



Anti-Corruption Consensus as a Prerequisite for Indonesia's Progress (An Analysis of the Roles of Government, Religious Leaders, and Society)

Hasan Syahrizal¹, Nur Hana Azizah²

Institut Agama Islam Ar-Risalah Inhil Riau, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia¹⁻²

Email Korespondensi: hasansyahrizal311@gmail.com¹, nur.hana.2501548@students.um.ac.id²

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ABSTRACT

Corruption as a systemic phenomenon has become a major obstacle to Indonesia's progress, as it involves government, religious leaders, and society in practices that undermine social integrity. This study aims to analyze the roles of government, religious leaders, and society in building an anti-corruption consensus as a prerequisite for Indonesia's progress. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design through library research based on scholarly sources and credible institutional reports. The findings reveal that corruption in Indonesia is multidimensional and institutionalized within social structures, reinforced by weak governance integrity, moral compromises among religious leaders, and a permissive societal culture toward corrupt practices. Furthermore, anti-corruption efforts that lack cross-sectoral synergy tend to be ineffective and unsustainable. Therefore, an anti-corruption consensus based on collective commitment among government, religious leaders, and society emerges as a strategic solution to foster a culture of integrity. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of strengthening ethical values, institutional reform, and active public participation as fundamental pillars for achieving a just and progressive Indonesia.

Keywords: Corruption, anti-corruption consensus, government, religious leaders, society

ABSTRAK

Korupsi sebagai fenomena sistemik menjadi penghambat utama kemajuan Indonesia karena melibatkan pemerintah, tokoh agama, dan masyarakat dalam praktik yang melemahkan integritas sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran pemerintah, tokoh agama, dan masyarakat dalam membangun konsensus anti-korupsi sebagai prasyarat kemajuan Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis deskriptif-analitis melalui studi kepustakaan terhadap berbagai sumber ilmiah dan laporan lembaga kredibel. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa korupsi di Indonesia bersifat multidimensional dan terinstitusionalisasi dalam struktur sosial, diperkuat oleh lemahnya integritas tata kelola pemerintahan, kompromi nilai moral oleh tokoh agama, serta budaya permisif masyarakat terhadap praktik koruptif. Selain itu, upaya pemberantasan korupsi yang tidak berbasis sinergi lintas sektor cenderung tidak efektif dan berkelanjutan. Oleh karena itu, konsensus anti-korupsi yang melibatkan komitmen kolektif antara pemerintah, tokoh agama, dan masyarakat menjadi solusi strategis dalam membangun budaya integritas. Implikasi penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya penguatan nilai etika, reformasi kelembagaan, serta partisipasi aktif masyarakat sebagai fondasi utama dalam mewujudkan Indonesia yang maju dan berkeadilan.

Kata Kunci: Korupsi, Konsensus Anti-Korupsi, Pemerintah, Tokoh Agama, Masyarakat

PENDAHULUAN

Corruption remains one of the most critical structural challenges hindering the progress of developing countries, including Indonesia. It not only causes economic losses but also undermines social order, weakens public trust, and obstructs sustainable development. Reports from Transparency International indicate that countries with high levels of corruption tend to exhibit poor governance quality and unstable economic growth (Transparency International, 2023). In the Indonesian context, corruption has evolved into a systemic phenomenon involving multiple sectors, requiring comprehensive and collaborative approaches to address it effectively (World Bank, 2020).

The persistence of corruption in Indonesia is closely linked to weak integrity within governmental systems. Numerous cases handled by the Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi reveal that abuses of power continue to occur across various levels of bureaucracy, from central to regional administrations (KPK, 2022). This condition suggests that institutional reforms alone are insufficient without strengthening moral and ethical values in governance. Previous studies emphasize that weak bureaucratic integrity is a primary driver of systemic corruption in developing countries (Rose-Ackerman & Palifka, 2016).

Beyond the government, religious leaders play a crucial role in shaping societal morality. In a predominantly religious society like Indonesia, religious figures significantly influence ethical awareness and the promotion of honesty (Azra, 2018). However, in practice, moral compromises may occur when religious leaders become entangled in pragmatic interests, including involvement in projects potentially linked to corrupt practices. This indicates a gap between normative religious values and actual social practices, highlighting the need to revitalize the role of religious leaders as independent and integrity-driven moral agents (Nasr, 2019).

Meanwhile, society itself contributes to the persistence of corruption. A permissive culture toward corruption, such as tolerance for gratuities and informal payments, indicates that corruption is not limited to elites but is embedded in everyday life. According to the World Bank, socially permissive attitudes toward corruption represent a major obstacle to effective anti-corruption policies in developing countries (World Bank, 2020). Therefore, transforming public behavior is a crucial component of comprehensive anti-corruption efforts.

Previous studies have emphasized that effective anti-corruption strategies require synergy between government, society, and other social institutions. Approaches focusing solely on law enforcement without fostering a culture of integrity tend to yield unsustainable outcomes (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015). In this context, the concept of an anti-corruption consensus becomes relevant as a collective effort to establish shared commitments across sectors. Such a consensus must go beyond normative declarations and be reflected in consistent and measurable actions.

Based on these considerations, corruption in Indonesia can be understood as a multidimensional issue involving various social actors. Without a shared commitment to reject corruption, development efforts will continue to be hindered

by practices that undermine systemic integrity. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the roles of government, religious leaders, and society in building an anti-corruption consensus as a prerequisite for Indonesia's progress.

METODE

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical research design aimed at comprehensively understanding corruption as a multidimensional phenomenon within the Indonesian social context. This approach is selected due to its ability to capture social realities in depth, particularly regarding the interactions among government, religious leaders, and society in both the practice and prevention of corruption. The method used is library research, involving an extensive review of scholarly sources such as academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, reports from international institutions including Transparency International and World Bank, as well as official documents from Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi. Conceptual and sociological approaches are applied to analyze the notion of an anti-corruption consensus and the dynamics of social actors in fostering a culture of integrity in Indonesia. Data collection is conducted through documentation of relevant literature published within the last ten years to ensure the novelty and relevance of the study. The collected data are then analyzed using content analysis techniques, involving data reduction, data display, and systematic conclusion drawing. The analysis focuses on identifying patterns, themes, and relationships among conceptual variables related to corruption practices and their prevention efforts. To ensure data validity, source triangulation is employed by comparing multiple academic references and reports from credible institutions. Accordingly, the findings are expected to provide comprehensive insights and contribute conceptually to the formulation of an anti-corruption consensus as a prerequisite for Indonesia's progress.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Corruption as a Systemic Phenomenon in Indonesia's Social Structure

Corruption in Indonesia can no longer be understood merely as individual misconduct but has evolved into a systemic phenomenon deeply embedded within the nation's social and institutional structures. This transformation reflects a shift from isolated acts of wrongdoing to a complex and interconnected system involving multiple actors across different sectors. Government officials, private sector entities, and even elements of civil society are often entangled in networks that sustain corrupt practices. Such conditions indicate that corruption has undergone a process of institutionalization, making it appear as a normalized component of governance and social interaction. In many contexts, corruption is not only tolerated but also subtly expected as part of bureaucratic processes. This normalization weakens ethical standards and blurs the distinction between legal and illegal practices. Consequently, corruption becomes self-reinforcing and difficult to eradicate without systemic intervention.

The systemic nature of corruption is evident in recurring patterns of cases involving various levels of bureaucracy, from local administrations to central government institutions. These patterns reveal that corruption is not random but structured, with identifiable mechanisms that enable its استمرار across institutional boundaries. Weak monitoring systems and ineffective enforcement mechanisms further exacerbate this condition, allowing corrupt practices to persist with minimal resistance. In addition, the lack of strong deterrent effects contributes to repeated offenses by individuals and groups. This situation demonstrates that corruption is sustained not only by opportunity but also by systemic weaknesses in governance. The continuity of such patterns indicates that corruption has become embedded within institutional routines. Therefore, addressing corruption requires more than legal reform; it demands structural transformation.

Organizational culture plays a crucial role in sustaining corruption, particularly when permissive attitudes toward abuse of power are prevalent. In many bureaucratic environments, corrupt practices are no longer perceived as serious violations but rather as customary behaviors that facilitate administrative processes. This normalization is reinforced through daily interactions and internal socialization mechanisms within institutions. Over time, new members adopt these practices as part of organizational survival strategies. As a result, integrity and ethical values are gradually eroded and replaced by pragmatic considerations. This cultural shift creates an environment where corruption is not only tolerated but also indirectly encouraged. Consequently, reform efforts that focus solely on structural changes without addressing cultural dimensions are unlikely to succeed.

Economic factors are frequently cited as justifications for corruption, particularly in contexts where individuals face financial pressures or perceive income disparities. However, empirical realities indicate that many perpetrators of corruption come from economically stable or even affluent backgrounds. This suggests that corruption is not solely driven by necessity but is strongly influenced by opportunity, greed, and weak moral restraint. The misuse of economic arguments often serves to legitimize unethical behavior and obscure deeper issues related to integrity. In this sense, corruption must be understood as a moral and ethical problem rather than merely an economic one. Addressing corruption therefore requires strengthening ethical awareness and accountability mechanisms. Without moral reinforcement, economic solutions alone will remain insufficient.

The political dimension of corruption further complicates its eradication, as corrupt practices are often used as instruments for gaining and maintaining power. Political actors may engage in corrupt activities to secure loyalty, finance campaigns, or consolidate influence within governance structures. This creates a patronage system in which resources are distributed based on loyalty rather than merit or legality. Such dynamics reinforce corruption as a strategic tool rather than a deviation from norms. Over time, this leads to the formation of entrenched networks that are resistant to reform. Political corruption thus becomes intertwined with governance itself, making it difficult to distinguish between

legitimate authority and illicit practices. This reality underscores the need for political reform alongside administrative and cultural changes.

Public perception and societal attitudes also play a significant role in sustaining corruption. In many cases, minor corrupt practices such as bribery or gratuities are perceived as acceptable or even necessary to expedite services. This tolerance reflects a broader cultural acceptance that weakens collective resistance against corruption. When society becomes desensitized to corrupt behavior, social sanctions lose their effectiveness, allowing such practices to flourish. Moreover, individuals who resist corruption may face social or institutional disadvantages, further discouraging ethical conduct. This creates a cycle in which corruption is continuously reproduced through social norms and expectations. Therefore, transforming public attitudes is essential for breaking this cycle.

From a sociological perspective, corruption can be viewed as a product of continuous social interactions that reproduce certain patterns of behavior within institutional frameworks. These interactions are shaped by norms, values, and power relations that define acceptable conduct within a given context. When corrupt practices are embedded within these structures, they become self-perpetuating and resistant to change. This perspective highlights the importance of addressing both structural and cultural dimensions of corruption simultaneously. Efforts that focus solely on legal enforcement without considering social dynamics are likely to have limited impact. A holistic approach that integrates legal, social, and cultural strategies is therefore necessary. Such an approach enables a more sustainable transformation of the system.

Based on the overall analysis, it can be formulated that corruption in Indonesia represents a systemic phenomenon involving structural, cultural, economic, and political dimensions simultaneously, thereby requiring a comprehensive approach that integrates institutional reform, cultural transformation, and ethical reinforcement as the foundation for sustainable anti-corruption efforts.

The Role of Government and Integrity Weaknesses in Public Governance

The government plays a central and decisive role in combating corruption, as it functions both as a regulator and as the primary executor of public policies. Ideally, the government should act as a model of integrity, transparency, and accountability in managing public resources. However, in practice, this role is often undermined by internal weaknesses that reduce the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. These weaknesses are not only technical but also ethical, reflecting deeper issues related to values and institutional culture. When government institutions fail to uphold integrity, they inadvertently create an environment that enables corrupt practices to flourish. This condition diminishes public trust and weakens the legitimacy of governance. As a result, corruption becomes more difficult to control and prevent.

One of the most critical issues in public governance is the gap between regulatory frameworks and their actual implementation. Governments may establish comprehensive anti-corruption laws and policies, but these regulations

often fail to be enforced consistently. This inconsistency creates opportunities for manipulation and selective enforcement, allowing certain actors to exploit loopholes in the system. Moreover, weak law enforcement mechanisms reduce the deterrent effect of existing regulations. In many cases, sanctions imposed on corrupt officials are not severe enough to prevent recurrence. This situation indicates that the problem lies not only in the absence of regulations but also in the lack of commitment to enforce them effectively. Therefore, strengthening implementation mechanisms is essential for improving governance integrity.

Internal control systems within government institutions also face significant challenges. Ideally, these systems are designed to monitor activities, detect irregularities, and prevent misconduct. However, in practice, they are often ineffective due to limited independence, lack of professionalism, and the presence of collusion within institutions. When oversight bodies are compromised, they fail to function as reliable mechanisms of accountability. This creates a situation where corruption can occur without detection or consequence. Furthermore, bureaucratic complexity and overlapping responsibilities often hinder effective supervision. These structural weaknesses allow corrupt practices to persist and evolve within institutional frameworks.

Transparency remains another major concern in public governance, particularly in relation to budget management and public procurement processes. Limited access to information and lack of openness create an environment conducive to corruption. When decision-making processes are not transparent, it becomes difficult for external actors, including the public and civil society, to monitor government activities. This opacity allows corrupt actors to manipulate data and conceal illicit transactions. Enhancing transparency is therefore crucial in preventing corruption and promoting accountability. Open governance systems that provide accessible and reliable information can significantly reduce opportunities for misconduct.

Political commitment is a fundamental factor in determining the success of anti-corruption initiatives. Without strong and genuine political will, anti-corruption programs often remain symbolic and fail to produce meaningful results. Political leaders play a crucial role in setting the tone for ethical governance and enforcing accountability within institutions. However, when political interests conflict with anti-corruption objectives, enforcement efforts may be weakened or selectively applied. This creates a perception that corruption is tolerated or even protected within political systems. Strengthening political integrity is therefore essential for ensuring consistent and effective anti-corruption measures.

The capacity and professionalism of public officials also influence the effectiveness of governance systems. Public servants are expected to uphold ethical standards and perform their duties with integrity. However, limited training, inadequate incentives, and weak accountability mechanisms often hinder their ability to maintain high standards of conduct. Capacity-building programs that emphasize ethical values and professional competence are necessary to strengthen institutional integrity. In addition, creating a merit-based system can reduce

opportunities for favoritism and corruption. Improving human resource management is therefore a key component of governance reform.

Despite the central role of government, anti-corruption efforts cannot rely solely on state institutions. Effective governance requires collaboration with civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders. Public participation in monitoring and reporting corruption can strengthen accountability mechanisms and enhance transparency. When citizens are actively involved, they become important agents of change in promoting integrity. This collaborative approach helps create a system of checks and balances that limits the concentration of power. Therefore, synergy between government and society is essential for sustainable anti-corruption efforts.

Based on the overall analysis, it can be concluded that weaknesses in integrity within public governance—manifested through inconsistent policy implementation, ineffective oversight systems, lack of transparency, and limited political commitment—constitute the primary obstacles to anti-corruption efforts, thereby necessitating comprehensive reforms focused on strengthening institutional integrity, accountability, and ethical governance practices.

Anti-Corruption Consensus as a Collective Solution Toward Indonesia's Progress

The concept of an anti-corruption consensus emerges as a response to the complexity of corruption that cannot be addressed by a single actor alone. This approach emphasizes the importance of a shared commitment among government institutions, religious leaders, and society to reject all forms of corrupt practices. In this context, corruption is not merely viewed as a legal violation but as a collective moral failure that requires a unified response. The idea of consensus highlights the need for alignment in values, attitudes, and actions across different sectors of society. Without such alignment, anti-corruption efforts tend to be fragmented and ineffective. Therefore, building a collective agreement becomes a strategic foundation for sustainable reform. This consensus must be rooted in shared ethical principles and reinforced through institutional mechanisms.

Within the governmental sphere, an anti-corruption consensus can be realized through the consistent implementation of good governance principles, including transparency, accountability, and rule of law. Government institutions must demonstrate a strong commitment to integrity by ensuring that policies are not only well-designed but also properly enforced. This requires strengthening oversight mechanisms, improving institutional capacity, and eliminating opportunities for discretionary abuse. When the government acts as a role model in upholding ethical standards, it sets a precedent for other sectors to follow. Moreover, clear and consistent policies can reduce ambiguity and limit opportunities for corruption. Thus, governmental commitment is a crucial pillar in establishing a credible anti-corruption framework.

Religious leaders play a strategic role in shaping moral consciousness and influencing societal values. In a religious society such as Indonesia, their authority extends beyond spiritual guidance to include social and ethical leadership. Through sermons, education, and community engagement, religious leaders can

promote values such as honesty, trustworthiness, and accountability. However, their effectiveness depends on their independence and integrity. When religious figures are involved in pragmatic or political interests that compromise ethical principles, their moral authority diminishes. Therefore, strengthening the integrity of religious leadership is essential for reinforcing anti-corruption values within society. Their role must remain aligned with ethical teachings rather than influenced by external interests.

Society, as the broader social entity, also plays a critical role in sustaining or combating corruption. Public participation in monitoring government activities and reporting corrupt practices is essential for strengthening accountability. When citizens are actively engaged, they contribute to creating a culture of transparency and vigilance. However, this requires a shift from passive acceptance to active resistance against corruption. Social awareness campaigns and civic education can help build this critical consciousness. In addition, collective action from communities can exert pressure on institutions to maintain integrity. Therefore, societal involvement is a key driver in the success of anti-corruption initiatives.

Education serves as a fundamental instrument in building long-term resistance to corruption by shaping the values and character of future generations. Anti-corruption education should not be limited to theoretical knowledge but must also emphasize ethical reasoning and practical application. By integrating integrity values into educational curricula, institutions can foster a culture of honesty and responsibility from an early age. This approach helps create individuals who are less likely to engage in corrupt practices. Furthermore, education can empower individuals to critically evaluate unethical behavior and take appropriate action. Thus, education becomes a preventive strategy in the broader anti-corruption framework.

The role of media is equally গুরুত্বপূর্ণ in supporting anti-corruption efforts by providing information, raising awareness, and acting as a watchdog over public institutions. Independent and responsible journalism can expose corrupt practices and hold authorities accountable. Through investigative reporting, media organizations can uncover hidden networks of corruption and bring them to public attention. This transparency pressures institutions to act responsibly and discourages misconduct. However, the effectiveness of media depends on its independence and freedom from political or economic influence. Therefore, strengthening media integrity is essential for maintaining its role as a pillar of accountability.

Law enforcement also constitutes a critical component in sustaining an anti-corruption consensus. Effective enforcement requires not only strong legal frameworks but also impartial and consistent application of the law. When legal institutions operate independently and uphold justice without bias, they create a deterrent effect against corruption. Conversely, selective enforcement or political interference undermines the credibility of the legal system. Strengthening judicial independence and ensuring fair legal processes are therefore essential. Law

enforcement must function as a reliable mechanism that supports and reinforces the broader anti-corruption agenda.

Based on the overall analysis, it can be formulated that an anti-corruption consensus represents a collective and multidimensional solution that requires the alignment of government integrity, religious moral authority, active societal participation, educational reinforcement, media accountability, and strong law enforcement, thereby establishing a comprehensive foundation for achieving sustainable progress in Indonesia.

SIMPULAN

Corruption in Indonesia has been demonstrated as a systemic and multidimensional phenomenon deeply rooted in structural, cultural, political, and moral dimensions, thereby requiring more than conventional legal approaches for its eradication. The findings of this study reveal that weaknesses in governmental integrity, permissive societal attitudes, and compromised moral authority among religious leaders collectively contribute to the persistence of corrupt practices. In this context, the absence of a unified commitment among key social actors has significantly hindered the effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. Therefore, the establishment of an anti-corruption consensus emerges as a fundamental prerequisite for national progress, as it integrates institutional reform, ethical reinforcement, and collective social responsibility into a coherent framework. Such a consensus must be reflected not only in formal regulations but also in consistent behavior and moral commitment across all sectors of society. Ultimately, sustainable progress in Indonesia can only be achieved when government institutions, religious leaders, and society collectively uphold integrity as a shared value and actively reject all forms of corruption in both principle and practice.

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