

# Religion and corruption prevention from the perspective of Islamic organizations

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## Abstract

This research seeks to elucidate the perspectives of Islamic organizations, specifically Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, on corruption and its prevention. This examination is necessitated by Indonesia's persistently high corruption index, which reflects the numerous issues faced by individuals lacking strong character and a religious basis for self-control. This investigation employed W. Richard Scott's institutional theory, which was delineated into three indicators: regulatory, normative, and cognitive cultural. This study adopted a descriptive qualitative method, utilizing NVivo 12 for data processing, to gather information from journals, websites, and books to bolster the case. NU categorizes corruption as a sin and an act of immorality, defined as the abuse of authority for personal or others' gain. Consequently, NU's preventive measures involve enhancing the role of Islamic boarding schools, moral education, the influence of ulama, strict sanctions, community engagement, and

a sense of responsibility. Furthermore, Muhammadiyah posits that corruption undermines social order, exacerbates inequality, and obstructs national progress, rendering it a significant crime that contravenes the principles of Islamic teachings, particularly those pertaining to trust, justice, and public welfare. Accordingly, Muhammadiyah's preventive measures include reinforcing monotheistic values through Islamic morals, promoting transparency and accountability in organizational governance, implementing Islamic-oriented anti-corruption education, enhancing the culture of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, and exemplifying *uswah hasanah*.

Urgensi penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan perspektif dalam konteks organisasi Islam, yaitu Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) dan Muhammadiyah, atas tindakan perilaku korupsi dan pencegahannya berdasarkan masing-masing pandangan setiap organisasi Islam. Pencegahan tersebut didasari oleh Indeks Korupsi yang masih sangat tinggi di Indonesia, yang merupakan cerminan masih banyaknya masalah pada setiap individu yang tidak memiliki karakter dan keyakinan agama yang kuat sebagai fondasi pengendalian diri. Artikel ini menggunakan teori institusional dari W.Richard Scott yang dirumuskan menjadi 3 indikator yaitu regulatif, normatif, kultural kognitif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pengolahan data menggunakan NVivo 12 untuk menjaring data dari jurnal, website, dan buku untuk memperkuat argumentasi. Hasilnya adalah bahwa Nahdlatul Ulama mengategorikan korupsi sebagai dosa dan maksiat, yaitu menyalahgunakan wewenang untuk memperkaya diri sendiri atau pihak lain. Maka pencegahan yang dilakukan oleh Nahdlatul Ulama adalah menguatkan peran pesantren, pendidikan moral, peran ulama, sanksi tegas, partisipasi umat, dan rasa tanggung jawab. Selain itu, dalam pandangan Muhammadiyah, korupsi merusak tatanan sosial, menambah ketimpangan, dan menghalangi kemajuan bangsa sehingga tindakan tersebut merupakan bentuk kejahatan besar yang bertentangan dengan prinsip-prinsip ajaran Islam, terutama terkait dengan amanah, keadilan, dan kesejahteraan umat. Maka pencegahan yang diberikan oleh Muhammadiyah adalah penguatan nilai tauhid dengan akhlak islami, transparansi dan akuntabilitas dalam pengelolaan organisasi, pendidikan anti korupsi berbasis Islam, penguatan budaya *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, dan keteladanan *uswah hasanah*.

**Keywords:** *Corruption; Islamic organizations; Muhammadiyah; Nahdlatul Ulama; prevention*

## Introduction

Corruption has become the most significant issue confronting Indonesia; it has been more prevalent over the past three years, with no encouraging signs of a quick solution.<sup>1</sup> Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) reported a significant rise in corruption cases in 2023, with 791 cases and 1,695 people identified as suspects by law enforcement officials.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the 2024 Integrity Assessment Survey (SPI)—released by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK)—unveiled that bribery and gratification persisted in more than 90% of ministries, institutions, and local government offices.<sup>3</sup> This discovery has confirmed that corruption remains pervasive in various government sectors despite various eradication efforts. Corruption includes activities such as bribery, nepotism, and abuse of power, which violate moral principles, undermine social harmony, and obstruct national development.<sup>4</sup> Figure 1 illustrates the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) in Indonesia over the past decade, from 2014 to 2024.

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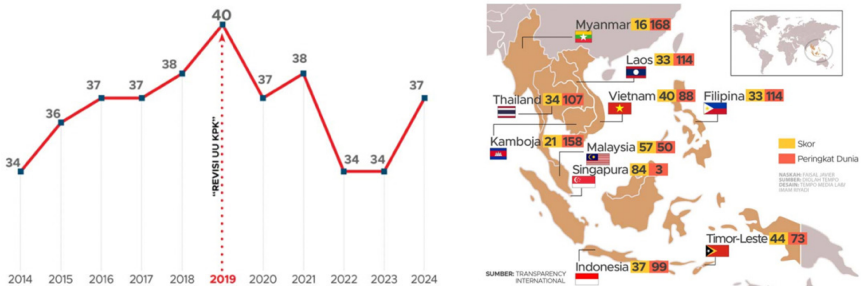
<sup>1</sup>Danang Kurniawan et al., “Analysis of the Anti-Corruption Movement Through Twitter Social Media: A Case Study of Indonesia,” *Advances in Digital Science, Advances in Intelligent Systems and Computing, Springer International Publishing*, Volume 1352 (2021): 298-308.

<sup>2</sup>Anisah, A., Lovadena, A., Atikahasri, H., Nurul, U., Peninjau, Q., Sunaryanto, A., & Juliantari, “Laporan Hasil Pemantauan Tren Korupsi Tahun 2023,” *Indonesia Corruption Watch*, 2024. <https://www.antikorupsi.org/sites/default/files/dokumen/Narasi%20Laporan%20Hasil%20Pemantauan%20Tren%20Korupsi%20Tahun%202023.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup>KPK, “Temuan SPI 2024: Suap Dan Gratifikasi Masih Terjadi Di Lebih Dari 90% Kementerian/Lembaga & Pemerintah Daerah.,” KPK, 2024. <https://www.kpk.go.id/id/ruang-informasi/berita/temuan-spi-2024-suap-dan-gratifikasi-masih-terjadi-di-lebih-dari-90-kementerianlembaga-pemerintah-daerah>,

<sup>4</sup>Faridah Abdul Jabbar, S., “Corruption: Delving into the Muddy Water through the Lens of Islam,” *Journal of Financial Crime*, Volume 20, Number 2 (2013): 139–147.

Figure 1. Corruption Perception Index (CPI) Graph of Indonesia<sup>5</sup>



ICW witnessed a rise in Indonesia’s CPI score following an assessment from the World Economic Forum (WEF). Indonesia’s CPI rose by 3 points in 2023. Indonesia earned a score of 37 among ASEAN countries, ranking it 99th globally in terms of corruption. The assessment was based on the number of corruption cases and the enforcement of anti-corruption measures, both of which remain significant concerns.<sup>6</sup>

A study conducted across 133 countries within the CPI framework found that the significance of religion to citizens could inhibit corruption-prevention efforts. European countries with a Christian and Catholic majority had a corruption index of 28%, signifying a moderate level of corruption.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, it is associated with countries with the largest Muslim populations globally. The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center (RISSC) report in *The Muslim 500, The World’s 500 Most Influential Muslims 2024*, indicates that this country had approximately 240.62 million Muslims, constituting 87% of the total population. The Muslim majority exerts substantial influence on Indonesia’s social, cultural, and

<sup>5</sup>Transparency.org,” How Does Your Country Measure Up On The Corruption Perceptions Index 2024?.” 2025. <https://www.transparency.org/en/index>,

<sup>6</sup>Tempo, “Indeks Persepsi Korupsi Indonesia 2024,” *Tempo*, 2025, <https://www.tempo.co/data/data/indeks-persepsi-korupsi-indonesia-2024-1208790>

<sup>7</sup>S. Douglas Beets, “Global Corruption and Religion: An Empirical Examination,” *Journal of Global Ethics*, Volume 3, Number 1 (2007): 69–85.

political spheres, which is expected to effectively mitigate corruption.<sup>8</sup> However, corruption remains widespread in Indonesia, especially within allegedly religious environments. One notable instance is the corruption case involving the procurement of goods and services for the hajj, in which KPK identified the Minister of Religious Affairs at the time, Suryadharma Ali, as a suspect in the alleged corruption within the hajj organization during the 2012–2013 fiscal year.<sup>9</sup> The corruption case involving the procurement of the Qur'an at the Ministry of Religion in 2011–2012 also exemplifies the abuse of authority in religious projects.

Despite a substantial Muslim population, monitoring corruption by civil society or community organizations in Indonesia remains inadequate. In Iran, the government has diminished civil society's influence, leading to public dissatisfaction and culminating in extensive protests against government corruption.<sup>10</sup> The inadequacy of civil society oversight is also apparent in Saudi Arabia. The public is excluded from monitoring corruption, while the Saudi kingdom offers security to government officials who disclose indications of corruption. Nonetheless, the reality is that the Saudi government comprises members of the royal family.<sup>11</sup> In this case, Noor M. Fayad and Hanadi Taher conducted an empirical study across

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<sup>8</sup>Rissc.jo, "The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre Is an Independent Research Entity Affiliated with the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought. The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought Is an International Islamic Non-Governmental, Independent Institute Headquartered in Amman, the Capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.," *The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre*, 2024. <https://rissc.jo/the-500-most-influential-muslims-in-the-world-2010/>

<sup>9</sup>BBC, "KPK Tetapkan Menteri Agama Sebagai Tersangka." BBC Indonesia, 2014. [https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita\\_indonesia/2014/05/140522\\_menteri\\_agama\\_tersangka\\_korupsi](https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2014/05/140522_menteri_agama_tersangka_korupsi),

<sup>10</sup>Ebrahim Abbasi, "Political Challenges and Crisis Management in the Islamic Republic of Iran: A Comprehensive Analysis," *Discover Global Society*, Volume 3, Number 1 (2025): 1-13.

<sup>11</sup>Ahmed A. Altawayan, "The Importance of Reinforcing the Rules against Corruption: Whistleblowing to Improve the Saudi Economic Environment for Saudi Vision 2030," *Arab Law Quarterly*, Volume 34, Number 1 (2020): 74–85.

the Middle East and North Africa from 2000 to 2020, categorizing Saudi Arabia as part of the high-corruption cluster, partly due to the absence of freedom of speech.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, Jerg Gutmann's prior research on the impact of market structure on corruption within religious organizations identified the challenges that prevent individuals from abusing their power for personal gain, as religion provides legitimacy and authority to the political regime. This research on corruption prevention employed a method proposed by Adam Smith, advocating that the government should restrict its effectiveness, since the state should not monopolize religion to mitigate competition among religious groups.<sup>13</sup>

A study by Robert E. Looney on the pervasive corruption in Iraq contends that religion has been adopted as a political instrument to fragment authority, which is populated by party affiliates, rendering corruption unavoidable. Moreover, numerous Islamic organizations in Iraq possess distinct interests in governmental authority and exert influence on other nations, aiming to dominate Iraq's resources. This study posits that for Iraq to eradicate corruption, it must eliminate the influence of the United States, as this interference undermines the nation's political stability.<sup>14</sup> Andrew Koppelman's work on the corruption of religion and the Establishment Clause emphasizes that those who introduce religion into contemporary state matters risk losing their credibility. This study argues that religion is valuable and can be adversely affected if the state

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<sup>12</sup>Nour M. Fayad and Hanadi Taher, "Impact of Corruption on Economic Growth in the MENA Region: An Empirical Analysis from 2000-2020," *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, Volume 8, Number 5 (2024): 2394-2406.

<sup>13</sup>Jerg Gutmann, "Believe, But Verify? The Effect of Market Structure on Corruption in Religious Organizations," *Kyklos*, Volume 68, Number 2 (2015): 153-164.

<sup>14</sup>Robert E. Looney, "Reconstruction and Peacebuilding Under Extreme Adversity: The Problem of Pervasive Corruption in Iraq," *International Peacekeeping*, Volume 15, Number 3 (2008): 424-440.

attempts to manipulate it. The paper suggests that the optimal strategy is for the government to adopt a neutral position toward religion.<sup>15</sup>

A study by Patrick Flavin and Richard Ledet on religion and government corruption in the American States revealed that a weak correlation between religion and corruption. Empirical studies found only a marginal association between corruption and religion in the United States. States in the United States with a Catholic majority exhibit elevated levels of corruption.<sup>16</sup>

Subsequently, a study by Kilkon Ko et al. indicates that an inadequate comprehension of religion and a lack of adherence to its teachings are primary contributors to corruption. Consequently, religion can significantly safeguard institutions against corruption, particularly for individuals in positions of authority. The study advocates modernizing bureaucratic reform systems by reinforcing religiously-based values to eradicate and prevent corruption.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, a study by Bukhari Ali et al. on the preemptive approach of ulama in Aceh to Eradicating Corruption recommends that clerics in Aceh identify the primary cause of corruption as insufficient religious understanding, leading to an excessive attachment to materialism. This study highlights collaboration between Acehese clerics and the Acehese government through the organization of religious studies and forums that involve politicians and the community.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, research conducted by Muhammad Ar et al. found that

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<sup>15</sup>Andrew Koppelman, "Corruption of Religion and the Establishment Clause," *William & Mary Law Review*, Volume 50, Number 6, (2008): 1831-1935.

<sup>16</sup>Patrick Flavin and Richard Ledet, "Religion and Government Corruption in the American States," *Public Integrity*, Volume 15, Number 4 (2013): 329-344.

<sup>17</sup>Kilkon Ko and Seong-Gin Moon, "The Relationship between Religion and Corruption: Are the Proposed Causal Links Empirically Valid?," *International Review of Public Administration*, Volume 19, Number 1 (2014): 44-62.

<sup>18</sup>Bukhari Ali et al., "The Preemptive Approach of Ulama in Aceh to Eradicating Corruption," *El-Mashlahah*, Volume 14, Number 2 (2024): 361-380. \\uc0\\u8221} {\\i} El-Mashlahah} 14, no. 2 (2024

the dayah (traditional Islamic boarding school) model implemented in Aceh, as a local curriculum that adheres to Islamic values, can enhance character development and significantly influence the community's moral framework, thereby preventing corruption.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Indrianawati Usman's research on corruption in corporate environments found that business pressures, inadequate regulations, and a permissive industrial culture can contribute to it.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, Gabreilla Mokoginita asserted that corruption prevention within an organizational framework involves internal, social, managerial, and transcendental controls.<sup>21</sup> It parallels the study by Caijie Zhu et al., claiming that corruption often arises in philanthropic organizations due to inadequate internal and external controls. Hence, preventative methods encompass strong internal controls and strict external media scrutiny, potentially diminishing the connection between organizational stakeholders and executive leaders.<sup>22</sup> This claim is corroborated in Hilman Latief's book on Islamic philanthropic politics in Indonesia, which indicates that Islamic or nationalist political parties engage in philanthropic organizational activities, thereby promoting vested interests.<sup>23</sup>

Prior research has concentrated on corruption prevention through governmental control or authority limitations, insufficient internal

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<sup>19</sup>Muhammad Ar et al., "Integrating Anti-Corruption Education in Acehese Dayahs: A Moral-Pedagogical Model for Character Formation," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, Volume 13, Number 2 (2025): 1581-1606.

<sup>20</sup>Indrianawati Usman, "Dampak Korupsi Di Sektor Konstruksi Indonesia Pada Industri Dan Kinerja Organisasi," *Kompas*, Desember 2024. <https://unair.ac.id/dampak-korupsi-di-sektor-konstruksi-indonesia-pada-industri-dan-kinerja-organisasi/>.

<sup>21</sup>Gabreilla Mokoginita, "Optimalisasi Peran Organisasi Masyarakat Dalam Pencegahan Dan Pemberantasan Korupsi," *Lex Et Societatis*, Volume VII, Number 5 (2019): 63-70.

<sup>22</sup>Caijie Zhu et al., "Research on the Relationship between Corporate Philanthropy and Executive Hidden Corruption," *International Review of Economics & Finance*, Volume 103, Number 104488 (2025): 1-14.

<sup>23</sup>Hilman Latief, *Politik Filantropi Islam di Indonesia: Negara, Pasar, dan Masyarakat Sipil*, Cetakan 2 (Penerbit Ombak, 2013).

and external oversight, including civil society involvement, ineffective management, and bureaucratic regulatory reform, all of which have contributed to the government's inability to eliminate corruption. Moreover, previous studies have not examined the perspectives of Islamic organizations on corruption prevention, particularly in Iraq, where their involvement may present a conflict of interest, and in Saudi Arabia. Civil society's influence on corruption oversight is diminished in this predominantly Muslim nation. This study, in contrast to prior work, emphasizes the viewpoints and functions of corruption as perceived by Islamic organizations, including Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah. Every business has a distinct approach to detecting and addressing corruption. This study examined how NU and Muhammadiyah confront this issue. The emphasis on these two Islamic groups arises from their substantial contributions to Indonesia in politics, education, and health. Moreover, both organizations possess substantial followings.

Moreover, Pranab Bardhan defined corruption as the exploitation of public office for personal benefit, in which an individual entrusted by the community misappropriates resources for personal enrichment. He asserted that corruption obstructs a nation's development by distorting resource allocation and undermining the legitimacy of institutions.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, J.S. Nye believes that corruption constitutes a willful violation of one's duties for personal benefit, manifested through financial gain or position, with specific instances including nepotism, bribery, and abuse, particularly prevalent within governmental spheres.<sup>25</sup> Individuals who engage in corrupt criminal behavior may not necessarily be detached from their religious beliefs.

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<sup>24</sup>Pranab Bardhan, "Corruption and Development: A Review of Issues," *Journal of Economic Literature*, Volume 35, Number 3 (1997):1320-1346.

<sup>25</sup>J S Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis," *The American Political Science Review*, Volume 61, Number 2 (2025):417-427.

Furthermore, Durkheim believes that religion is a belief system encompassing activities, principles, and rituals deemed sacred. Moreover, religion can influence an individual's morality and make them more ethical due to its doctrinal teachings.<sup>26</sup> In this context, Steve Bruce pointed out that religion encompasses beliefs, acts, facilitators, and obstacles for an individual. It can serve as a comprehensive guide to life, offering a purpose that benefits both the Creator and people.<sup>27</sup> Throughout history, religion has established an organizational structure to consolidate its adherents, incorporating religious, social, educational, health, and communal initiatives.

Subsequently, Hasan Basri et al. asserted that, from an Islamic perspective, religious organizations bear a moral obligation to propagate religious knowledge within society and uphold religious teachings. The organization is inherently structured to demonstrate that it depends heavily on deliberation and consensus.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, this perspective suggests that religious institutions serve as venues for cultivating individuals' ethical and moral ambitions and as instruments for disseminating religious teachings with truth.<sup>29</sup>

This study employs W. Richard Scott's institutional theory to examine the perspectives and strategies for preventing corruption of the religious organizations NU and Muhammadiyah. W. Richard Scott asserted that the

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<sup>26</sup>Robert Launay, "Defining Religion: Durkheim and Weber Compared," *Mdpi Journal Religions*, Volume 13, Number 2 (2022):89-102. we must first define what is properly understood as a religion". Almost simultaneously, Max Weber would begin the long section on the sociology of religion in his unfinished work *Economy and Society* by insisting, "To define 'religion', to say what it is, is not possible at the start of a presentation such as this. Definition can be attempted, if at all, only at the conclusion of the study" (1978, p. 399

<sup>27</sup>Steve Bruce, "Defining Religion: A Practical Response," *International Review of Sociology*, Volume 21, Number 1 (2011): 107-120.

<sup>28</sup>Hasan Basri et al., "Accounting and Accountability in Religious Organizations: An Islamic Contemporary Scholars' Perspective," *Gadjah Mada International Journal of Business*, Volume 18, Number 2 (2016): 207-230. two ulamas (mufti

<sup>29</sup>Inayatillah et al., "The History of Moderate Islam in Indonesia and Its Influence on the Content of National Education," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun*, Volume 17, Number 2 (2022): 213-226.

significance of this idea lies in the necessity for organizations to uphold moral and social legitimacy, particularly for Islamic organizations that derive legitimacy from their adherents. The approach encompasses three indicators: regulative (formal rules, laws, and regulations), normative (prevention and promotion of moral and ethical behavior), and cognitive cultural (beliefs and symbols of social support).<sup>30</sup> The study identifies the regulative indicators of NU and Muhammadiyah as fatwas and legal rules regarding their perspectives on corruption. The normative and cognitive cultural indicators within both organizations encompass measures implemented to combat corruption, beginning with fundamental actions such as cadre development, moral education, and the influence of organizational leaders in fostering community ethics.

### **Nahdlatul Ulama's Perspective**

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia's most prominent Islamic organization, firmly opposes corruption. NU considers corruption a conduct that contradicts Islamic teachings and prioritizes justice, trustworthiness, and high morality. Corruption, encompassing abuse of power, bribery, and manipulation of state assets, is defined as an act that damages social order, destroys public trust, and causes misery to society, especially the vulnerable. NU teaches that Islam prioritizes honesty and transparency in all aspects of life, including personal and governmental affairs.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, corruption is regarded as a major sin that must be combated by all Muslims, both individually and collectively.

As part of the prevention efforts, NU encourages every element of the nation to diligently fulfill their responsibilities and refrain from behavior

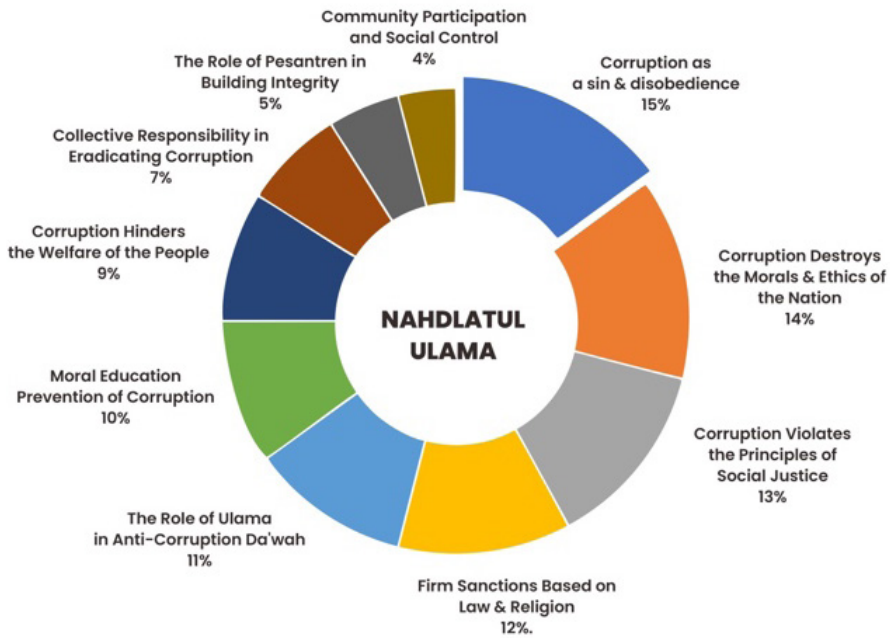
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<sup>30</sup>W. Richard Scott, "The Adolescence of Institutional Theory." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Volume 32, Number 4 (1987): 493-511.

<sup>31</sup>Sari Widowati, Fatwa Nu Tentang Hukuman Mati Bagi Koruptor Perspektif Fikih Jinayah," *Jurnal Agama dan Hak Azazi Manusia*, Volume 2, Number 2 (2013): 239-260.

that can harm others. NU also emphasizes the significance of moral and spiritual education in shaping the nation’s character and enforcing the law fairly to eradicate corruption through various approaches, such as education, preaching, and active participation in government.<sup>32</sup> NU is committed to helping create an environment free of corruption and to encouraging development grounded in noble Islamic values, specifically justice, welfare, and prosperity for all people.

Figure 3. Nahdlatul Ulama’s Views on Corruption



Source: Data Processed On NVivo 12 Plus

<sup>32</sup>Dedi Ratno, “Aspek Sanksi Pidana Dalam Korupsi Korporasi Pandangan Fuqaha Dan Undang-Undang Di Indonesia,” *Integratif | Jurnal Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Volume 2, Number 1 (2023):17-30.

NU defines corruption as a sin and act of disobedience. It views an individual who commits corruption as lacking *al-Tawazun* (balance), which can be interpreted as a profound betrayal (*ghulul*), due to the absence of personal boundaries, resulting in corrupt actions through the abuse of authority to enrich themselves or others.<sup>33</sup>

Islamic criminal experts Abdul Qadir, Abdul Aziz Amir, and Ahmad Fathi Bahnasi asserted that corruption crimes classified as *ta'zir* may incur penalties commensurate with their severity. They argued that they can be subjected to the following laws. First is temporary or permanent imprisonment. Regarding the second, Umar bin Khatab imposed exile or banishment. Third, the punishment of removal from office applies when an official is proven to have abused their authority. The fourth refers to the punishment of asset confiscation and sanctions in the form of financial fines.<sup>34</sup> The hadith of Rasulullah PBUH elucidates the severity of the sin of corruption. Perpetrators will face consequences in both this life and the afterlife. They will be burdened with the wealth they have taken unlawfully and must endure painful torments.<sup>35</sup> The Prophet Muhammad PBUH stated:

قَوَالِذِي نَفْسٍ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ لَا يَغْلُ أَحَدُكُمْ مِنْهَا شَيْئًا إِلَّا جَاءَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَحْمِلُهُ عَلَى عُنُقِهِ إِنْ كَانَ بَعِيرًا جَاءَ بِهِ لَهُ رُغَاءٌ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ بَقْرَةً جَاءَ بِهَا لَهَا حُورٌ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ شَاةً جَاءَ بِهَا تَيْعَرٌ

*“By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, none of you takes property without its right (corruption), except that on the Day of Resurrection he will carry*

<sup>33</sup>Erviana Iradah Ulya and Azalia Wardha Aziz, “Tawazun Sebagai Prinsip Moderasi Beragama Perspektif Mufasir Moderat,” *Ulumul Qur’an: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur’an Dan Tafsir*, Volume 4, Number 2 (2024): 290-308.

<sup>34</sup>Saidah, “Korupsi Dalam Perspektif Hadis Ahkam (Studi Kritis Pada Sanad Dan Matan Hadis),” *Jurnal Hukum Diktum*, Volume 13, Number 1 (2015): 75-87.

<sup>35</sup>Ahmad Muntaha, “Hukuman Bagi Koruptor Di Akhirat,” *NU Online*, 2023. <https://islam.nu.or.id/syariah/hukuman-bagi-koruptor-di-akhirat-6Eslk>.

it on his neck; if the corruption is a camel, he will carry it and make the sound of the camel; if the corruption is a cow, he will carry the cow and moo; and if the property he took is a goat, then the goat will bleat.” (HR Al-Bukhari).<sup>36</sup>

The Hadith, narrated by Bukhari, elucidates that corruption exists at varying levels. Yusuf al-Qardhawi reinforces the interpretation of the hadith narrated in Sahih Bukhari, asserting that it encompasses the concept of *maja*, which signifies the magnitude of the reward for corrupt people. This hadith remains pertinent today, positively influencing social improvement by raising awareness.<sup>37</sup>

NU fosters moral and character development in its corruption efforts by providing education at Islamic boarding schools and universities, positioning itself as a pioneer in the moral recovery and restructuring of Indonesian youth through early anti-corruption education.

Ethics in the Qur'an and Hadith related to the prevention of corruption are rooted in moral and spiritual values, emphasizing justice, *amanah* (trust), honesty, and transparency. Islam teaches that every individual, especially those entrusted with power or authority, should uphold their integrity and refrain from abusing others' rights for personal gain. In the Qur'an and Hadith, ethics are grounded in religious teachings, emphasizing the importance of *amanah* (trust), avoiding injustice, and promoting justice.<sup>38</sup> The Hadith narrated in HR. Tirmidhi is as follows:

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<sup>36</sup>Dien Muhammad Ismal Bansika and Charles Charles, “Pendidikan Anti Korupsi Menurut Al-Qur'an Dan Hadits (Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Anti Korupsi Dalam Tinjauan Qur'an Dan Hadist),” *Educational : Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan & Pengajaran*, Volume 4, Number 4 (2024): 402-407.

<sup>37</sup>Moh Hilmi Badrut Tamam and Andris Nurita, “Korupsi dalam Perspektif Hadis Imam Bukhari,” *El Nubuwwah: Jurnal Studi Hadis*,” Volume 1, Number 2 (2023): 206-233.

<sup>38</sup>Jannatul Firdausiyah and Ainur Rofiq Sofa, “Relevansi Al-Qur'an dan Hadits Dalam Pembentukan Nilai Sosial, Etika Politik, dan Pengambilan Keputusan di Era Kontemporer: Kajian Terhadap Pengaruhnya Dalam Kehidupan Sosial, Kebijakan Publik, Demokrasi, Kepemimpinan, Hukum, Ekonomi, Pendidikan, dan Teknologi,” *Jurnal Budi Pekerti Agama Islam*, Volume 3, Number 1 (2024): 102-131.

لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الرَّاشِيَ وَالْمُرْتَشِيَ

“*Rasulullah PBUH cursed bribe givers and bribe takers.*” (HR. Tirmidzi)<sup>39</sup>

Hadith, “The Messenger of Allah cursed the giver of bribes and the recipient of bribes.” Tirmidhi reminded Muslims about how bad the practice of bribery (*rasuah*) is from a religious perspective. Bribery is an act that involves giving a sum of money or goods to influence someone’s decision or action, often to gain illegitimate personal gain.<sup>40</sup> In Islam, bribery is considered a form of injustice, undermining integrity, transparency, and trust in society. This practice often oppresses the weak and leads to the abuse of power. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH strictly condemned both the giver and the receiver of bribes, indicating that both were guilty and cursed by Allah.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, this hadith underscores the significance of upholding justice and honesty in every aspect of life, especially in social and economic transactions. Bribery harms the recipient and disrupts the social and economic order. This practice exacerbates social inequality and causes injustice, as decisions influenced by bribery do not reflect the truth and public interest, but rather personal interests.<sup>42</sup> Consequently, Islam strongly advises its adherents to avoid all forms of deviation that can damage morals and harm society.

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<sup>39</sup>Anis Nabilah Kamarulzaman et al., “Gejala Rasuah Dan Implikasi Terhadap Masyarakat Malaysia Menurut Perspektif Syarak: The Symptoms Of Corruption And Implications For The Malaysian Community According To The Shariah Perspective,” *Journal of Fatwa Management and Research*, Volume 28, Number 2 (2023): 87–103.

<sup>40</sup>Ayu Ningsi et al., “Peran Pendidikan Anti-Korupsi dalam Membangun Karakter Mahasiswa di Institut Ilmu Al-Qur’an An-Nur Yogyakarta,” *Journal Lppm Unindra*, Volume 9, Number 2 (2024): 282-288.

<sup>41</sup>Sri Hafizatul Wahyuni Zain et al., “Peran Pendidikan Islam dalam Pembentukan Karakter Masyarakat Berbasis Nilai-Nilai Al-Qur’an dan Hadis,” *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Volume 2, Number 4 (2024):199-215.

<sup>42</sup>Milatus Shofiyah, “Dampak Korupsi Bagi Masyarakat Dan Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam,” *Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam El-Qist*, Volume 6, Number 01 (2023):1-14.

## Corruption Prevention

According to NU, five elements can be optimized to strengthen its capacity to prevent corruption, as shown in Figure 3. First is the role of Islamic boarding schools in building integrity. These schools, as traditional NU educational institutions, play a vital role in cultivating students' character by teaching religious knowledge and instilling the values of honesty, simplicity, and trustworthiness. Thus, Islamic boarding schools have emerged as a strong moral fortress for producing an anti-corruption generation.

Second is moral education. NU can integrate anti-corruption moral education into its curriculum through formal and non-formal educational institutions. The instillation of these values must be carried out continuously, not only through theory but also through practice and examples from educators and Kiai.

Third is the role of Ulama in anti-corruption preaching. Ulama occupy a central role as models and conveyors of religious messages to the community. Ulama can continuously remind the community about the prohibition of corruption in Islam, the consequences for perpetrators in this world and the hereafter, and the significance of upholding the values of justice and honesty.

Fourth is related to strict sanctions based on law and religion. NU supports strict law enforcement against perpetrators of corruption. In Islam, sanctions (*hudud* or *ta'zir*) are applied to deter and maintain social order. Strict sanctions, both in positive law and religion, are expected to reduce a person's intention to commit corruption.

Fifth, community participation and social control is also encouraged by NU in the social supervision of corrupt practices. Every Nahdliyin citizen is responsible for participating in efforts to eradicate corruption through reporting, advocacy, or anti-corruption campaigns. Furthermore, shared responsibility for eradicating corruption is vital. It is a shared task for all

elements of society. With its extensive network and large mass base, NU can serve as the driving force behind a massive, sustainable anti-corruption movement. It aligns with the principle of *ukhuwah wathaniyah* (national brotherhood) and *ukhuwah basyariyah* (human brotherhood) carried by NU.

In addition, NU scholars argued that *tawassuth* and *I'tidal* (moderation and balance) attitudes are the spearheads for forming Nahdiiyin's character, as a firm and consistent attitude will prevent deviations. NU asserted that corruption equates with *risywah* (bribery) because of its association with positions, which is not entirely correct. Bribery and similar acts are integral components of corruption. Nonetheless, these acts are significantly larger and more complex when compared to *risywah* (bribery) as contained in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 188: "Do not eat up the wealth of others in a false way, and do not bring the matter to the judge so that you can eat up the wealth of others." The hadith from at-Tarmizi Ibn Majah and Ahmad implies, "Allah curses the briber and the bribe taker."<sup>43</sup>

Character education that prioritizes *tawassuth* and *I'tidal* should be interpreted as a secular practice, as it embodies a balanced approach that avoids extreme positions and aligns with integrity under Islamic law. This pattern is regarded within the context of religion, especially NU, as a correct and authentic attitude because, methodologically, it can be accounted for from the Messenger of Allah, PBUH, who received revelation for humanity until the present day.<sup>44</sup>

Comparison of *tawassuth* in everyday life is reflected in refraining from comparing individuals or groups when interacting and communicating,

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<sup>43</sup>Nazar Nurdin, Abu Hapsin, "Nu Dan Sumbangan Untuk Indonesia (Argumen-Argumen Ideologis Tentang Pidana Mati Pelaku Korupsi)," *Jurnal Iqtisad: Reconstruction of Justice and Welfare for Indonesia*, Volume 7, Number 2 (2020): 124-141.

<sup>44</sup>Ahmad Faza Muzakky, "Implementasi At-Tawassuth Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Sebagai Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Di Mi Khozainul Ulum Bojoasri Kali Tengah Lamongan," *Akademika*, Volume 10, Number 1 (2016): 29-41.

accepting other people's opinions, and prioritizing tolerance toward others. Accordingly, if a person embodies the attitude of *tawassuth* in community life, a noble character will emerge, as *tawassuth* means the middle. It implies that an individual with this attitude will live a peaceful life, maintaining a neutral stance and viewing matters rationally and moderately. Muslims, as adherents of their faith, must act honestly and be sincere to everyone; with the attitude of *I'tidal*, one can avoid excessive behavior that can damage the image of religion and harm oneself and others. Hence, this perspective encourages respect for differences and diversity, both within internal religion and across interfaith contexts. In everyday life, *I'tidal* teaches people to assess situations impartially, to adopt wisdom in decision-making, and to sustain a balance between spiritual and material needs.<sup>45</sup>

### **Muhammadiyah's Perspective**

Muhammadiyah, as an Islamic organization grounded in moderate Islamic teachings, takes a strong stance against corruption. Considering that Muhammadiyah is a socio-religious Islamic organization, its characteristics are formed by the diverse religious, cultural, political, and economic activities in which it engages the community.<sup>46</sup> For Muhammadiyah, corruption is a significant crime that contradicts the principles of Islamic teachings, especially those related to trust, justice, and the welfare of the people. Islam teaches that every individual, especially leaders, must maintain integrity and carry out their responsibilities honestly and transparently. Corruption, which involves abusing power or state assets for personal gain, is considered a form of betrayal of the trust bestowed by Allah and society.<sup>47</sup> In Muhammadiyah's

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<sup>45</sup>Yesi Arikarani et al., "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Dalam Penguatan Moderasi Beragama," *Edification Journal: Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Volume 7, Number 1 (2024): 71-88.

<sup>46</sup>Zuly Qodir et al., "Muhammadiyah Identity and Muslim Public Good: Muslim Practices in Java," *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, Volume 19, Number 1 (2021): 133-146. \\ uc0\\u8221{ \\i{International Journal of Islamic Thought} 19, no. 1 (2021

<sup>47</sup>Ilham, "Strategi Melawan Korupsi Dari Jalur Kultural," *MUHAMMADIYAH.OR.ID*,

view, corruption damages social order, exacerbates inequality, and hinders national progress, necessitating urgent eradication.<sup>48</sup>

As part of its efforts to combat corruption, Muhammadiyah invites Muslims to uphold the values of justice and truth in everyday life, at the levels of the individual, family, and community.<sup>49</sup> The organization also underscores the importance of moral and ethical education in developing a strong character that remains resilient against worldly temptations, such as corruption. Muhammadiyah encourages every element of the nation to actively participate in maintaining integrity and advancing the country through legitimate means, in accordance with Islamic teachings. By implementing strong principles of justice and morality, Muhammadiyah aspires to create a society free of corruption and toward a more equitable, prosperous life.<sup>50</sup>

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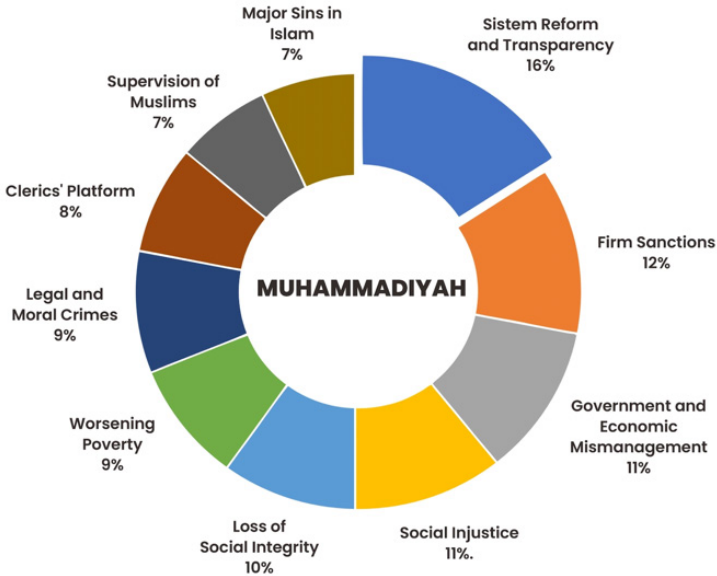
YOGYAKARTA, 2025. <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2022/02/strategi-melawan-korupsi-dari-jalur-kultural/>

<sup>48</sup>Idem.

<sup>49</sup>Tinuk Dwi Cahyani and Sholahuddin Al-Fatih, "Peran Muhammadiyah Dalam Pencegahan Dan Pemberantasan Tindak Pidana Korupsi Di Kota," *Justitia Jurnal Hukum*, Volume 4, Number 2 (2020): 279-295.

<sup>50</sup>Suara Muhammadiyah, "Fikih Anti Korupsi Dan Money Politik Dalam Pandangan Muhammadiyah," *Suara Muhammadiyah*, Edisi 227, 2023. <https://web.suaramuhammadiyah.id/2023/09/01/fikih-anti-korupsi-dan-money-politik-dalam-pandangan-muhammadiyah/>

Figure 4. Muhammadiyah's View on Corruption



Source: Data Processed on NVivo 12 Plus

From Muhammadiyah's perspective, system reform and transparency are critical strategic steps in preventing corruption. Muhammadiyah asserted that a fair and transparent system is fundamental for creating a clean and responsible government. Therefore, a government system that is honest and free of corruption must be supported by clear policies, transparent procedures, and strict oversight. System reform includes structural changes in the management of power and resources that not only focus on effectiveness but also prioritize honesty, justice, and the welfare of the people. In this case, Muhammadiyah invites Muslims to support policies aimed at eradicating corruption and encouraging the creation of a government system that is trustworthy, clean, and accountable.

In addition, transparency is critical to preventing corruption.

Muhammadiyah has emphasized that all actions undertaken by leaders and public officials must be open to public scrutiny to prevent the abuse of authority. This transparency includes the management of the state budget, policy-making, and decision-making that engages the public. Transparency enables people to monitor and control the government's operations, thereby reducing the incidence of corruption. Muhammadiyah advocates for Muslims to actively maintain a transparent system, prioritize honesty, and avoid all forms of abuse of power, both in private and public life.

Al-Siyasah Al-Syar'iyah is a principle of Islamic governance that highlights piety, justice, and accountability as key elements in combating corruption. This principle integrates ethical and moral values derived from Islamic teachings into governance practices. Al-Siyasah Al-Syar'iyah refers to the political framework or policies governed by Sharia law. This concept pertains to governmental policies or actions taken by the ruler for the welfare of the populace, even if not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith, provided they do not conflict with Sharia principles.

Islam emphasizes the need for internal morals in combating corruption. Muslims are encouraged to develop a strong sense of responsibility to God, serving as a deterrent even in circumstances with a low likelihood of detection.<sup>51</sup> Islam has advocated proactive measures to prevent corruption, such as promoting justice, accountability, and transparency in governance. Islam also stresses the significance of ethical behavior and integrity among individuals.<sup>52</sup> Islamic teachings promote the detection and punishment of corrupt practices to maintain social order and justice, including legal and moral consequences for individuals convicted of corruption.

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<sup>51</sup>Waled Younes E. Alazzabi et al., "Corruption and Control from the Perspective of Islam," *Journal of Financial Crime*, Volume 27, Number 2 (2020): 355-368.

<sup>52</sup>Salah Ud Din et al., "Combating Corruption Based on Al-Siyasah al-Syar'iyah Perspective: A Literature Review," *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, Volume 40, Number 4 (2024): 776-807.

Corruption constitutes a substantial issue faced by the Indonesian nation, despite its status as the country with the largest Muslim population. Corruption cases involving state officials, politicians, and law enforcement officers prove corrupt practices have taken root in society's government and social systems. As one of Indonesia's most prominent Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah has a strategic position in addressing this issue from theological, social, and public policy aspects. This analysis investigated Muhammadiyah's perspective on corruption through the lens of the Islamic Organization Perspective, highlighting the role of Islamic organizations in building morality, social institutions, and policy influence.

In the book *Anti-Corruption Fiqh: Muhammadiyah Ulama Perspective*, it is stated that corruption has resulted in poverty, ignorance, and decline. Consequently, eradicating corruption is urgent (*al-hajat al-dharuriyah*) and must be carried out systematically and simultaneously to achieve public welfare, prosperity, and social justice.<sup>53</sup>

### **Corruption Prevention**

Muhammadiyah defines corruption as the unlawful abuse of authority, position, and mandate to obtain personal or group benefits detrimental to the public interest. If this practice persists, it will adversely impact the order of life, leading to poverty, ignorance, and deterioration.<sup>54</sup> In this regard, Muhammadiyah has proposed five strategies for corruption prevention, as depicted in Figure 3. The first strategy is strengthening the value of monotheism through Islamic morals. Muhammadiyah underscores the necessity for its cadres and members to maintain a consciousness of divine

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<sup>53</sup>Syamsul Anwar., "Korupsi Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam." *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum*, Volume 1, Number 15, (2018): 14-31.

<sup>54</sup>Ilham, "Islam Anti Dengan Segala Tindak-Tindakan Korupsi!," MUHAMMADIYAH. OR.ID, BANDUNG, 2023. <https://muhammadiyah.or.id/2022/11/islam-anti-dengan-segala-tindak-tindakan-korupsi/>

oversight (*muraqabah*) by reinforcing the principles of monotheism and Islamic morals. This principle mandates that all actions and behaviors within the organization be directed toward honesty, responsibility, and fairness, without favoring personal interests. Second is the notion of transparency and accountability in organizational management, which Muhammadiyah highlights through the dissemination of financial records to all members and the establishment of an independent internal and external auditing system. Community funds, whether alms, *zakat*, *waqf*, or education funds, must adhere to Islamic sharia principles to prevent corruption.

Third, anti-corruption education is grounded in Islamic principles. Muhammadiyah believes that the fundamental basis for combating corruption is Islamic education. Consequently, anti-corruption education is essential, beginning with the emphasis on the principles of *Amanah* (trustworthiness), *Shiddiq* (righteousness), *Fathanah* (faithfulness), and *Tabligh* (discipline). Additionally, anti-corruption teaching is integrated into the formal education system, cultivating a culture throughout schools, Islamic boarding schools, and universities. It will promote a clean, transparent, and accountable governance framework. Fourth is Reinforcing the Culture of *Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar* (prohibiting wrongdoing). The culture upheld by Muhammadiyah serves as an instrument for mutual reinforcement and social regulation within the organization. Emphasizing oversight will deter the abuse of authority and power. In this setting, Muhammadiyah, representing progressive Islam, endeavors to establish a cohesive and virtuous society. Fifth is the notion of Exemplary *Uswah Hasanah* (virtuous character). From this perspective, the significance of *Uswah Hasanah* is that it will cultivate a robust culture of integrity, not only through legal regulations but also by instilling a societal norm that rejects the abuse of trust, thus preventing corruption at its roots. In this context, the role of Muhammadiyah figures is crucial in convincing the public that prioritizing the principle of *uswah*

hasanah is important in daily life, especially to prevent corruption through the da'wah media owned by Muhammadiyah.

Muhammadiyah, as a modern Islamic movement, always emphasizes the importance of Islamic values in the life of the nation and the state. On various occasions, this organization has repeatedly asserted that corruption contradicts Islamic teachings. Corruption harms the country economically, undermines social order, and hinders development. In Muhammadiyah's view, corruption constitutes a betrayal of the trust and responsibility bestowed, as highlighted in the Qur'an:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا  
فَرِيقًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

*"Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly, nor deliberately bribe authorities in order to devour a portion of others' property, knowing that it is a sin." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 188)<sup>55</sup>*

In addition, the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH also emphasizes the dangers of corruption:

*"Rasulullah PBUH cursed bribe givers and bribe takers according to the law." (HR. Abu Dawud)<sup>56</sup>*

Muhammadiyah's strategy for eradicating corruption is both normative and transformative. It upholds anti-corruption values through education, preaching, and institutional strengthening. It also seeks to instill awareness of the significance of integrity and honesty through educational institutions from elementary to tertiary levels. Various Muhammadiyah schools and

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<sup>55</sup>Yasir Arafat Arman and Mohammad Faruq Azam, "Combating Corruption in Bangladesh: An Unexplored Framework in Anti-Corruption Strategies," *Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science*, Volume 2, Number 1 (2025):194-203.

<sup>56</sup>Ikhsan Gasali and UIN Alauddin Makasar. "Studi Otentisitas Pemaknaan Hadits Tentang Larangan Gratifikasi," *Jurnal Hukum dan Ekonomi Syariah*, Volume 07, Number 1 (2019): 152-174.

universities include these moral values in their curriculum to cultivate a strong character in students, equipping them to encounter the challenges of the modern world. Islam underscores the significance of character formation through moral and virtuous education from an early age. This internal moral compass is deemed essential in preventing corrupt behavior.<sup>57</sup>

The book *Anti-Corruption Fiqh: Perspektif Ulama Muhammadiyah* outlines several strategic steps to prevent and eradicate corruption. Initially, it sought to deconstruct the culture that perpetuates corruption. It signifies changing public perception. The public must be educated that corruption is an unacceptable aspect of culture, particularly the erosion of the cult and paternalistic culture that frequently protects perpetrators of corruption. Additionally, the practice of gift-giving should be abolished, particularly for public officials, as it may lead to conflicts of interest. Third is enhancing supervision: the community and government must continuously strengthen oversight of the government through existing mechanisms. These steps include interrelated cultural, legal, educational, and social approaches to create an environment intolerant of corruption. Involving all elements of society can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of corruption eradication operations.

## **Conclusion**

The high corruption index in Indonesia indicates that many individuals maintain strong character and religious beliefs as a basis for self-discipline, despite the nation being home to the largest Muslim population globally at 87%. Consequently, the anti-corruption perspective and approach of Islamic organizations, including NU and Muhammadiyah, are exceedingly relevant and urgent. Due to their substantial membership and wide

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<sup>57</sup>Idem.

institutional networks, these organizations can strategically contribute to both religious education and the fostering of anti-corruption values within the community.

Corruption is perceived as a multifaceted issue intricately embedded within political, legal, and social frameworks, extending to the most fundamental level, specifically, the village. It is further intensified by inadequate internal and external controls within organizations. A comprehensive approach that includes individual moral strengthening, education, law enforcement, transparent and accountable system reform, the exemplary role of religious leaders, and community engagement, as advocated by NU and Muhammadiyah, may help prevent corruption. Moreover, Islamic teachings that underscore honesty, trustworthiness, justice, and the instilling of strong Islamic morals are essential to an individual's character and serve to prevent corruption.

Accordingly, it is recommended that a comprehensive empirical study be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the corruption-prevention initiatives implemented by NU and Muhammadiyah and to determine the influence of each organization's programs.

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