023)



Figure 1. Indonesia's CPI trend shows stagnation in corruption eradication, 2019– 2023

c) Impact on Institutional Quality and Development

The impact of bureaucratic corruption is multidimensional, encompassing economic, social, and governance aspects. According to the 2024 Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) report, state financial losses due to corruption reached more than IDR 25.1 trillion between 2018 and 2023. (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025, July 16) In addition to material losses, corruption has a domino effect, including:

- 1) Declining public trust in state and government institutions;
- 2) Weakening the effectiveness of public services, where bureaucratic decisions are often based on personal or group interests;
- 3) Increasing social and economic inequality, due to the uneven distribution of public resources due to corrupt behavior;
- 4) The emergence of institutional dysfunction, where the system of accountability and internal control not running optimally.

According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), public perception of the integrity of state civil servants (ASN) has also declined. Public Sector Integrity Index The 2023 bureaucratic integrity index showed an average score of 70.5 on a scale of 100, a decrease from the previous year. (Central Statistics Agency, 2024) This data strengthens the correlation between low GPA and a decline in the ASN integrity index.

d) Relationship with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The phenomenon of corruption in the bureaucracy directly contradicts the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially:

Code SDG	Destination Name	Relevance to Corruption Issues
SDG 16	<i>Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</i>	Corruption weaken institution public And hinder the creation of fair and transparent governance.
SDG 4	<i>Quality Education</i>	Public integrity and ethics must be instilled through character education and ethics training for ASN.
SDG 8	<i>Decent Work and Economic Growth</i>	A clean and effective bureaucracy promotes economic efficiency and creates a fair working environment.

One of the main targets of SDG 16.5 emphasizes the importance of "substantially reduced corruption and bribery in all their forms" This goal has clearly not been achieved in Indonesia, given the stagnant CPI trend and the rise in corruption cases at the regional level. (United Nations. 2023)

e) Critical Analysis and Policy Implications

Analytically, the main causes of the stagnation in eradicating corruption in the bureaucracy can be traced to several factors:

- 1) Structural weaknesses in internal oversight institutions, where the Inspectorate often lacks sufficient independence.
- 2) A culture of political patronage, which allows for the buying and selling of positions and the permissibility of unethical practices in government work environments. (Gadjah Mada University (UGM). 2024)
- 3) Lack of moral and integrity education for ASN, so that ethical values have not been fully internalized.
- 4) Weak coordination between law enforcement agencies (KPK, Prosecutor's Office, Police), which makes follow-up of corruption cases inconsistent. Addressing this issue requires a long-term strategy based on integrity education (SDG 4) and strengthening institutional governance (SDG 16). Furthermore, improving civil servant welfare and implementing a meritocratic system will help foster a clean and productive bureaucracy (SDG 8).

Therefore, the state of bureaucratic corruption in Indonesia demonstrates that improving the moral and ethical aspects of public administration must go hand in hand with institutional strengthening. If the value of integrity is not an inherent part of bureaucratic culture, the SDGs, especially SDG 16, will not be achieved. Empirical data shows that corruption eradication efforts still need to be directed at establishing strong, ethical, and character-based institutions.

The Importance of Reconstructing Administrative Ethics in Bureaucratic Governance

Public administration ethics is the normative foundation that guides state officials in making decisions and carrying out public service duties. In the context of Indonesian bureaucracy, ethics is often understood procedurally and formally, rather than as part of the moral values internalized within officials. (State Administration Institute (LAN). 2024) As a result, adherence to ethics is often superficial and easily violated, especially when there is no strong oversight mechanism. In fact, the success of bureaucratic reform is largely determined by the ability of officials to act based on moral principles rooted in ethical awareness, not merely administrative compliance. A reconstruction of administrative ethics is necessary to shift the bureaucracy's orientation from power to public service. Cooper's perspective emphasizes that strong administrative ethics must encompass three main components: moral awareness, moral will, and moral action. (Cooper, TL 2012) This means that public officials not only know what is right but also have the moral courage to do it, even in difficult situations.

a) Pillars of Administrative Ethics Reconstruction

The process of reconstructing administrative ethics can be built through four main pillars as summarized in the following table:

Pillar Ethics Administration	Conceptual Explanation	Practical Implications in Bureaucracy
Awareness Morals (Morals) Awareness)	The ability to recognize the moral dimensions of every administrative decision.	Encourage ethical reflection before making policy decisions.
Will Morals (Morals) (Will)	Moral courage to choose the right action even if it conflicts with personal/superior interests.	Reducing moral compromising practices such as gratuities and nepotism.
Action Morals (Morals) Action)	Implementation of ethical values in real and consistent actions.	Make ethics as apparatus performance indicators (ethical performance).
Culture Organization Ethical	A work environment that supports honest and transparent behavior.	The leader becomes <i>role model</i> moral role models, not just discipline controllers.

Source: Adapted from Cooper, TL (2012).

The Responsible Administrator: An Approach to Ethics for the Administrative Role.

b) Conceptual Diagram of Administrative Ethics Reconstruction

Types of Organizational Culture

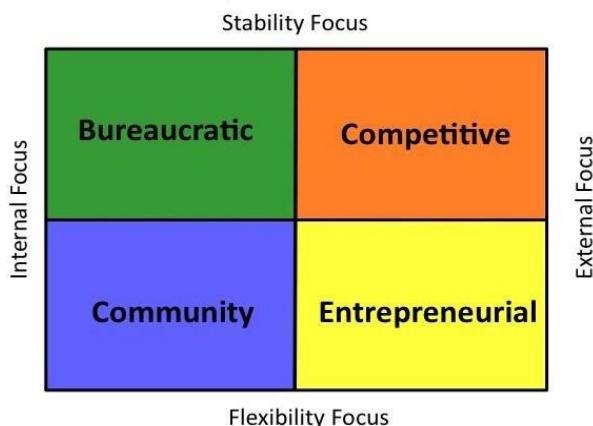


Figure 2. Integration Model of Moral Awareness, Moral Will, and Moral Action in Bureaucracy. Source taken from Seapoint Center. (2018).

Organizational Culture and Ethical Leadership Diagram. <https://seapointcenter.com> accessed on November 12, 2025. The diagram above explains that the formation of bureaucratic ethics begins with individual moral awareness which was then developed into collective moral action through organizational culture and exemplary leadership.

c) The Urgency of Ethical Reconstruction in Indonesian Bureaucracy

The 2024 State Administration Institute (LAN) report stated that over 60% of civil servants in Indonesia view ethics as merely adherence to written regulations, not a reflection of the moral values inherent in the public service profession. This highlights the need for a new approach to civil service ethics education and training that is more humanistic and values-based. Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform The Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB) also emphasized that many cases of civil servant disciplinary violations are not caused by a lack of regulations, but rather by a weak moral awareness among civil servants. (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform. 2023) In this regard, building integrity is not solely achieved through law enforcement, but also through the internalization of ethical values at all levels of the bureaucracy.

d) Data and Facts: Perception of ASN Ethics and Integrity

The following data from the Public Sector Integrity Index (IISP) released by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in 2023 provides an overview of the current state of bureaucratic ethics:

Year	Mark IISP International	Mark Integrity ASN (LAN)	Vital Records
2020	74.4	72.8	ASN ethics training is starting to be intensified

Year	Mark IIISP International	Mark Integrity ASN (LAN)	Vital Records
2021	73.6	71.4	The pandemic has weakened internal oversight
2022	72.3	69.8	Cases of buying and selling positions are increasing in the regions
2023	70.5	68.9	Indication of weak integration of moral values in the ASN management system

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), Public Sector Integrity Index 2023; State Administration Institute, 2023 Civil Servant Performance Report.

e) Relevance to SDGs

The reconstruction of administrative ethics is closely linked to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Code SDG	Objective	Relatedness
SDG 16	<i>Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</i>	Administrative ethics strengthens the integrity and accountability of public institutions.
SDG 4	<i>Quality Education</i>	Character education and ASN ethics are part of developing people with integrity.
SDG 8	<i>Decent Work and Economic Growth</i>	Ethical bureaucracy creates fair, transparent, and productive work governance.

The reconstruction of administrative ethics thus not only functions as a moral tool, but also as an instrument of sustainable development policy, because a bureaucracy with integrity is a prerequisite for achieving effective governance.

f) Implementation of Obstacles and Challenges

Based on data from Transparency International Indonesia (2024), the implementation of the reconstruction of administrative ethics still faces various challenges, including:

- 1) A patrimonial bureaucratic culture that emphasizes personal loyalty over public responsibility.
- 2) The lack of leaders who are moral role models, so that ethics only stops at the document level.
- 3) Short-term results orientation that pressures officials to ignore ethical processes.
- 4) Weak reward and punishment system based on ethical behavior.
- 5) Lack of applicable public ethics education in the ASN training curriculum.

Therefore, the transformation of administrative ethics must be carried out through an approach. Top-down (regulation, moral leadership) and bottom-up (value formation through training, organizational culture, and daily role models). Reconstructing administrative ethics is a key element in building a bureaucracy with integrity and humanism. Institutional reform

without ethical change will only result in a bureaucracy that is procedurally efficient but morally fragile. Concrete steps are needed, including values-based ethics education, exemplary leadership, and a measurable moral accountability system, so that the Indonesian bureaucracy truly functions as an instrument of fair and clean public service, in accordance with the principles of SDG 16.

Moral Exemplars and Their Implementation in Corruption Prevention

a. The Concept of Moral Exemplarity in Bureaucracy

Moral exemplary (moral exemplarity) is the core of ethical leadership in modern bureaucracy. This concept emphasizes that public leaders are not merely administrative decision makers, but rather moral agents who shape ethical values, norms, and behavior in organizations. (Brown, ME, & Treviño, LK 2006) Moral role models create a positive effect. Role modeling is strong, where the behavior leaders will be the standard for their subordinates. According to Treviño, et al., (2000), ethical leadership has two main dimensions: moral person (personal character with integrity) and moral manager (the ability to instill moral values in the organization). (Treviño, LK, Hartman, LP, & Brown, M. 2000)

In the context of Indonesian bureaucracy, moral role models are crucial because most ethical violations and corruption cases are rooted in leaders who abuse their authority. A study by the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (2023) showed that more than 68% of civil servant ethical violations were initiated by the behavior of direct superiors who set a bad example in using their positions. (Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, 2023) Therefore, strengthening moral role models means instilling integrity at the highest levels of the bureaucracy, thus spreading it throughout the structure.

b. The Importance of Role Models in Preventing Corruption

Bureaucratic leaders who demonstrate integrity will shape an organizational culture that rejects deviation. Moral role models serve as guides for organizational behavior, not merely symbols of morality. Research by Manara, Widodo, & Hidayatullah (2024) found that ethical leadership has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between social norms and corrupt behavior. The stronger the ethical leadership, the weaker the influence of permissive norms on corruption. (Manara, U., Widodo, RW, & Hidayatullah, M. 2024) Similarly, Suryani's (2024) research states that leadership morality and a conducive organizational culture play a major role in preventing fraud in local government agencies, contributing 42.5% to improving the integrity of the apparatus. (Suryani, P. 2024) This reinforces the assumption that anti-corruption strategies cannot rely solely on the legal system, but also on soft mechanisms in the form of exemplary moral leadership.

Table Factors Influencing Corruption Prevention through Moral Exemplars.

Factor Influence	Impact to Corruption Prevention	Information
Leadership Ethical	Very high	Lowering tolerance for corrupt behavior

Culture Ethical Organization	Tall	Creating internal anti-corruption norms
Reward System and Ethical Sanctions	Currently	Functions optimally when there is moral exemplary behavior at the top of the organization.
Regulation and Supervision Formal	Low if without exemplary behavior	Effective only if supported by ethical leadership examples

Source: Adapted from various studies (Manara et al., 2024; Suryani, 2024; KemenPAN-RB, 2023).

c. Conceptual Diagram of the Relationship between Moral Exemplars and Corruption Prevention

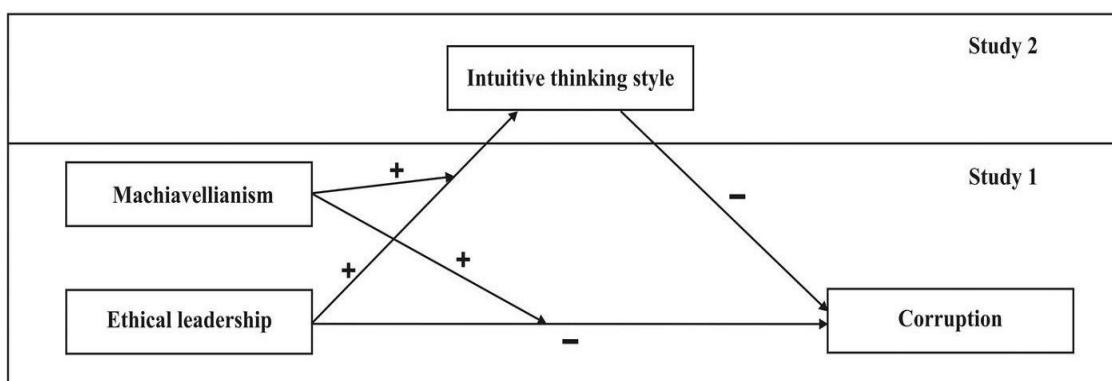


Figure 3. The Relationship between Moral Exemplarity, Ethical Culture, and Corruption Reduction. (Frontiers in Psychology. 2021)

The diagram above illustrates that moral exemplars (ethical leadership) has a direct effect on reducing corrupt behavior by establishing an ethical organizational culture and increasing individual moral commitment. If leaders consistently demonstrate honest, open, and responsible behavior, employees tend to emulate this behavior as a professional norm.

d. Linkage to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Moral exemplarity explicitly supports the achievement of three key objectives in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

SDG	Objective	Relevance to Moral Exemplarity
SDG 16	<i>Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</i>	Moral exemplary conduct strengthens the integrity and accountability of public institutions, creating just and transparent governance.
SDG 4	<i>Quality Education</i>	Ethics and integrity education for civil servants forms human resources with character.

SDG 8	<i>Decent Work and Economic Growth</i>	Ethical bureaucracy creates a healthy work environment and supports economic growth that is free from corrupt practices.
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The realization of moral role models within the bureaucracy helps reduce the risk of corruption, increase the efficiency of public policy, and strengthen social trust in government—three crucial aspects for stable, sustainable development. (United Nations, 2020)

e. Challenges of Implementing Moral Exemplars

The implementation of exemplary moral values in the Indonesian bureaucracy cannot be separated from several structural and cultural obstacles:

- 1) Culture of Patronage and Feudalism – many leaders still value personal loyalty more than professional integrity.
- 2) Absence of a Moral Evaluation System – the ASN assessment mechanism is still oriented towards administrative performance, not ethical behavior.
- 3) Political Pressure and Conflict of Interest Regional heads and bureaucratic officials are often faced with a dilemma between public interests and political groups.
- 4) Lack of Role Models at the Top: Moral role models often stop at rhetoric without concrete action. (Hardinto, W., et al. 2019)

Research by Maulidi et al. (2023) confirms that high power distance (power distance) in public organizations increases the opportunity for corruption if it is not balanced by an ethical and transparent leadership system. (Maulidi, A., et al. 2023)

f. Strategic Recommendations for Strengthening Moral Exemplars

To optimize the role of moral role models in preventing corruption, several strategic steps can be taken:

- 1) Integration of ethics education in ASN training based on moral reflection and real ethical dilemmas.
- 2) Determination of “exemplary behavior” indicators in the performance assessment of bureaucratic leaders.
- 3) Ethics mentoring program between senior and junior officials to build consistency in moral values.
- 4) Transparency and public involvement as a means of controlling leadership behavior.
- 5) Strengthening the reward system for leaders who are proven to uphold the values of honesty and public responsibility.

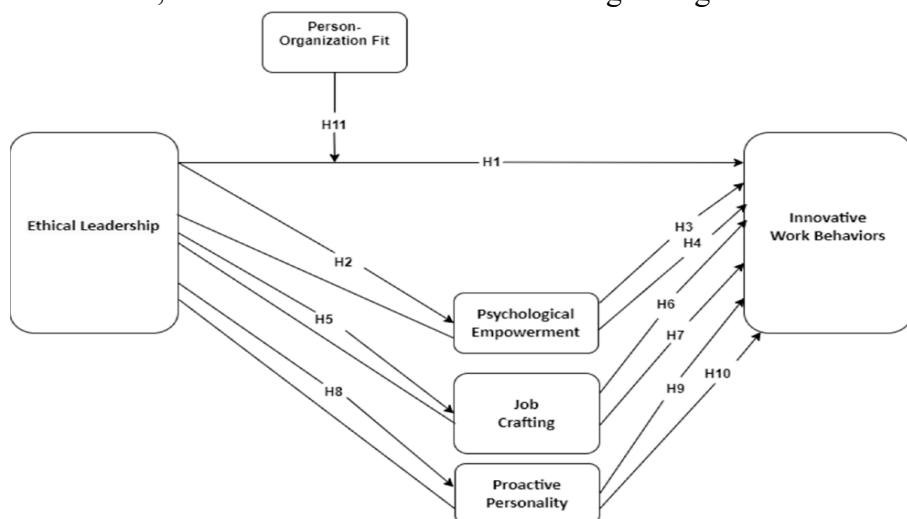
Therefore, moral exemplary conduct is at the heart of anti-corruption bureaucratic reform. Regulations and sanctions will be ineffective without ethical role models at the leadership level. By instilling the values of integrity, honesty, and public responsibility in leadership, the bureaucracy can transform into a credible institution aligned with SDG 16:

Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. As Cooper (2012) emphasized, "Administrative ethics is not about compliance, but about the moral courage to do what is right.." (Cooper, TL 2012)

Implementation Strategy and Recommendations for Policies to Strengthen Ethics and Moral Exemplars in the Bureaucracy

a) Strategic Framework

In the context of Indonesian bureaucratic reform, strengthening administrative ethics and exemplary moral conduct are key factors in the success of clean and effective governance. Based on findings from the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (PAN-RB) and the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP), one of the reasons for the low corruption perception index is the weak internalization of integrity values into the daily behavior of civil servants. (Ministry of PAN-RB. 2023) Public ethics cannot be viewed merely as a collection of formal norms, but as a value system that must be integrated into all dimensions of the bureaucracy, from recruitment processes and training to performance appraisals, to reward and punishment systems. (Transparency International. 2024) The following diagram shows a model of the relationship between value systems, organizational culture, and institutional reform in building strong bureaucratic ethics:



The image above confirms that the transformation of bureaucratic ethics can not only be carried out through a regulatory approach, but also through the formation of an organizational culture and ethical leadership that encourages change from within.

b) Key Policy Recommendations

1. Value-Based Civil Service Recruitment and Selection

The ASN recruitment process must emphasize a combination of competencies technical and moral integrity. A study conducted by UGM stated that a values-based selection mechanism can reduce the potential for ethical deviations in public services by up to 40%. (Choirulsyah, D. & Azhar, A. 2024) The government needs to integrate behavioral assessment integrity-based and reflective moral interviews to assess the suitability of prospective civil servants' values.

2. Ongoing Public Ethics Training and Education

Ethics education for civil servants is not just a formality but must be contextual and based on real cases (case-based moral learning) Research shows that interactive and reflective ethics training can increase civil servants' moral awareness and moral action by up to 35% in two years. (Mubarok, U. 2020)



3. Integration of Ethical Values in the Civil Service Performance System

The performance of the apparatus needs to be measured not only from a quantitative aspect (administrative output), but also from an ethical perspective, transparency, and public participation. Ethical performance indicators by several ministries showed an increase in ASN integrity compliance by 27% in 2023. (KPK RI. 2024)

4. Moral Exemplary Leadership as a Driver of Ethical Culture

Bureaucratic leaders play a strategic role in instilling a culture of ethics. Without moral role models at the leadership level, ethical norms will not become part of the organizational culture. Empirical studies show that ethical behavior by leaders is positively correlated with a 21% decrease in corruption practices within agencies. (Nani, YN, Abdussamad, J., Mozin, SY, & Tohopi, R. 2025)

5. Public Participation and Digital Transparency

Bureaucratic reform must involve the public in monitoring and reporting ethical behavior through digital systems (e-integrity) The Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) recorded a 32% increase in reports of ethical violations through SP4N-LAPOR! in 2023 compared to the previous year. (SP4N-LAPOR! 2024)

6. Ethical Reward and Sanction System

Awards such as "ASN with Integrity" and consistent moral sanctions reinforce a positive ethical culture. Ethical recognition system Increasing the motivation of civil servants to behave ethically without external pressure. (Widiasih, S., Julina, F., & Susanti, S. 2024).

c) Strategy and Implementation Table:

Strategy	Practical Implementation	Success Indicators
Selection based on mark	Integrity test, value interview, background check	Percentage ASN pass tes integrity
Ethics training	Case-based and reflection training	Individual integrity index score
Performance assessment ethical	Addition of moral and transparency indicators	The number of disciplinary violations decreased
Exemplary behavior leadership	“Leader as Role Model” Program	Perception of integrity increases
Transparency public	E-reporting, whistleblowing system	Public trust levels are increasing
Reward And sanctions	ASN integrity awards & ethical sanctions	Reduction in ASN code of ethics violations

d) Relevance to SDGs

This program directly contributes to three main pillars Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

1. SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): ethical bureaucracy creates strong and transparent institutions.
2. SDG 4 (Quality Education): ASN character education strengthens moral values and professionalism.
3. SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): clean bureaucracy improves efficiency and investment climate.

e) Implementation and Evaluation Diagram



The roadmap outlines three strategic stages for strengthening bureaucratic ethics. The initial stage (2024–2025) emphasizes the integration of integrity values and revision of the ASN code of ethics. The intermediate stage (2026–2028) focuses on the implementation of ethical assessments and training. Moral leadership. Meanwhile, the advanced stage (2029–2035) is directed at formation ethical performance culture sustainable and measurable, in

order to create a bureaucracy with integrity and oriented towards principles good governance in accordance with SDG 16 goals.

Evaluation and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework

Evaluation and systems Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) is a crucial element in ensuring the effectiveness of policies to strengthen ethics and exemplary moral conduct within the bureaucracy. Its purpose is not only to assess administrative achievements but also to measure changes in apparatus behavior, increase transparency, and strengthen institutional integrity on a sustainable basis. According to the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (2023), M&E serves as a monitoring and institutional learning mechanism to ensure that ethics policies do not remain normative but instead transform bureaucratic practices to be more inclusive and accountable. The M&E framework in the context of bureaucratic ethics can be built through three main dimensions, namely input, process, and outcome. At the input stage, the evaluation focuses on supporting resources and policies, such as the number of ethics training sessions, revisions to the ASN code of ethics, and the availability of integrity enforcement agencies. The process stage assesses the effectiveness of program implementation, including the extent to which moral leadership training is implemented, the functioning of reporting mechanisms for ethical violations, and the regular conduct of integrity audits. Meanwhile, at the outcome stage, the evaluation focuses on long-term results such as an increase in institutional integrity scores, a decrease in ethical violation cases, and an increase in the national Corruption Perception Index (CPI). (Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index 2023) To ensure policy sustainability, evaluation indicators are needed that encompass both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Quantitative indicators can include the number of integrity training sessions and improvements in scores. National Integrity Index (IIN) released by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), as well as Indonesia's CPI trend data published by Transparency International. Qualitative indicators include employee perceptions of the ethical culture in their institutions, the effectiveness of leadership role models, and the level of civil servant participation in moral and integrity training.

As an illustration, the following table shows a measurement model for the effectiveness of implementing bureaucratic ethics policies based on M&E dimensions:

Dimensions	Key Indicators	Measuring Instruments	2030 Target
Input	Number of ethics training & revision of the ASN code of ethics	Data training ASN, policy documents	100% ASN follow integrity training
Process	Reporting mechanism & ethics enforcement	Internal audit, KASN/KPK report	90% of violation cases followed up in a manner transparent

Outcome	Improvement score institutional integrity and National GPA	KPK Survey, Transparency International	National GPA increased to a score of 50/100
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In addition, the M&E Framework diagram depicts the ongoing stages:

1. Planning – establishing indicators, baseline data, and institutional ethics objectives.
2. Implementation and Monitoring – field data collection, observations, and integrity reports.
3. Periodic Evaluation – analysis of effectiveness, ethical audits, and measurement of changes in ASN behavior.
4. Policy Feedback – regulatory refinement, drafting best practice, and strengthening leadership commitment.

This approach is in line with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) which emphasizes the importance of transparent and accountable governance, as well as SDG 4 (Quality Education) which emphasizes the role of moral education and ethics training. in the development of civil servant human resources. This M&E-based evaluation also contributes to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), as a clean bureaucracy will support the creation of a productive and equitable work environment.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of corruption, which remains deeply rooted in the Indonesian bureaucracy, demonstrates that public governance problems stem not only from weak regulations or oversight systems, but also from the degradation of moral and ethical values within the state apparatus. Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) Indonesia's 2023 score of 34 out of 100 illustrates the suboptimal implementation of integrity and accountability principles within government institutions. This reality demonstrates that building a clean bureaucracy cannot be achieved solely through legal instruments and administrative sanctions, but rather through a comprehensive reconstruction of the ethical and moral values of the apparatus.

Reconstructing public administration ethics is a fundamental agenda in shaping a new bureaucratic orientation that positions public service as a moral calling, not merely a formal obligation. Administrative ethics must transform from normative rules to living values which is internalized in the consciousness of each apparatus. This approach is in line with the concept of ethical governance, where bureaucratic decisions are measured not only by procedural compliance but also by moral responsibility to the public and the state. Without strong ethical reconstruction, the bureaucracy risks remaining trapped in mechanistic administrative routines and neglecting the values of social justice.

In addition, moral exemplary behavior is a key element in the success of reform bureaucratic ethics. Public leaders are not enough to just be policy regulators but must also play a role as moral compass providing ethical direction and inspiration for all levels below them. Authentic role models can foster institutional trust and erode a culture of permissiveness toward moral violations in the workplace. In this context, leaders with

integrity serve a dual role: as drivers of an ethical culture and as symbols of honesty in public service.

The strategy for implementing ethical strengthening and moral exemplarity must be operationalized through long-term policies. The three main stages of integrating integrity values into the civil service system (2024–2025), developing moral leadership capacity (2026–2028), and establishing a sustainable ethical performance culture (2029– 2035) are realistic steps toward a bureaucracy with character and professionalism. However, the success of this strategy depends heavily on political commitment, consistent oversight, and a fair and transparent reward and sanction system.

To ensure policy sustainability, a structured Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework is needed, one that not only assesses administrative achievements but also measures changes in ethical behavior and perceptions among officials. An effective M&E system must combine quantitative indicators such as improvements in institutional integrity scores and decreases in disciplinary violations, with qualitative indicators such as strengthening an ethical culture within the bureaucracy. Planned M&E will reflect the extent to which ethics policies actually produce value transformation in daily bureaucratic practices.

Overall, the effort to build a bureaucracy with integrity is not a project. short-term, but rather a process of moral reconstruction that requires time, exemplary behavior, and consistent policy. Administrative ethics and civil service morality are not only instruments for eradicating corruption, but also prerequisites for the birth of a just, humane, and public-interest-oriented bureaucracy. These efforts directly contribute to the achievement of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by strengthening transparent and accountable institutions; SDG 4 (Quality Education) through character and integrity education for civil servants; and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by creating a productive and just bureaucracy. Thus, bureaucratic ethics reform is not merely an administrative responsibility, but a moral commitment of the nation to realize a civilized government with high integrity.

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