Integrative Dissonance in Public Sector Disciplinary Management: A Systematic Literature Review

Annisa Rahmawati[1], Muhamad Yopan[2]
[1]Faculty of Administrative Science, University of Indonesia,
West Java 16424, Indonesia
[2]Faculty of Administrative Science, University of Indonesia,
West Java 16424, Indonesia

Abstract
Traditional bureaucratic reform has long relied on stringent regulations and hard control mechanisms to curb misconduct. However, excessive oversight often fails to catalyze substantial shift in bureaucratic behavior. This research deconstructs these significant challenges by proposing the concept of Integrative Dissonance to explain the persistent gap between formal disciplinary instruments and substantive integrity. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following the PRISMA 2020 framework, this research synthesized findings from 62 relevant Scopus-indexed articles. The synthesis reveals that Integrative Dissonance occurs when rigid formal controls clash with social realities, political pressures, and resource scarcity. This pathological state triggers bureaucratic gaming —an adaptive behavior where bureaucrats manipulate administrative procedures to maintain a veneer of compliance while bypassing actual organizational values. Bibliometric mapping further confirms a dichotomy of focus in existing literature between structural accountability and micro-behavioral decision-making. To mitigate this dissonance, governance models must pivot from rigid formalism toward Ecological Alignment. This requires integrating formal rules with the moral motivations of employees through authorized discretion, psychological safety, and incentive coherence.

Keywords: bureaucratic reform, oversight, corruption, bureaucratic behavior, systematic literature review, integrative dissonance, bureaucratic gaming, governance, ecological alignment, public administration

1. Introduction

Corruption and disciplinary breaches in global public services remain an anomaly, despite the proliferation of regulatory instruments and oversight institutions over the last two decades. As noted by Peltier-Rivest (2024), the 2021 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) revealed that 131 countries failed to make significant progress in the past decade, with corruption continuously eroding public trust and distorting resource allocation. This phenomenon occurs not only in states with weak institutions but also in those with established legal frameworks. Corruption is not merely a momentary deviation; it is a universal and hazardous institutional phenomenon

(Peltier-Rivest, 2024). In developing nations, bureaucratic corruption has evolved into a consolidated and resilient structure capable of withstanding standard reform interventions through informal and procedural networks (Meza & Pérez-Chiqués, 2021). This reality challenges the fundamental assumption that increasing regulations automatically results in higher compliance.

Literature concerning governance and civil service discipline is divided into two distinct approaches: "hard control" and "soft control." Proponents of "hard control" emphasize external oversight mechanisms, rigorous audits, and sanctions as primary deterrents. This school of thought argues that a high risk of audit significantly reduces the accumulation of illegal wealth by politicians and bureaucrats (Fonseca & Izumi, 2025), and that the presence of oversight bodies, such as the Office of Inspector General (OIG), correlates positively with corruption conviction rates (Kempf et al., 2022). The underlying logic is based on rational calculation: increasing the probability of detection and the severity of sanctions alters the perpetrator's cost-benefit analysis, thereby inducing compliance (Anders et al., 2020; Bahník & Vranka, 2022).

Conversely, "soft control" literature highlights the role of ethical infrastructure, leadership, and intrinsic values. Studies within this cluster emphasize that ethical leadership positively influences organizational behavior and employee integrity (Quynh et al., 2025; Zahari et al., 2024). The central argument is that compliance cannot be coerced solely through fear; it must be internalized through a supportive ethical climate and strong Public Service Motivation (PSM) (Potipiroon & Wongpreedee, 2021). However, this dichotomy leaves a critical theoretical gap. Research examining how these two mechanisms interact simultaneously within complex bureaucratic environments is limited, particularly when formal rules clash with informal realities on the ground.

The primary critique of these separate approaches is their failure to explain "pseudo-compliance" or negative adaptive behaviors among bureaucrats. For instance, imposing strict disciplinary sanctions without an ethical culture often fails to eliminate corruption, instead merely displacing it to lower levels of government or more clandestine forms (Woodhouse, 2022). Furthermore, in environments characterized by resource scarcity or high political pressure, frontline bureaucrats often respond to rigid controls not with compliance, but with strategies such as rule-bending or shirking for organizational survival (Pasha et al., 2023). Consequently, instead of fostering integrity, additional disciplinary rules often fall into "empty formalism," where codes of conduct are cherry-picked to protect managerial elites while punishing lower-level staff (Akosa et al., 2020).

To bridge this gap, We propose the concept of "Integrative Dissonance" as a new analytical framework. This concept explains the paradox where the enforcement of rigid "hard control" disciplinary mechanisms, when misaligned with an organization's real capacity and "soft control" ethical infrastructure, triggers managerial cognitive dissonance. This dissonance does not produce compliance but instead encourages "bureaucratic gaming"—an adaptive form where bureaucrats manipulate performance targets or formal rules to satisfy administrative demands

without achieving substantive integrity (Taylor et al., 2022). Uhl et al. (2025) reinforce this argument through Situational Action Theory, stating that corruption arises from the interaction between individual morality and the immediate criminogenic environment, implying that external controls become irrelevant without moral alignment within bureaucratic rules.

This study aims to synthesize empirical evidence from 62 selected documents to validate the existence of integrative dissonance in global civil service governance. We argue that the failure of civil service disciplinary reforms is often caused not by a lack of rules, but by the clash between the formal expectations of oversight systems and the behavioral realities of bureaucrats attempting to survive within an incoherent system.

2. Method

To ensure objectivity, transparency, and replicability in the synthesis of empirical evidence, this study adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design. The study protocol was developed following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 standard guidelines. This approach was chosen to mitigate selection bias and enable the integration of findings from diverse methodological and geographic contexts. The detailed study selection flow is visualized in Figure 1.
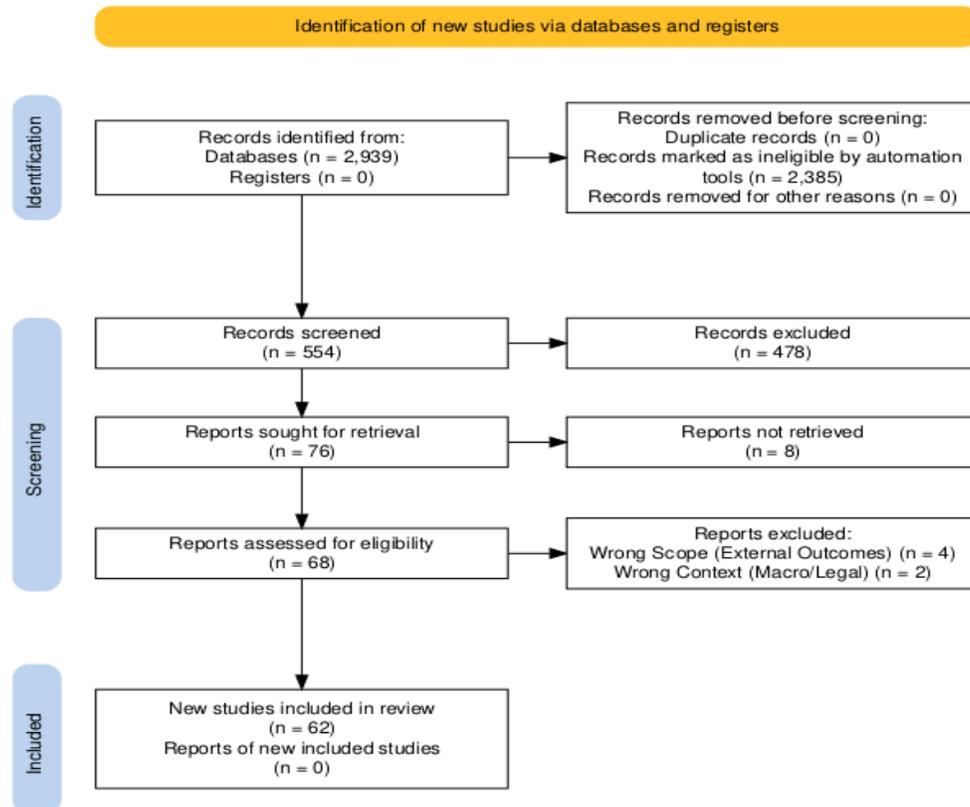

Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart
Source: Authors' elaboration (2025)

2.1 Data Identification and Selection

The data search process was conducted on the Scopus database, which was chosen for its comprehensive coverage of highly reputable public administration journals. The search strategy was carried out by combining Boolean terms covering variations of civil service management, oversight mechanisms, and disciplinary behavior as detailed in Table 1. The raw search results were then systematically filtered using Scopus internal filters to ensure only English-language journal articles were included in the analysis corpus, resulting in a total of 2,939 documents before the quality screening stage.

Table 1. Scopus Search Strategy and Syntax (Scopus Search String)

No	Search Components	Syntax Query Scopus	Results (n)
1	Main Keywords (Topic Search)	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Civil Service*" OR "Public Service*" OR "Public Sector" OR "Bureaucra*") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Governance Mechanism*" OR "Accountability" OR "Audit*" OR "Oversight") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Disciplinary Management" OR "Ethics" OR "Integrity" OR "Corruption")	~4.500+
2	Document Type Filter	AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar"))	3.120
3	Source Type Filter	AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j"))	3.015
4	Language Filter	AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English"))	2.939
Total	Initial Data Corpus	Data identified through the Scopus database	2.939

2.2 Screening and Eligibility

The identified documents then underwent a multi-step screening process based on strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria limited selection to: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles; (2) published in English; and (3) explicitly discussing the interaction between governance mechanisms (such as audits or oversight) and the disciplinary or ethical behavior of civil servants. Studies focused on the private sector, grey literature, or articles that did not provide clear empirical data were excluded.

After screening titles and abstracts, 68 articles were deemed eligible for full-text eligibility assessment. In this final stage, a critical evaluation was conducted to ensure the suitability of the unit of analysis. Six articles were excluded due to: a study focus too heavily on external outcomes (such as citizen perceptions) or a macro-legal context that did not capture the dynamics of bureaucratic behavior. Thus, 62 documents were selected as the final data corpus for analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis: Thematic Synthesis

Data analysis was conducted using the Thematic Synthesis method. This method was chosen for its ability to integrate findings from studies with diverse methodologies—from large-scale quantitative studies on corruption and audit risks (e.g., Thomann et al., 2025) to qualitative and ethnographic studies on bureaucrats' coping mechanisms (e.g., Pasha et al., 2023; Hassan & Kodouda, 2023).

The analysis process involved three recursive stages: (1) line-by-line coding of the main findings from each study; (2) grouping codes into "descriptive themes" encompassing categories such as formal sanctions, ethical leadership, and political pressure; and (3) developing "analytical themes" to generate new theoretical constructs. It was through this synthesis process that the pattern of "Integrative Dissonance" was identified as a common thread explaining the tension between formal compliance and the reality of informal behavior in global civil service governance.

3. Results

3.1 Bibliometric Overview : The Landscape of Governance and Behavioral Schism

From a total of 2,939 documents, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using keyword co-occurrence techniques. This analysis aims to empirically demonstrate the fragmentation within public sector governance literature, which precipitates the phenomenon of Integrative Dissonance.

3.1.1 Network Visualization: Structural Polarization of "Hard" vs "Soft" Controls

The network visualization (Figure 2) and keyword frequency data (Table 2) reveal a sharply fragmented research topography. Based on the analysis of link strength between terms, two primary poles were identified that dominate the discourse but rarely engage in substantive interaction.
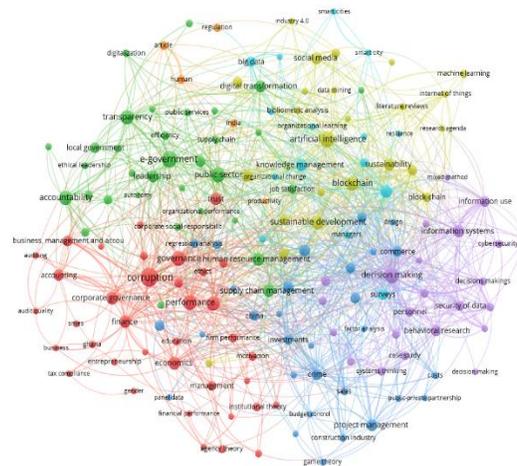
Figure 2. Network Visualization
Source: Vosviewer Authors' elaboration (2025)

Current literature remains predominantly centered on the legalistic-structural paradigm. This is evident in Table 2, where keywords such as *Corruption* (110 occurrences), *Performance* (71), and *Governance* (68) occupy the top positions. These terms constitute Cluster 1 (Red) and Cluster 2 (Green), representing the "hard control" approach. The primary focus of this group is on formal accountability and macro-level bureaucratic reform.

Table 2. Top 10 Most Influential Keywords by Occurrences

No	Keywords	Occurrences	Primary Cluster	Conceptual Domain
1	Corruption	110	1	Macro-Governance / Hard Control
2	E-government	84	2	Digital Governance
3	Artificial intelligence	81	4	Digital Transformation
4	Decision making	77	5	Micro-Behavioral
5	Performance	71	1	Organizational Result
6	Public sector	70	2	Institutional Context
7	Governance	68	1	Structural Framework
8	Accountability	66	2	Formal Control
9	Blockchain	66	4	Technological Discipline
10	Transparency	65	2	Integrity Framework

The integration of this data reveals a paradox that forms the theoretical basis of Integrative Dissonance. While *Accountability* and *Transparency* are highly dominant (Cluster 2), there is a significant emergence of themes such as *Decision making* (Cluster 5, 77 occurrences) and disruptive technologies like *Artificial Intelligence* (Cluster 4). The spatial separation in the network (Figure 2) between control mechanisms (green/red) and individual decision-making processes (blue/purple) confirms a "dichotomy of focus." There is a notable scarcity of studies

successfully bridging how rigid administrative sanctions (Cluster 1) psychologically influence the field-level decision-making of bureaucrats, which frequently results in mock compliance.

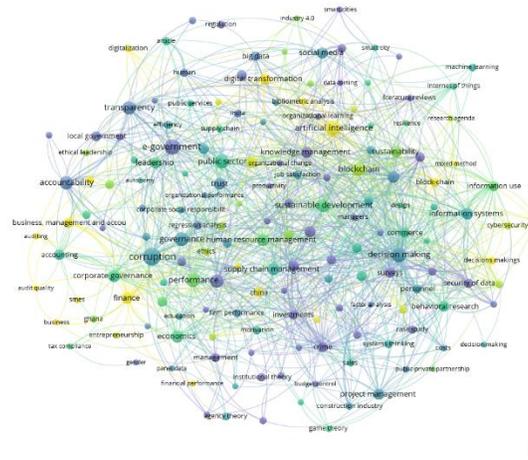3.1.2 Overlay Visualization: The Micro-Behavioral Shift

Figure 3. Trend Analysis
Source: Vosviewer Authors' elaboration (2025)

The temporal trend analysis (Figure 3) reveals a significant paradigm shift from 2015 to 2024. Traditional topics emerging in the early period (indicated in purple/blue) are dominated by macro-structural issues such as *Accountability* and *Public Sector Reform*. However, entering the 2021–2024 period (marked in bright yellow), there is a thematic evolution toward micro-behavioral aspects and transformative technologies. The increasing frequency of *Whistleblowing* and *Behavioral Public Administration* in recent years validates the novelty of the Integrative Dissonance concept. This study serves to explain why structural reforms (the legacy themes) frequently fail to be internalized into individual behavior (the emerging themes)—a gap that has now become a primary concern for the global academic community.

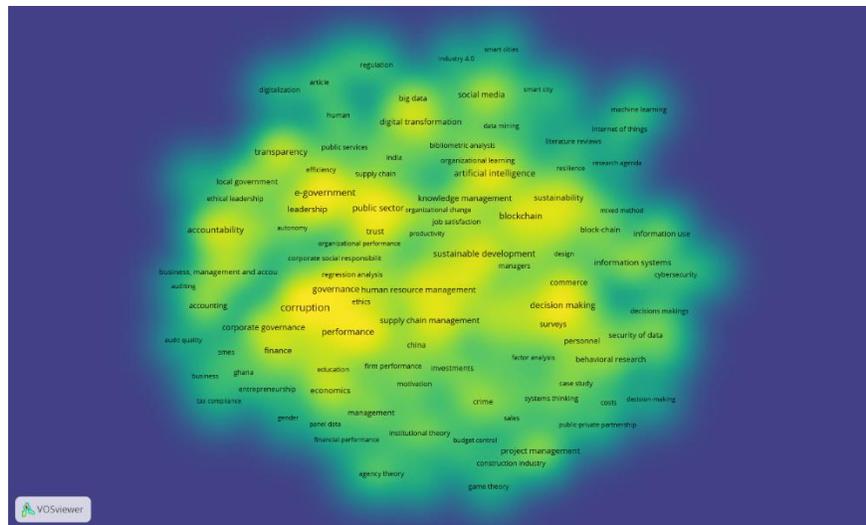3.1.3 Density Visualization: Mapping the "Integrative Dissonance" Gap

Figure 4. Density Visualization
Source: Vosviewer Authors' elaboration (2025)

The density map (Figure 4) provides empirical evidence of the research gap that this study targets. There are two highly saturated "centers of mass" (indicated in bright yellow) within the *Governance/Accountability* and *Technology/Digitalization* areas. However, the intersecting area between these two poles—where bureaucratic behavior responds to regulatory pressure— exhibits low density (indicated in dim blue).

This density valley is precisely where the concept of Integrative Dissonance is situated. The scarcity of research in this transitional zone proves that the interaction between "compliance pressure" and "bureaucratic survival strategies" (such as *bureaucratic gaming*) has long been overlooked by mainstream literature. The discourse void, identified visually through this bibliometric mapping, serves as the point of departure for the qualitative analysis of the 62 selected documents in the subsequent section. The following review will atomistically deconstruct these empirical evidences to explore the effectiveness, limitations, and dissonances emerging within each governance approach.

3.2. The Hard Approach: Effectiveness and Limitations of Sanctions and Oversight

Literature indicates that hard control mechanisms (comprising external audits, criminal sanctions, and rigorous oversight) exert a statistically significant deterrent effect; however, their efficacy is highly contingent upon institutional context and the independence of law enforcement. The institutional structure of the audit itself plays a pivotal role. A comparative study of OECD countries suggests that Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) organized under the Anglo-Saxon model (audit office) tend to achieve higher corruption control scores compared to the Judicial model (courts of accounts), suggesting that flexibility and a performance-oriented

focus may be more effective than a purely legalistic approach (Kontogeorga & Papapanagiotou, 2023).

Empirical evidence from field experiments demonstrates that the threat of an audit is a potent instrument for altering bureaucratic behavior. In Chile, Engel et al. (2023) found that government agencies receiving audit threat letters from the Comptroller General reduced year-end procurement spending by 33% compared to the control group. This finding is reinforced by studies in Brazil, where increased audit risk significantly reduced the accumulation of private wealth by incumbent politicians, demonstrating that formal oversight mechanisms are capable of limiting corruption incentives (Fonseca & Izumi, 2025). The deterrent effect of such "hard" enforcement even transcends national borders; the extraterritorial enforcement of US anti-corruption laws (such as the FCPA) has become a global benchmark, compelling foreign corporations to adopt more stringent internal controls and proving that transnational sanction threats can systemically shift compliance behavior (Karpacheva & Hock, 2024).

In the United States, the presence of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at the state level also correlates positively with corruption conviction rates, indicating that formal detection functions are effective (Kempf et al., 2022). However, the mere existence of oversight bodies does not guarantee effectiveness if not supported by adequate authority. An evaluation of the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC) in Malaysia showed that despite an increase in complaints, the agency's effectiveness remains questionable due to a lack of prosecutorial power and limited human resources, illustrating that oversight mechanisms without strong "teeth" are merely "paper tigers" (Ayub et al., 2022). Furthermore, the effectiveness of criminal sanctions is often eroded by legal uncertainty; an analysis of Indonesia's legal framework reveals that dualism in norms regarding bribery regulations creates interpretative loopholes that weaken enforcement, making reform to ensure legal certainty an absolute prerequisite for sanction effectiveness (Saputra et al., 2025).

The effectiveness of hard control drops drastically when confronting informal norms or structural barriers. In Malawi, Anders et al. (2020) noted that despite formal law enforcement, the deterrent effect was limited due to strong informal norms and the political protection of bureaucrats. Such phenomena give rise to "convenient accountability," where integrity is enforced only insofar as it does not disturb the comfort of elites (Odilla, 2020). This is mirrored in a case study from Kazakhstan, where Janenova and Knox (2020) found that ethical mechanisms and sanctions were often applied selectively to protect the image of the institution or political elites, rendering oversight instruments merely symbolic. Furthermore, tightening accountability at one level of government does not necessarily eliminate corruption but may instead trigger a displacement effect. Empirical evidence from Italy shows that aggressive judicial oversight of national deputies shifted corrupt practices toward local public officials where oversight was more lenient (Woodhouse, 2022). This ineffectiveness of formal control is exacerbated by the adaptability of corrupt networks, as seen in Mexican local governments where corruption has "consolidated" through organized informal networks to manipulate formal procedures, create opacity, and blunt checks and balances (Meza & Pérez-Chiqués, 2021).

The failure of formal sanctions is also evident in the context of post-tenure administrative sanctions. In Vietnam, Cao Vu & Thi Ngoc Anh Cao (2024) highlighted the ineffectiveness of the "removal of previous posts" sanction for retired officials. This sanction is deemed ineffective as it lacks tangible financial consequences (e.g., reduction in pension rights), thus failing to deter officials during their active years. Additionally, the effectiveness of whistleblowing systems as oversight instruments is often hindered by inadequate legal infrastructure. In the Indonesian context, Suteki et al. (2025) found that the realization of rewards for corruption whistleblowers is significantly impeded by the absence of clear operational technical guidelines. These barriers are not only structural but also complicated by behavioral factors; a study of public employees in Taiwan revealed that the intention to blow the whistle is strongly influenced by subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, where support from colleagues and family is often more influential in encouraging reporting than mere formal legal protection (Zhang et al., 2025). Consequently, many ethical violations in local governments end as a "death by a thousand cuts" phenomenon, where small-scale corruption becomes normalized and goes unreported because employees are skeptical of follow-up actions or fear social exclusion, rendering formal reporting mechanisms ineffective (Yates & Graycar, 2020). This underscores that without consistent execution and psychosocial support, hard control instruments are prone to dissonance between regulations on paper and implementation in the field.

3.3. The Soft Approach: Ethical Leadership and the Internalization of Norms

In contrast to hard control, which focuses on external compliance, soft control seeks to build integrity through ethical leadership, training, and the internalization of values. This approach does not rely solely on the individual morality of leaders but also on specific dimensions of managerial behavior. A study of local government managers in the United States identified six interrelated dimensions of ethical leadership—such as commitment to action, norm dissemination, and role modeling—which collectively form a robust organizational ethical infrastructure (Reddick et al., 2025). Empirical evidence suggests that these variables have a significant positive impact on bureaucratic behavior, although they are often mediated by other psychological factors.

Ethical leadership has proven to be a powerful predictor of positive employee behavior. In the context of the Vietnamese public sector, Quynh et al. (2025) found that ethical leadership directly enhances organization-oriented Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) and indirectly influences individual-oriented behaviors through the mediation of Public Service Motivation (PSM). This influence mechanism is further reinforced by another study in Vietnam, which found that ethical leadership serves as a crucial moderator strengthening the relationship between Socially Responsible HRM and employees' "moral voice", creating a psychologically safe environment for integrity (Ha & Doan, 2024). Furthermore, in the context of China's digital government transformation, ethical leadership was found to influence innovative behavior both directly and indirectly through increased PSM, which channels employees' intrinsic drives toward creative problem-solving within ethical boundaries (Bian & Wang, 2024).

Similar findings were reported in Malaysia, where Zahari et al. (2024) noted that ethical leadership significantly reduces integrity violations related to ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) compliance. The mediating role of psychological factors in soft control is also confirmed in the Ugandan public sector, where job satisfaction emerged as a crucial mediator linking ethical leadership and codes of conduct to employee integrity (Kyambade & Namatovu, 2025). More broadly, a systematic review of 59 empirical articles confirms that PSM serves as an essential antecedent that reduces vulnerability to corruption and increases whistleblowing intentions through prosocial organizational behavior mechanisms, especially when supported by a conducive organizational climate (Lee et al., 2023). Interestingly, the impact of ethical leadership has proven stronger in mitigating misconduct than the influence of the organization's ethical culture itself (Zahari et al., 2024). This underscores that the "tone at the top" is a pivotal element in shaping subordinate behavior.

However, the effectiveness of soft control is neither universal nor absolute. Experiments conducted by Belle and Cantarelli (2019) showed mixed results; ethical leadership interventions effectively reduced dishonesty in tasks impacting personal financial gain but had no significant effect on tasks involving prosocial outcomes. This suggests that ethical leadership may have limitations in preventing unethical behaviors rationalized by employees as being "for the greater good" or pro-social rule breaking. The complexity of ethical decision-making is also highlighted in hybrid organizations (such as social enterprises), where managers are found to be more effective in resolving ethical dilemmas when they do not rely on a single ethical source but rather integrate various categories—both deontological (rule-based) and teleological (outcome-based)—to build confidence in their resolutions (Heckler & Ronquillo, 2020). This implies that ethical leadership requires more than just being a "good person"; it demands the cognitive ability to navigate conflicting moral frameworks.

Beyond leadership, ethics training shows significant potential as an intervention mechanism. Hauser (2019) found that specific anti-corruption training can effectively reduce the professional tendency to rationalize or justify corrupt behavior. In Chile's public administration, Pliscoff-Varas and Lagos-Machuca (2021) noted that ethics training has a positive short-term impact on the ethical reflection of officials, particularly for those with less work experience or newcomers to the public sector. The effectiveness of such training is deepened by a study of senior Civil Servants in India, which found that bureaucratic career integrity is not only shaped by demographics but is heavily influenced by "social contagion" during training. This process aligns individual values with the institution through intensive mentoring, confirming that training functions not merely as knowledge transfer but as a profound instrument of value socialization (Balasubramanian & Kakani, 2024).

The existence of formal ethical infrastructure, such as codes of conduct, does not automatically guarantee compliance. In fact, a comparative study of conflict-of-interest policies in EU member states revealed a paradox where countries with higher "policy coverage density" often have poorer Corruption Perception Index scores. This indicates that increased formal rules are often merely symbolic or political responses to critical governance issues without real-field

effectiveness (Demmke et al., 2023). Akosa et al. (2020) revealed that in Ghana, the implementation of codes of conduct is significantly hampered by nepotism and selective protection of violators, indicating that even "soft" instruments can be paralyzed if the organizational culture is unsupportive. Similar dynamics were found in Tanzania's public service, where the code of ethics failed as a corruption control instrument due to low citizen awareness and bureaucratic "ecological pressures" (such as low salaries and weak monitoring) that make ethical compliance irrational for employees (Nkyabonaki, 2019). Furthermore, Meyer-Sahling and Mikkelsen (2022) found in Poland that ethical and disciplinary codes do not work effectively in isolation; they must be applied simultaneously to reinforce each other in reducing bribery. This underlines that the dichotomy between hard and soft control may be flawed, as empirical evidence suggests the need for a cohesive integration of both mechanisms (Meyer-Sahling & Mikkelsen, 2022). This systemic perspective is supported by an evaluation of local integrity systems in major European cities (Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Munich), concluding that effective integrity management relies on the interconnectedness of seven key elements—including clarity of definition, leadership, and a balance between value-based and rule-based approaches—within a coherent system (Hoekstra et al., 2023).

3.4 The Context: Structural Incentives and HR Systems

Effective governance mechanisms rely heavily on human resource management (HRM). Literature confirms that meritocracy—particularly in recruitment and promotion—serves as a primary "firewall" against corruption. A global study involving 149 countries demonstrates that the robust application of meritocratic principles is positively associated with bureaucratic efficiency, legal compliance, and employee integrity (Mulaphong, 2023). Merit systems foster a psychological environment where bureaucrats feel secure acting as impartial experts; empirical evidence from Australia indicates that a strong perception of merit-based recruitment correlates positively with employees' willingness to engage in whistleblowing, as they feel their careers are protected by professional competence rather than political connections (Cooper, 2022).

Conversely, patronage systems or political appointments undermine organizational integrity because employee loyalty is directed toward political patrons rather than formal rules. An analysis of public official appointments at the subnational level in Mexico reveals that the absence of high-quality organizational arrangements—such as document transparency and the involvement of independent stakeholders—drastically increases the discretion of political authorities, ultimately leading to patronage appointments instead of integrity-based governance (Pimienta Gonzalez, 2025). This is further supported by findings from South Korea, where Cho and Kim (2025) prove that the presence of female bureaucrats in high-ranking positions effectively disrupts male-dominated collusive arrangements, thereby significantly reducing corruption risks in public procurement.

However, incentive structures often create a dilemma. On one hand, job tenure is considered essential to shield bureaucrats from political pressure and uphold the rule of law, particularly in emerging democracies (Migueis Pereira, 2021). On the other hand, Migueis Pereira (2021) warns that rigid tenure without objective performance evaluations can lead to moral hazard, where

employees feel safe underperforming or resisting innovation. This risk of bureaucratic entrenchment is confirmed by ethnographic studies in post-revolutionary Sudan, where veteran bureaucrats leveraged their job security and deep procedural knowledge to sabotage civil service reform efforts and forge new clientelistic ties with incoming political elites, showing that job protection without strict accountability can perpetuate corrupt practices (Hassan & Kodouda, 2023).

These structural issues are exacerbated by low salary levels. In the Vietnamese context, Cao and Cao (2024) note that inadequate salaries—often covering only 50-60% of living expenses — drive bureaucrats to seek supplementary income. This financial deprivation often forces employees to engage in petty corruption or deliberately slow down services to extort "grease money" (Bhattarai & Gupta, 2023; Cao & Cao, 2024). This vulnerability is not exclusive to developing nations; a multilevel analysis of educational systems in European countries reveals that low staff compensation is significantly associated with an increased probability of bribery in public schools, confirming that economic pressure can erode professional integrity even within more established administrative contexts (Wysmułek, 2024).

Theoretically, these dynamics are explained by Situational Action Theory (SAT), which positions low wages as a source of external "economic pressure". This pressure, when interacting with weak individual moral controls and situational opportunities, triggers corruption as a rationalized problem-solving mechanism for the perpetrator (Uhl et al., 2025). In this context, corruption is not driven solely by greed but becomes an economic survival strategy embedded within a flawed incentive structure.

3.5 The Anomalies: Bureaucratic Gaming and Coping Mechanisms

Despite the tightening of oversight mechanisms, literature reveals a persistent phenomenon known as bureaucratic gaming—a deliberate manipulation of behavior to gain strategic advantage or create an illusion of performance without substantive improvement (Taylor et al., 2022). This phenomenon often manifests not as major scandals, but as an accumulation of normalized minor infractions, or a "death by a thousand cuts".These micro-violations, such as subtle nepotism or minor financial leakages, are frequently overlooked by regulators obsessed with high-profile cases; however, in the aggregate, their impact is far more damaging to organizational integrity (Yates & Graycar, 2020). These findings challenge the assumption that bureaucrats are passive implementers; rather, they are adaptive actors who actively navigate and manipulate rules to survive or maximize gains under pressure.

One of the most subtle yet destructive forms of gaming is cream-skimming, where bureaucrats prioritize "easy" clients or cases to meet performance targets while neglecting complex cases or the citizens most in need (Döring & Jilke, 2023; Taylor et al., 2022). Empirical evidence from field experiments shows that street-level bureaucrats tend to prioritize clients demonstrating high administrative literacy—those prepared with complete documentation and strong communication skills—as these cases significantly minimize the bureaucrat's workload (Döring & Jilke, 2023). This selection dynamic is driven not only by technical efficiency but also by the bureaucrat's

subjective moral judgment regarding a client's "deservedness". A study of 911 emergency dispatchers in the United States revealed that bureaucratic discretion is often used to provide "active representation" (superior service) to clients perceived to share the officer's identity or life experience, while limiting services for those deemed to be "gaming the system" (Zamboni, 2020).

This discriminatory behavior distorts public service equity, as vulnerable and less-educated citizens are pushed out of service priorities in favor of achieving staff statistical targets (Döring & Jilke, 2023). This risk becomes even more pronounced when government services are privatized or outsourced; pressure to demonstrate cost-efficiency often drives contractors to engage in "creaming" —selecting the easiest tasks to manipulate efficiency metrics—thereby neglecting service quality standards that are difficult to measure quantitatively (Fay & Zavattaro, 2019). Beyond client selection, Taylor et al. (2022) highlight the prevalence of data manipulation or "upcoding" —the practice of reporting performance categories higher than reality—which frequently occurs in rigid performance management systems, ultimately bypassing real organizational accountability. The consequences of such manipulation are fatal for democratic governance; when performance reports and public sector accounts are perceived as being filled with "spin" rather than material facts, it not only obscures oversight but fundamentally erodes parliamentary and public trust in the validity of government information (Ferry & Midgley, 2024).

In environments with extreme resource constraints, bureaucrats do not violate rules solely out of malice, but as a coping mechanism to keep the organization functioning. A study in Pakistan's former tribal areas provides striking empirical evidence of this (Pasha et al., 2023). Vulnerability to such practices is particularly high during the construction phase of physical infrastructure, where technical uncertainty, incomplete cost estimates, and supply chain complexities often force actors to commit procedural deviations—such as manipulating bidding data or material quality—as a survival strategy amidst schedule and budget pressures (Ghahari et al., 2024). Pasha et al. (2023) report that frontline bureaucrats—specifically civil engineers—routinely engage in falsifying measurement books and approving invoices before work is completed. The objective is not purely self-enrichment but strategic: to ensure contractors have liquid funds to continue projects so that annual budgets do not lapse (Pasha et al., 2023). Furthermore, as departments fail to provide adequate official vehicles or operational funds, bureaucrats are forced to use personal resources or request transportation facilities from the contractors they are supposed to supervise. This logistical dependency automatically creates a sense of indebtedness and undermines their oversight independence (Pasha et al., 2023).

This vulnerability aligns with findings in the broader infrastructure development lifecycle, where construction and maintenance phases are critical points; without adequate state monitoring resources, quality oversight becomes dependent on contractors who have profit incentives, creating a structural loophole for corruption (Ghahari et al., 2024). Moreover, the "need vs. greed" dynamic becomes relevant here, where public employees with low salaries or facilities feel morally justified in accepting logistical "assistance" to ensure duty fulfillment—a

phenomenon also observed in Nepal's public service delivery, where providers demand extra payments (bribes) when basic salary expectations and facilities are not met by the state (Bhattarai & Gupta, 2023). This is a stark form of dissonance where bureaucrats are forced to violate formal rules precisely to meet informal performance expectations and ensure project completion. Another identified form of gaming is the use of excessive procedural adherence, or malicious compliance, as a defensive tactic. When facing reform efforts or audits that threaten the status quo, bureaucrats often use formal rules as a shield to obstruct change. In Sudan's post-insurgency transition, Hassan and Kodouda (2023) found that old-regime bureaucrats used existing bureaucratic rules—such as demanding official letters with specific stamps for every data request—as a strategy to delay the handover of personnel archives to anti-corruption committees. This strategy reflects what is termed "corruption consolidation" through procedural opacity. A study of local governments in Mexico shows that legal ambiguity and procedural uncertainty are often deliberately maintained or created by corrupt networks to build high levels of opacity, allowing them to operate "under the radar" and blunt formal oversight mechanisms (Meza & Pérez-Chiqués, 2021). These administrative tactics create a strategic time gap used by bureaucrats to "get their affairs in order", which often means destroying evidence or consolidating political protection networks (Hassan & Kodouda, 2023).

This phenomenon demonstrates that disciplinary rules and formal procedures, designed to ensure accountability, can be subverted into instruments for protecting consolidated corruption networks (Hassan & Kodouda, 2023). This dynamic reflects a framework of "corruption consolidation", where informal networks do not merely operate outside the system but actively manipulate legal ambiguity and procedural opacity to institutionalize corrupt practices as the dominant "rules of the game", effectively neutralizing internal checks and balances and making corruption resistant to formal interventions (Meza & Pérez-Chiqués, 2021). In the aggregate, these findings indicate that the application of hard control without understanding field-level micro-realities often fails to produce substantive compliance; instead, it triggers bureaucratic creativity in manipulating the system or creating mock compliance to protect corrupt practices under a layer of formality (Pasha et al., 2023; Taylor et al., 2022).

4. Discussion

The synthesis of 62 empirical studies demonstrates that the underlying explanation cannot be attributed solely to the absence of rules or the weakness of sanctions, but rather to a dysfunctional interaction between formal control mechanisms and the lived realities of informal behavior. This section advances the theoretical argument of "Integrative Dissonance" to account for this phenomenon.

4.1 The Failure of Isolation: Beyond the Hard/Soft Dichotomy

Existing literature is frequently trapped in a false dichotomy between "hard control" approaches (sanctions, audits, and laws) and "soft control" approaches (ethics, leadership, and values). Our findings indicate that when executed in isolation, both approaches suffer from fatal failure points. This is confirmed by empirical studies on local integrity management in Spain, which

found that formal rules alone are insufficient to guarantee the broad implementation of integrity systems; without a professional and transformative leadership vision, policy application often becomes mired in "minimalist legal adoption" that fails to influence the substance of organizational culture (Pardo-Beneyto et al., 2025).

Hard control approaches, such as external audits and criminal threats, have proven effective in suppressing short-term opportunistic behavior. However, this effectiveness collapses when confronted with powerful informal networks or political protection, where sanctions often only reach low-level perpetrators while the bureaucratic elite enjoy impunity. The weakness of a purely legalistic approach is also evident in Indonesia's anti-corruption legal framework, where inconsistencies in legal norms regarding bribery offenses create legal uncertainty. This condition opens loopholes for subjective discretion by law enforcement that is prone to abuse, causing these "hard" instruments to lose their deterrent power and certainty in punishing offenders (Saputra et al., 2025).

Conversely, soft control approaches focusing on ethics training and codes of conduct often become mere "cosmetics" if not supported by a credible enforcement structure. A genealogical analysis of governance development in the United Kingdom over four decades reveals that codes of conduct and behavioral standards frequently mutate into political disciplinary instruments rather than sincere moral guides. The definition of "corruption" and the responses to it shift according to the prevailing political agenda, rendering these soft instruments ineffective if they stand alone without supporting structural context and stability (Ferry et al., 2023). A code of ethics without enforcement "teeth" remains a dead document, ignored in the daily calculations of bureaucrats.

4.2 The Mechanism of Integrative Dissonance

We proposes the concept of "Integrative Dissonance" to explain why the combination of disciplinary and ethical mechanisms frequently fails to produce integrity. This dissonance occurs when the demands of formal control mechanisms (hard control) clash frontally with the actual capacity, structural incentives, and informal norms (soft reality) surrounding bureaucrats. This conflict is often exacerbated by the social ecology of the bureaucracy; as found in studies of small-state administrations, the existence of close-knit social ties and "managed intimacy" often forces bureaucrats to pivot away from rigid rule compliance toward more flexible informal procedures, as the pressure to maintain personal relationships frequently overrides the objectivity and neutrality demanded by formal rules (Saarniit & Sarapuu, 2024).

Under conditions of dissonance, tightening regulations does not produce compliance; instead, it triggers an adaptive mechanism that the We terms "bureaucratic gaming". When the pressure to adhere to disciplinary rules increases (for instance, through rigid performance targets or strict prohibitions without clear definitions) but is not accompanied by resource support or protection from political pressure, bureaucrats do not become compliant; they become cunning. This process of negative adaptation often does not take the form of a sudden, major scandal, but rather manifests through an accumulation of minor infractions tolerated or ignored by management.

This phenomenon is described as a "death by a thousand cuts", where the failure to recognize and respond early to minor transgressions causes corrupt behavior to become systemic and normalized within the organizational culture (Yates & Graycar, 2020).

In Pakistan, bureaucrats falsify reports not merely out of malice, but as a coping mechanism to navigate political pressure and resource scarcity. This is a form of dissonance: formal rules demand reporting accountability, yet informal realities (political pressure) demand illegal flexibility. Consequently, bureaucrats "play" within these gaps. This phenomenon can be further explained through the lens of Luhmann's systems theory as a "code clash"; bureaucrats are often forced to switch from the binary legal code (legal/illegal) to an economic code (efficient/inefficient) or a social code (loyal/disloyal) to justify their actions. In such cases, rule-breaking is viewed as rational to maintain the organization's operational continuity amidst conflicting demands (Pedersen, 2024). A similar dynamic occurs in the phenomenon of cream-skimming, where bureaucrats manipulate client selection to satisfy formal performance targets while disregarding substantial public service mandates.
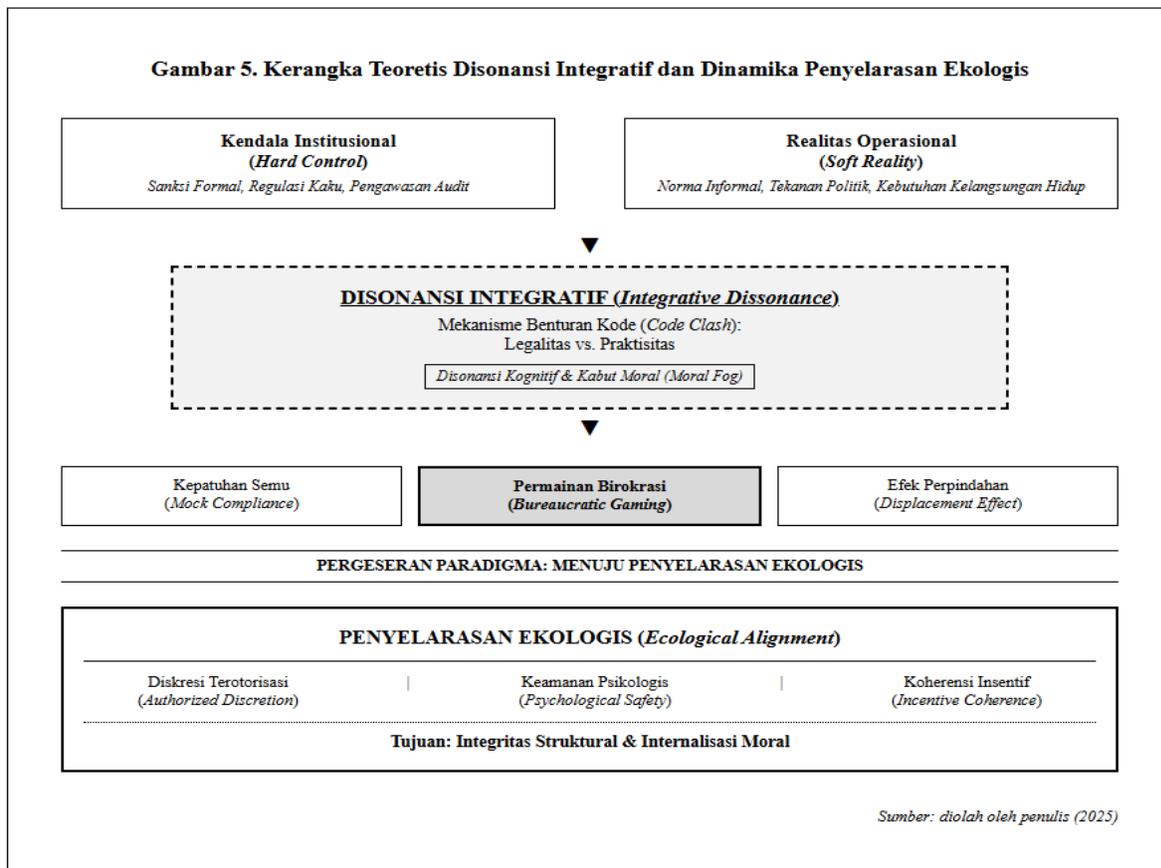

Gambar 5. Kerangka Teoretis Disonansi Integratif dan Dinamika Penyelarasan Ekologis

Figure 5. Theoretical Framework of Integrative Dissonance and Dynamics of Ecological Alignment
Source: Authors' elaboration (2025)

Figure 5 summarizes the theoretical synthesis of the Integrative Dissonance mechanism. This visualization illustrates how the clash between institutional oversight (hard control) and operational realities (soft reality) creates a zone of dissonance that obscures a bureaucrat's moral guidance—a state of "moral fog". In this condition, without interventions to align these two poles, bureaucrats tend to adopt negative adaptive responses, with Bureaucratic Gaming emerging as the most dominant form. This framework simultaneously proposes the path of "Ecological Alignment" as a strategy to transform dissonance into structural integrity through the strengthening of authorized discretion, psychological safety, and incentive coherence.

Uhl et al. (2025), through Situational Action Theory (SAT), explain that corruption occurs at the intersection of an individual's moral propensity and environmental criminogenicity. Integrative dissonance expands this view by demonstrating that an environment becomes criminogenic precisely when rigid formal rules are imposed upon fragile cultural foundations or "perverse" incentive structures (such as low wages or patronage-based promotions).

The complexity of this causality is further emphasized by the "Corruption Hexagon" model, which posits that corruption does not arise from a single factor, but rather from an interconnected configuration of external pressures, the supply of corruption from actor networks, and the individual's capability to exploit such opportunities. Within the context of dissonance, rationalization becomes the key element that allows actors to normalize corrupt behavior as a reasonable response to an unsupportive environment (Thomann et al., 2025).

4.3 The Paradox of Control: More Rules do not equate to Less Corruption

Our analysis reveals a troubling policy paradox: an increase in the volume of regulation does not always correlate linearly with a decrease in corruption. This paradox is clearly illustrated in the case of Malaysia; despite the adoption of international legal frameworks and the establishment of independent oversight bodies such as the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC), public perception of integrity within law enforcement remains low. This indicates that the mere presence of legal instruments and formal oversight institutions is insufficient to guarantee integrity without effective internal mechanisms within the agencies themselves (Ayub et al., 2022). Why does "more rules" often result in "more problems"?

First, regulatory complexity creates a "moral fog". When rules become excessive and detailed yet remain ambiguous, bureaucrats lose clear moral guidance and tend to hide behind "tick-box compliance" while violating the spirit of the law. This dynamic aligns with the classic debate in public service ethics, which highlights that excessive external control tends to narrow a bureaucrat's ethical understanding to mere technical compliance. In reality, resolving daily ethical dilemmas requires the strengthening of internal ethical sources and individual moral reasoning that transcends formal regulation (Heckler & Ronquillo, 2020).

Second, increased control in one area often triggers a "displacement effect". As demonstrated by Woodhouse (2022) in the Italian case, aggressive judicial accountability at the national level did not eliminate corruption; it merely shifted it to the local level where oversight is more lenient.

This displacement occurs not only vertically across government levels but also laterally into informal social networks. A study across 36 African countries revealed that when citizens face corrupt hurdles in accessing formal public services, they do not always comply or resist. Instead, they utilize their social networks (social capital) as "exit options" or substitutes to facilitate service access. Ultimately, this creates new forms of exclusivity and perpetuates inequality without necessarily involving direct bribery (Osei et al., 2024).

Third, excessive formalism can paralyze individual moral judgment. This phenomenon resonates with the analysis by Demmke et al. (2025), which points out that despite the proliferation of rules and increasingly sophisticated, standardized ethical institutionalization, the effectiveness of integrity policies is often hampered by implementation gaps and the emergence of a new "ethics bureaucracy". This new layer imposes administrative burdens without addressing the root causes of behavior. When a system focuses too heavily on external compliance (sanctions), the intrinsic motivation of employees to act ethically (PSM) can be eroded or "crowded out".

Systematic global literature reviews confirm that high levels of PSM serve as a crucial psychological mechanism that consistently lowers tolerance for unethical behavior and reduces individual vulnerability to corruption (corruptibility). This moral asset is at risk of being lost if management relies solely on rigid external controls (Lee et al., 2023). Employees stop asking "What is right?" and begin asking "What is legal?" or "How can I avoid getting caught?" This shift from substantive morality to formal legality is dangerous because, as evidenced by a study of public employees in Taiwan, the intention to perform risky ethical acts like whistleblowing is driven more strongly by internal values of justice and individual attitudes than by perceptions of formal legal protection or fear of organizational retaliation (Zhang et al., 2025). This fosters a culture of mock compliance, where an organization appears clean on paper but remains hollow or corrupt within.

4.4. Policy Implications: From Enforcement to Ecological Alignment

The implications of this research demand a paradigm shift for policymakers and practitioners of bureaucratic reform. The solution to civil service disciplinary issues is not merely to add layers of new regulations or to increase the severity of sanctions, but to integrate formal instruments with behavioral realities. This aligns with evaluations of local integrity systems in Europe, which affirm that effective integrity strategies require a proportional balance between rule-based approaches (compliance/sanctions) and value-based approaches (training/internalization), alongside leaders who provide sustained attention rather than relying on the mere existence of policy documents (Hoekstra et al., 2023). Furthermore, the concept of "authorized discretion" suggests that public integrity should be viewed as institutional coherence in adhering to democratic norms, where officials are not only pressured by external rules but are guided by consistent internal principles to strengthen democratic values (Bertelli et al., 2025). The implications are as follows:

1. Prioritize Psychological Safety

The effectiveness of whistleblowing and internal correction depends heavily on the psychological climate. Research shows that without the safety to speak up, even the most sophisticated reporting mechanisms will fail. A recent analysis adapting the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to public employees in Taiwan confirms that whistleblowing intention is strongly influenced by subjective norms (support from colleagues and family) and individual risk-taking tendencies. This means that formal legal protection alone is insufficient to encourage reporting if internal social norms and individual courage are not psychologically supported (Zhang et al., 2025). Additionally, regional case studies in Indonesia indicate that the effectiveness of reward systems for whistleblowers often fails not due to a lack of financial incentives, but because of the absence of clear operational guidelines and physical protection guarantees. Consequently, potential whistleblowers choose silence for personal safety rather than risking integrity (Suteki et al., 2025). Leaders must build a culture where moral voice is valued rather than silenced by the threat of retaliation.

2. Redesign Structural Incentives

Disciplinary reforms will be ineffective if the incentive structure (salary and promotion) still encourages corrupt behavior. Meritocracy in recruitment and promotion is the most effective firewall against corruption. A global survey of public administration experts across 149 countries empirically validates that the application of meritocracy—specifically competency-based recruitment and administrative impartiality—correlates strongly with a bureaucracy's ability to uphold integrity, adhere to the rule of law, and serve citizens, thereby effectively curbing the space for corruption (Mulaphong, 2023). More specifically, improving demographic structures by increasing female representation in high-level positions has proven effective in disrupting male-dominated collusive arrangements; senior female officials tend to adhere more strictly to ethical standards to legitimize their leadership in resistant environments, significantly reducing corruption risks in public procurement (Cho & Kim, 2025). Conversely, where public appointments are dominated by political discretion without transparent organizational arrangements—as observed in the patronage dynamics of subnational Mexico—public goals are easily hijacked for private interests, weakening the institutional capacity to act ethically (Pimienta Gonzalez, 2025). As long as promotions remain based on patronage or political connections, disciplinary sanctions will be viewed as a tool for purging political opponents rather than enforcing integrity.

3. Focus on Clarity, Not Regulatory Volume

Instead of adding ambiguous rules, policymakers must simplify the definitions of violations (such as gift limits or conflicts of interest) to eliminate the "gray areas" often exploited for manipulation. Recent studies on corporate gift policies affirm that using subjective terms like "reasonable value" in codes of conduct opens wide interpretative loopholes for actors to disguise bribes as gifts. In contrast, the implementation of a "zero-gift policy" has proven far more effective in removing ambiguity, reducing reporting burdens, and increasing compliance (Peltier-Rivest, 2024). In the realm of criminal law, this uncertainty is often exacerbated by regulatory dualism—such as the overlap between passive bribery and gratuity articles in Indonesia's anti-

corruption framework—which creates legal uncertainty and allows law enforcement agencies to use subjective discretion arbitrarily. Therefore, legal reform must be directed toward the unification of norms to ensure legal certainty (Saputra et al., 2025).

4. Contextualize Control

Oversight mechanisms must be adapted to local contexts. In areas with strong informal networks, a purely legalistic audit approach may be less effective than an approach involving public transparency and citizen participation to break local corruption consolidation. This contextual adaptation is crucial in environments with close social ecologies or small-scale settings where personal relationships overlap with professional roles. In the context of "managed intimacy", standard rules often fail because of social pressure to prioritize personal ties over bureaucratic objectivity, necessitating oversight instruments that are more sensitive to informal network dynamics (Saarniit & Sarapuu, 2024). Consequently, transparency must not be merely symbolic or sporadic. Empirical evidence from Kazakhstan shows that without a systematic public communication framework supported by digital technology, anti-corruption efforts (such as state asset recovery) risk being perceived by the public as selective or politically motivated rather than a genuine enforcement of justice, ultimately failing to build public trust (Yessenzholov et al., 2025).

Combating corruption and enforcing bureaucratic discipline is not a choice between sanctions or ethics. The challenge lies in managing the dissonance that arises when the two converge. The success of future governance depends on the ability to design systems where formal rules do not trigger gaming, but instead support and reinforce the intrinsic moral commitment of public servants.

5. Conclusion

This systematic review has identified a critical theoretical and practical gap in public sector disciplinary management, termed Integrative Dissonance. The analysis of 62 global studies demonstrates that the prevailing dichotomy between "hard control" (sanctions and audits) and "soft control" (ethics and values) is insufficient when applied in isolation. When formal oversight is intensified without regard for operational realities—such as political pressure, resource scarcity, and informal social norms—it does not foster integrity. Instead, it incentivizes bureaucratic gaming, where administrative procedures are subverted into tools for organizational survival or the protection of corrupt networks.

The research concludes that "more rules" do not equate to "less corruption". Excessive formalism often creates a "moral fog", causing bureaucrats to prioritize technical legality over substantive ethical judgment. Furthermore, the findings highlight that structural barriers, such as patronage-based promotions and inadequate salary levels, remain the primary drivers of corrupt rationalization, rendering paper-based ethics codes ineffective.

To move forward, this study proposes a paradigm shift toward Ecological Alignment. Policymakers must move beyond the mere volume of regulation and focus on: Authorized

Discretion (strengthening the internal moral reasoning of bureaucrats to navigate ethical dilemmas), Psychological Safety (ensuring that whistleblowing mechanisms are supported by social norms and physical protection), and Structural Reform (aligning incentives through meritocracy and fair compensation to reduce the economic necessity of corruption).

Future research should focus on empirical testing of the Integrative Dissonance framework across different cultural and digital governance contexts to further validate the pathways to ecological alignment.

References

Akosa, F., Yeboah-Assiamah, E., Asare, B. E., Asamoah, K., Essah-Koli, A. P., & Ahmad, P. (2020). Operationalization of Ghana's civil service code of conduct. *Public Money & Management*, *40*(6), 475–482. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2019.1598198

Anders, G., Kanyongolo, F. E., & Seim, B. (2020). Corruption and the impact of law enforcement: Insights from a mixed-methods study in Malawi. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, *58*(3), 315–336. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X2000021X

Ayub, Z. A., Wahab, H. A., Yusoff, Z. M., Md Zan, Z. M., & Shariffuddin, M. D. K. (2022). Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission: Whither Is It Bound? *BiLD Law Journal*, *7*(1), 25–36.

Bahník, Š., & Vranka, M. A. (2022). Experimental test of the effects of punishment probability and size on the decision to take a bribe. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics*, *97*, 101813. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socec.2021.101813

Balasubramanian, G., & Kakani, R. K. (2024). Exploring the Demographic Determinants of Integrity in Careerist Senior Civil Servants: Role of Social Norms and Security. *Public Integrity*, *26*(4), 455–472. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2023.2250130

Belle, N., & Cantarelli, P. (2019). Do Ethical Leadership, Visibility, External Regulation, and Prosocial Impact Affect Unethical Behavior? Evidence From a Laboratory and a Field Experiment. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *39*(3), 349–371. https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X17721301

Bertelli, A. M., Falletti, V., & Cannas, S. (2025). Authorized Discretion: The Democratic Essentials of Governance in the European Union. *Governance*, *38*(3), e70029. https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.70029

Bhattarai, P. C., & Gupta, A. K. (2023). Bribing for Public Service: What Drives the Service Users? *International Journal of Public Administration*, *46*(11), 773–782. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2021.2018709

Bian, X., & Wang, B. (2024). Enabling Innovative Governance: Ethical Leadership and Dynamic Capabilities in Government Digital Transformation. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, *8*(4), 186–200. https://doi.org/10.61093/bel.8(4).186-200.2024

Cao Vu, M. V. C., & Thi Ngoc Anh Cao, T. N. A. C. (2024). Anti-Corruption in Vietnam and Conflict Around Sanctions For Removal of Their Previous Posts of Retired Civil Servants. *PRAWO i WIĘŹ*, *2*, 223–256. https://doi.org/10.36128/PRIW.VI49.851

Cho, B., & Kim, H. (2025). Breaking up male-dominated collusive arrangements: Women's representation in bureaucracy and corruption. *Public Administration*, *103*(1), 201–219. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.13014

Cooper, C. A. (2022). Encouraging bureaucrats to report corruption: Human resource management and whistleblowing. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, *44*(2), 106–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/23276665.2021.1894955

Demmke, C., Autioniemi, J., & Lenner, F. (2023). Explaining the Popularity of Integrity Policies in Times of Critical Governance—The Case of Conflicts of Interest Policies for Ministers in the EU-Member States. *Public Integrity*, *25*(1), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2021.1987056

Demmke, C., Autioniemi, J., & Lenner, F. (2025). The end of the world as we know it – public ethics in times of de-standardization and individualization. *Public Management Review*, *27*(7), 1741–1763. https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2021.2000221

Döring, M., & Jilke, S. (2023). Cream-skimming at the frontline: The role of administrative literacy. *Public Administration*, *101*(4), 1569–1586. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12900

Engel, E., Jordán, F., Rau, T., & Repetto, A. (2023). Audit threats and year-end spending by government agencies: Experimental evidence from Chile. *Journal of Public Procurement*, *23*(1), 100–124. https://doi.org/10.1108/JOPP-07-2022-0032

Fay, D. L., & Zavattaro, S. M. (2019). Contracting, Ethics, and Policy Adoption: The Case of Florida Municipalities. *Public Integrity*, *21*(3), 301–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2018.1472975

Ferry, L., Funnell, W., & Oldroyd, D. (2023). A genealogical and archaeological examination of the development of corporate governance and disciplinary power in English local government c.1970–2010. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *109*, 101466. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aos.2023.101466

Ferry, L., & Midgley, H. (2024). Are public sector accounts trusted? Exploring the verdict of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee in the United Kingdom. *Public Administration*, *102*(4), 1450–1467. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12983

Fonseca, T. D. N., & Izumi, M. Y. (2025). Audit Risk and Wealth Accumulation: When Politicians Give up on Corruption. *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, *17*(3), 309–332. https://doi.org/10.1177/1866802X251343637

Ghahari, S. A., Queiroz, C., Labi, S., & McNeil, S. (2024). Corruption Propensity and Mitigation at Different Phases of Infrastructure Development. *Public Works Management & Policy*, *29*(1), 5–44. https://doi.org/10.1177/1087724X231162544

Ha, M. T., & Doan, B. S. (2024). Exploring moral voice in Vietnam's public sector: A study of socially responsible human resource management, public service motivation, and ethical leadership. *J. for International Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, *16*(1), 34–62. https://doi.org/10.1504/JIBED.2024.139131

Hassan, M., & Kodouda, A. (2023). Dismantling old or forging new clientelistic ties? Sudan's civil service reform after uprising. *World Development*, *169*, 106232. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106232

Hauser, C. (2019). Fighting Against Corruption: Does Anti-corruption Training Make Any Difference? *Journal of Business Ethics*, *159*(1), 281–299. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3808-3

Heckler, N., & Ronquillo, J. C. (2020). Effective Resolution of Ethical Dilemmas in Social Enterprise Organizations: A Moral Philosophy and Public Management Approach. *Public Integrity*, *22*(1), 39–53. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2018.1477405

Hoekstra, A., Huberts, L., & Van Montfort, A. (2023). Content and Design of Integrity Systems: Evaluating Integrity Systems in Local Government. *Public Integrity*, *25*(2), 137–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2021.2014204

Janenova, S., & Knox, C. (2020). Combatting corruption in Kazakhstan: A role for ethics commissioners? *Public Administration and Development*, *40*(3), 186–195. https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1873

Karpacheva, E., & Hock, B. (2024). Foreign whistleblowing: The impact of US extraterritorial enforcement on anti-corruption laws in Europe. *Journal of Financial Crime*, *31*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFC-11-2022-0283

Kempf, R. J., Sampath, V. S., Lu, E. Y., & Shapiro, D. M. (2022). An Empirical Assessment of the Contribution of State Offices of Inspectors General to Corruption Control. *Public Integrity*, *24*(1), 51–65. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2020.1839188

Kontogeorga, G., & Papapanagiotou, A. (2023). Auditing ethics and corruption: Old challenges and new trends for Supreme audit institutions in turbulent times. *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*, *35*(4), 474–492. https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBAFM-08-2021-0131

Kyambade, M., & Namatovu, A. (2025). The impact of ethical leadership and code of ethics on employee integrity, mediated by job satisfaction in Uganda's public sector. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, *21*(1), 72–89. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-10-2024-0110

Lee, E., Lewis-Liu, T., Khurana, S., & Lu, M. (2023). A systematic review of the link between public service motivation and ethical outcomes. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/23276665.2023.2247101

Meyer-Sahling, J.-H., & Mikkelsen, K. S. (2022). Codes of Ethics, Disciplinary Codes, and the Effectiveness of Anti-Corruption Frameworks: Evidence from a Survey of Civil Servants in Poland. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *42*(1), 142–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X20949420

Meza, O., & Pérez-Chiqués, E. (2021). Corruption consolidation in local governments: A grounded analytical framework. *Public Administration*, *99*(3), 530–546. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12698

Migueis Pereira, A. C. (2021). Civil Servants: Tenure, Incentives and Democracy in the Administrative State in Brazil and Latin America. *A&C - Revista de Direito Administrativo & Constitucional*, *21*(86), 25. https://doi.org/10.21056/aec.v21i83.1456

Mulaphong, D. (2023). Does Meritocracy Produce Desirable Outcomes for Public Organizations? Results of a Worldwide Expert Survey from 149 Nations. *Public Integrity*, *25*(6), 578–598. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2022.2074763

Nkyabonaki, J. (2019). Effectiveness of the Public Service Code of Ethics in Controlling Corrupt Behaviour in The Public Service: Opinion from the Grassroots at Toangoma Ward-Temeke

Municipal Council. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, *54*(8), 1195–1212. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909619862835

Odilla, F. (2020). Oversee and Punish: Understanding the Fight Against Corruption Involving Government Workers in Brazil. *Politics and Governance*, *8*(2), 140–152. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.v8i2.2716

Osei, D., Konte, M., & Avenyo, E. K. (2024). Escaping Corruption in the Demand for Public Services in Africa—The Dual Nature of Civic Networks. *World Development*, *177*, 106541. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2024.106541

Pardo-Beneyto, G., Abellán-López, M. Á., & Aguado-Hernández, J. A. (2025). Exploring Local Integrity Management in the Valencian Community: A Mixed-Methods Study. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, *76 E*, 86–106. https://doi.org/10.24193/tras.76E.6

Pasha, O., Ramanath, R., & Bajwa, Y. (2023). Coping with political interference and resource scarcity: Governance in the former tribal regions of Pakistan. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, *45*(4), 306–334. https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2023.2176071

Pedersen, K. (2024). Corruption in unlikely places: The case of Denmark seen through Luhmann's system theory. *Oñati Socio-Legal Series*, *14*(5), 1272–1295. https://doi.org/10.35295/osls.iisl.1858

Peltier-Rivest, D. (2024). Gift or bribe? The characteristics and the role of gift policies in the prevention of corruption. *Journal of Financial Crime*, *31*(5), 1094–1105. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFC-09-2023-0222

Pimienta Gonzalez, C. (2025). Discretion of public appointments in Mexico: A review of organizational arrangements in subnational appointments. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *91*(4), 579–597. https://doi.org/10.1177/00208523251358592

Pliscoff-Varas, C., & Lagos-Machuca, N. (2021). Efecto de las capacitaciones en la reflexión sobre ética y corrupción. *Revista de Administração Pública*, *55*(4), 950–968. https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-761220200658

Potipiroon, W., & Wongpreedee, A. (2021). Ethical Climate and Whistleblowing Intentions: Testing the Mediating Roles of Public Service Motivation and Psychological Safety Among Local Government Employees. *Public Personnel Management*, *50*(3), 327–355. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020944547

Quynh, T. N. T., Alang, T., & Le, T. D. (2025). Examining the relationships between ethical leadership and organisational citizenship behaviours in a transitional country: The mediation of public service motivation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration*, *47*(3), 286–313. https://doi.org/10.1080/23276665.2025.2453862

Reddick, C. G., Demir, T., & Perlman, B. J. (2025). A Categorical Framework of Ethical Leadership for Public Organizations: Testing a Multi-Dimensional Model of Local Government Managers. *Administration & Society*, *57*(1), 3–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997241291833

Saarniit, L., & Sarapuu, K. (2024). Corruption and country size. *Halduskultuur*, *22*(2). https://doi.org/10.32994/hk.v22i2.315

Saputra, R., Zaid, M., Wibowo, M. K. B., Hanum, W. N., & Triasari, D. (2025). Criminal Liability for Corruption of Bribery: Problems and Legal Reform. *Journal of Law and Legal Reform*, *6*(4), 2089–2140. Scopus. https://doi.org/10.15294/jllr.v6i4.22251

Suteki, S., Jalil, A., Natalis, A., & Rembulan, D. (2025). Community Engagement in Eradicating Corruption: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reward Models for Whistleblowers As a Regional Strategy. *Jurnal Pengabdian Hukum Indonesia (Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement) JPHI*, *8*(1), 23–92. https://doi.org/10.15294/jphi.v8i1.20440

Taylor, J., McDonnell, J., & Duong, H. (2022). Bureaucratic gaming: Causes and consequences for policy-making. *International Journal of Public Policy*, *16*(5/6), 253. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJPP.2022.127430

Thomann, E., Ioannidis, G., Zgaga, T., & Schwarz, F. (2025). Explaining Public Sector Corruption: The Hexagon Model. *Governance*, *38*(2), e70000. https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.70000

Uhl, A., Herrmann, C., & Treiber, K. H. (2025). Corruption: A situational action view. *Theory and Society*, *54*(1), 161–184. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-024-09590-3

Woodhouse, E. F. (2022). Accountability and corruption displacement: Evidence from Italy. *Journal of Public Policy*, *42*(4), 730–754. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X22000113

Wysmułek, I. (2024). Corruption in the public schools of Europe: A cross-national multilevel analysis of education system characteristics. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, *65*(1), 10–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/00207152221096841

Yates, A., & Graycar, A. (2020). Death by a Thousand Cuts: Recognizing, Reporting, and Responding to Corruption in Local Government. *Public Integrity*, *22*(1), 85–103. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2018.1534924

Yessenzholov, N., Kenzhetayeva, A., Ishimgaliyeva, A., Kalkhanova, A., Dyussembekova, M.,Kuandykov, N., & Nurkey, A. (2025). Assessing the impact of transparency in asset recovery on public trust: Evidence from Kazakhstan. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, *23*(3), 658–670. https://doi.org/10.21511/ppm.23(3).2025.47

Zahari, A. I., Said, J., Muhamad, N., & Ramly, S. M. (2024). Ethical culture and leadership for sustainability and governance in public sector organisations within the ESG framework. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, *10*(1), 100219. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joitmc.2024.100219

Zamboni, L. M. (2020). Expanding the theoretical boundaries of active representation: Clients' deservedness of service in the 911 emergency system. *Public Administration*, *98*(2), 465–479. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12624

Zhang, Y., Hung, W., Dong, H., & Chen, D. (2025). Public Employees' whistleblowing intention: Explanation by an adapted theory of planned behavior. *Public Administration*, *103*(1), 115–135. https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.13009