

## A Prophetic Leadership Strategy for Fostering an Anti-Corruption Culture in Schools

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### ABSTRACT

Corruption in Indonesia's education sector remains a serious obstacle to national development, weakening institutional integrity and eroding public trust in educational governance. Existing anti-corruption initiatives in education tend to fall short because they lean almost entirely on cognitive approaches, leaving leadership ethics and organizational culture largely untouched. This study develops a conceptual framework of prophetic leadership as a strategic model for building an anti-corruption culture in schools, using a qualitative design built on a systematic literature review guided by PRISMA standards. Data drawn from reputable academic databases were analyzed through thematic analysis to construct an integrative conceptual model. The findings point to four interrelated dimensions behind prophetic leadership: *siddiq* (integrity) supplies the moral foundation, *amanah* (accountability) turns that foundation into working systems, *tabligh* (transparency) keeps communication open, and *fathonah* (wisdom) keeps the whole framework adapting rather than going stale. The study concludes that prophetic leadership offers a workable alternative to compliance-based approaches, positioning school principals as value-based leaders who can build integrity into school culture over time. This study implies that principals can embed prophetic leadership directly into school financial, personnel, communication, and curriculum management practices.

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## INTRODUCTION

Corruption continues to obstruct global socio-economic development, and this obstruction is felt most acutely in developing countries where institutions remain fragile (Hassan, 2022; Lubis & Mufidah, 2025; Agu et al., 2024). Its effects are systemic and multidimensional, yet few sectors are as critically exposed as education. Beyond the direct loss of funds, corruption in this sector erodes the moral and intellectual foundation of society by weakening the very pipeline through which human capital is built for national progress (Montes & Piñeiro, 2022). Corruption in education is therefore not merely an economic problem; it is an ethical and leadership crisis with the capacity to produce long-term institutional decay (Canen & Wantchekon, 2022; Zhang et al., 2023).

Indonesia illustrates this problem with particular clarity. Despite strong national ambitions for development, its education sector has repeatedly been identified as vulnerable to corrupt practice. The 2023 report by Indonesia Corruption Watch records education among the sectors most affected, citing recurring cases of misappropriated School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds, illegal levies, and fictitious procurement that together have cost trillions of rupiah (antikorupsi.org, 2023). Such findings place Indonesia in a relatively weak position on corruption perception indices compared with neighbouring countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, a gap that in turn undermines public trust and



national educational performance (Putri et al., 2024).

This pattern exposes a deeper contradiction between what education is meant to achieve and what it often delivers. In principle, schools and universities are the primary institutions for character formation, expected to produce individuals who are intellectually competent and ethically grounded (Dewantara et al., 2021), and so to function as centers of integrity in their own right. In practice, however, educational institutions frequently mirror the corruption dynamics of the wider society. Misconduct is not confined to the misuse of institutional funds; it also surfaces at the micro level through plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and attendance fraud among students (Osipian, 2025; Eutsler et al., 2023). Schools, in other words, have not consistently succeeded in modelling the very integrity they are meant to instill (Handoyo, 2021).

The Indonesian government has responded by introducing anti-corruption education (PAK) across school levels, yet existing studies suggest that these interventions remain largely superficial and fall short of transformative outcomes. Most programs emphasize cognitive understanding of corruption while leaving the affective and behavioural dimensions needed to internalize anti-corruption values underdeveloped (Wayan Yasmiati et al., 2025; Rinenggo et al., 2022). Even when anti-corruption content has been folded into religious education, the change in actual behaviour has been limited, which suggests that normative instruction alone cannot dislodge socio-cultural practices that are already deeply embedded (Suyadi et al., 2021). What is missing, then, is not another instructional module but a comprehensive, value-based leadership framework capable of transforming school culture from within.

This study addresses that gap by proposing Prophetic Leadership as a culturally grounded and ethically structured model for school governance. The framework is rooted in four attributes traditionally associated with Prophet Muhammad: *siddiq* (integrity and honesty), *amanah* (accountability and trustworthiness), *tabligh* (transparency and communication), and *fathonah* (wisdom and strategic competence). Rather than relying on compliance-based regulation, prophetic leadership works through internal moral transformation, exemplary leadership behaviour, and the internalization of systemic values. By embedding transparency and accountability into both leadership practice and institutional culture, the model seeks to establish sustainable ethical norms and strengthen the school community's collective commitment to integrity.

This article contributes to the literature on educational leadership and anti-corruption education by developing a conceptual framework of Prophetic Leadership as an integrated, value-based strategy for cultivating an anti-corruption culture in schools. Prophetic leadership, anti-corruption education, and school governance have so far been examined largely as separate strands of research, and few studies have synthesized them into a single, operational leadership model built specifically for educational institutions. The contribution offered here lies in reconstructing the four prophetic attributes, *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*, into one coherent, multi-level framework that links individual moral integrity, institutional accountability, communicative transparency, and strategic pedagogical innovation within a single system of school-based corruption prevention. Where existing approaches tend to emphasize the cognitive transmission of anti-corruption values, this framework positions leadership behavior itself as the central mechanism of cultural transformation, treating an anti-corruption culture not as something instructed into students but as an outcome that emerges from leadership-driven systemic integrity.

The theoretical significance of the study lies in extending prophetic leadership theory beyond individual ethical conduct toward institutional-level anti-corruption governance in education. For practice, the framework gives school principals and policymakers a structured basis for designing leadership development programs that target corruption prevention at the organizational level rather than the individual one. Methodologically, the study relies on a systematic literature review combined with thematic analysis to show how a body of dispersed, interdisciplinary literature can be synthesized into a structured conceptual model, an approach that other conceptual research in educational leadership can replicate.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design and Approach

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) 2020 framework to ensure transparency, replicability, and methodological rigor. The SLR method is appropriate for this research because it enables a structured identification, screening, and synthesis of existing literature to construct a conceptual framework of prophetic leadership in fostering an anti-corruption culture in schools. Compared to traditional narrative reviews, this approach follows a predefined protocol that minimizes selection bias and ensures that all included studies are retrieved and systematically filtered according to explicit criteria. The final synthesis of the selected literature is conducted using thematic analysis to derive conceptual patterns and theoretical constructs that serve as the basis for the proposed framework.

### Data Search Strategy

A comprehensive and systematic search strategy was conducted across multiple academic databases to ensure broad coverage of interdisciplinary literature related to educational leadership, anti-corruption studies, Islamic leadership, and governance. The databases used in this study include Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journal records where available, JSTOR, ProQuest Education Database, Taylor & Francis Online, and Publish or Perish software, which was utilized to expand citation tracing and improve retrieval completeness. The search strategy combined English and Indonesian keywords using Boolean operators to maximize relevance and coverage. The primary English keywords included "prophetic leadership", "anti-corruption leadership", "anti-corruption education", "corruption in education", and "ethical leadership in schools". In contrast, the Indonesian equivalents included "*kepemimpinan profetik*", "*kepemimpinan anti korupsi*", "*pendidikan anti korupsi*", and "*korupsi di pendidikan*". To maintain contemporary relevance, the search was limited to publications from 2020 to 2025. The initial search yielded approximately 742 articles across all databases, which were then processed through systematic screening stages in accordance with PRISMA guidelines.

### Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Following the identification stage, all retrieved studies were screened using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure methodological consistency and relevance. The inclusion criteria focused on studies that addressed at least one of the core themes relevant to this research, including prophetic leadership, anti-corruption education, ethical leadership, or governance practices in educational institutions. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and academic book chapters published between 2020 and 2025 were included to ensure academic rigor and currency. Studies written in English and Indonesian were considered eligible for inclusion. Additionally, studies were required to demonstrate academic quality and relevance to educational leadership or corruption-related issues within educational contexts. Conversely, studies were excluded if they were not related to education, leadership, or corruption themes, or if they were published in non-peer-reviewed sources such as blogs, opinion articles, and news reports. Publications prior to 2020 were generally excluded unless they represented foundational theoretical works. Studies written in languages other than English or Indonesian were also excluded. Furthermore, studies that lacked sufficient methodological clarity or were published in low-quality or non-indexed journals were removed during the screening process. The complete inclusion and exclusion criteria applied in this study are summarized in **Table 1**.

**Table 1. Literature Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Theme/ Topic	Studies on prophetic leadership, anti-corruption education, ethical leadership in schools, or integrity-based governance	Studies not related to education, leadership, or corruption contexts
Publication Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, academic books or chapters	Non-peer-reviewed sources such as blogs, opinion pieces, and news articles
Time Range	Published between 2020–2025	Published before 2020 except foundational theoretical works
Language	English and Indonesian publications	Other languages
Quality	Indexed or high-quality academic journals (preferably Scopus/WoS indexed)	Low-quality, predatory, or non-academic sources
Relevance	Must directly address leadership, ethics, or corruption in educational settings	Studies outside educational governance context

### Data Analysis

The data analysis process used thematic analysis following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2017), which is widely recognized for its flexibility and rigor in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative datasets. After applying the PRISMA screening process, 44 eligible studies were included in the final synthesis. These studies were subjected to repeated, in-depth reading to become familiar with the content and identify preliminary patterns related to leadership, integrity, and anti-corruption education. From this process, an initial set of 126 codes was generated, representing recurring concepts such as integrity-based leadership practices, financial transparency in schools, moral role modeling, and the integration of anti-corruption values into the curriculum. These codes were then systematically grouped into broader conceptual themes that reflected the core dimensions of prophetic leadership.

Through iterative comparison and refinement, four dominant themes were developed, corresponding to the prophetic attributes of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*. These themes were continuously reviewed to ensure internal coherence and consistency across the dataset, resulting in the merging and refinement of overlapping categories. Each theme was then clearly defined in relation to its role in shaping anti-corruption culture in schools, specifically as a moral foundation, governance accountability, communicative transparency, and strategic educational innovation. The final phase involved synthesizing these themes into a coherent conceptual framework that explains how prophetic leadership operates as an integrated system for preventing corruption in educational environments.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The systematic literature review following PRISMA guidelines resulted in a rigorous selection process that identified 742 initial records across multiple databases. After the removal of duplicates, 612 records remained for screening based on title and abstract relevance. During the screening phase, 442 articles were excluded due to lack of relevance to educational leadership, anti-corruption studies, or value-based governance frameworks. A full-text eligibility assessment was conducted on 170 articles, resulting in the exclusion of 126 studies due to methodological limitations, weak conceptual alignment, or lack of peer-reviewed status. Ultimately, 44 studies met all inclusion criteria and were included in the final qualitative synthesis. The complete selection process, from initial identification through final inclusion, is presented in **Figure 1**.

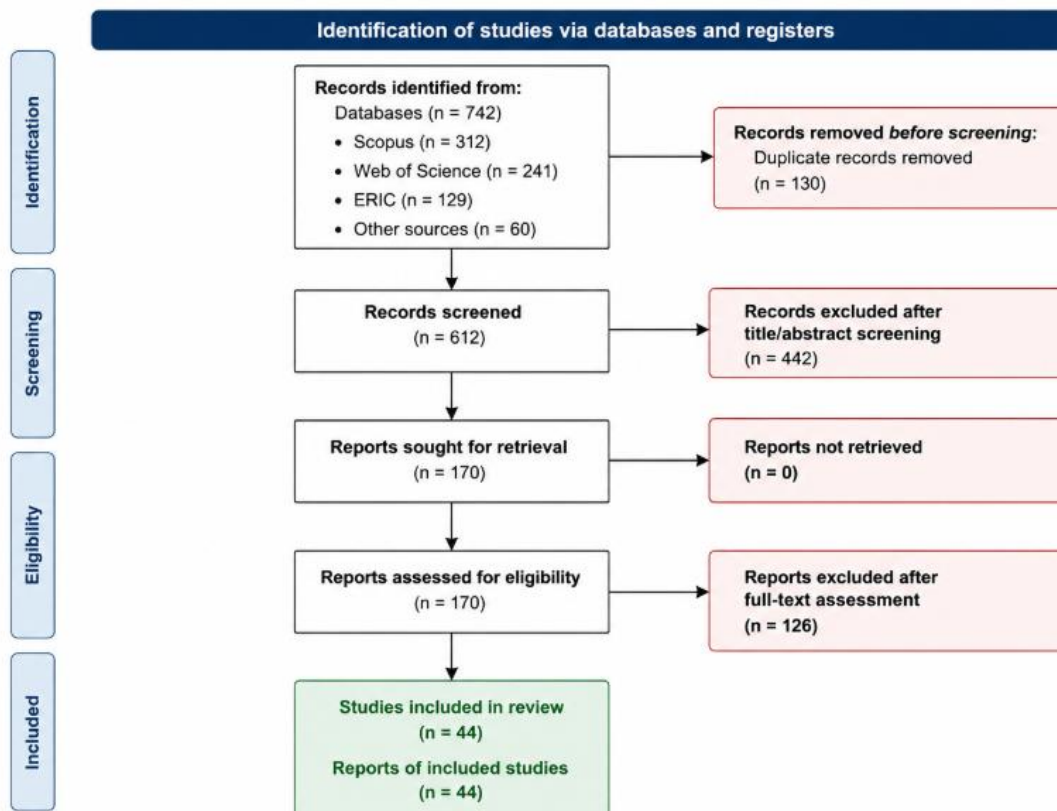


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the selection process.

Source: Processed by the authors (2026)

This structured selection process confirms the methodological rigor of the review and ensures that the resulting conceptual framework is grounded in a representative and quality-controlled body of literature. The PRISMA flow demonstrates transparency in study selection and strengthens the validity of thematic synthesis outcomes.

### ***Siddiq* (Integrity) as the Foundation for Building an Ethical Culture in Schools**

The synthesis of 44 selected studies indicates that *siddiq* (integrity) represents the foundational pillar within the prophetic leadership framework for anti-corruption culture in schools. Integrity is consistently positioned in the literature as a core ethical attribute that ensures coherence between values, speech, and actions in leadership practice (Ariyanti & Himayah, 2021). Across the reviewed studies, *siddiq* is not only described as a personal moral quality but also as a prerequisite for the emergence of other leadership dimensions, namely *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*, as it constitutes the primary source of institutional trust (Karim et al., 2023).

In the school leadership context, *Siddiq* is operationalized through the principal's role as an ethical role model (*Uswah Hasanah*). The literature consistently emphasizes that integrity-based leadership is most effectively demonstrated through visible actions rather than formal directives (Fauziah, 2025; Purwanto et al., 2022). Empirical findings show that principals who consistently demonstrate honesty in administrative practices, fairness in evaluation, punctuality, and rejection of unethical benefits create a stable ethical reference for the entire school community (Rakhman et al., 2023; Hamdanah et al., 2025). These behaviors contribute to the formation of an ethical climate in which honesty becomes a normalized institutional value (Anggraeni et al., 2025).

Beyond individual behavior, *Siddiq* also extends into the domain of institutional transparency. The reviewed studies highlight that integrity-driven leadership actively dismantles secrecy in school governance systems. One key manifestation is the openness in managing public funds such as School Operational Assistance (BOS), where transparent reporting reduces ambiguity and limits opportunities for misuse (Astuti & Hanif, 2025; Sekalala et al., 2020). This demonstrates that *siddiq* functions as both a moral principle and a structural mechanism for corruption prevention.

Furthermore, *Siddiq* influences decision-making processes by grounding them in truth, fairness, and ethical accountability. Leaders guided by integrity rely on objective evidence rather than personal interest or external pressure, thereby strengthening institutional justice (Wahidin et al., 2022). This condition fosters psychological safety within the school environment, where teachers and staff are encouraged to report irregularities without fear of retaliation. Consequently, *Siddiq* strengthens collective moral courage and transforms school members into active agents of ethical supervision. The findings confirm that *Siddiq* functions as the entry point of prophetic leadership, where integrity establishes the moral legitimacy required for all subsequent governance and educational processes.

### ***Amanah* (Accountability): A Strategy for Transparent Management of School Finances and Resources**

The second dominant theme emerging from the literature is *amanah* (accountability), which represents the operational dimension of prophetic leadership in school governance. *Amanah* is consistently interpreted as the transformation of leadership authority into a structured responsibility system, where power is understood as a trust that must be accounted for both institutionally and morally (Mujahid et al., 2025). This conceptualization directly contradicts the essence of corruption, defined as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (Vian, 2020).

In practical terms, *amanah* is strongly associated with transparent financial governance systems. The literature highlights that accountable school leadership is characterized by openness in budgeting, reporting, and financial decision-making processes. Public access to financial information, particularly regarding government funding such as BOS, strengthens social control mechanisms and reduces opportunities for embezzlement (Anggraini & Bahri, 2024; Hunter et al., 2020). This demonstrates that accountability functions as a preventive structural mechanism rather than a corrective response.

In addition, *amanah* extends to resource allocation and procurement systems, where decision-making must be based on institutional needs rather than personal or group interests. The findings show that accountable leadership minimizes corrupt practices such as price manipulation, nepotism in vendor selection, and unnecessary procurement (Alghozali & Hasiolan, 2025). This ensures that institutional resources are directed toward educational improvement rather than private benefit.

The accountability dimension also includes human resource governance, particularly in recruitment, promotion, and performance evaluation systems. The literature emphasizes that fair and transparent HR systems reduce internal inequalities and prevent the emergence of unethical practices within the institution (Hikmawati et al., 2024). By ensuring merit-based governance, *amanah* strengthens organizational fairness and reduces structural incentives for corruption (Fathih et al., 2024). Thus, *amanah* transforms leadership from administrative control into an ethical accountability system that institutionalizes trust through structured governance mechanisms.

### **The Synergy of *Tabligh* (Transparency) and *Fathonah* (Wisdom) in Building Systemic Integrity**

The third and fourth themes—*tabligh* (transparency) and *fathonah* (wisdom)—emerge as mutually reinforcing dimensions that collectively strengthen systemic integrity in schools.

The literature indicates that *tabligh* functions as the communicative mechanism that externalizes ethical leadership values, ensuring that institutional decisions are visible, understandable, and socially accountable (Brigue & Orlu, 2023; Maulidia, 2023). Transparent communication reduces information asymmetry and prevents the formation of hidden decision-making spaces that may lead to corruption.

*Tabligh* is operationalized through open communication systems between school leaders and stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and school committees. The studies highlight that regular dialogue, accessible reporting, and participatory decision-making processes enhance collective oversight and strengthen institutional trust (Irvita & Asriani, 2025). This indicates that transparency is not merely informational disclosure but a relational governance mechanism that builds shared responsibility.

However, the findings also emphasize that transparency alone is insufficient without strategic intelligence, which is embodied in *fathonah* (wisdom). *Fathonah* refers to the ability of leaders to design adaptive, innovative, and corruption-resistant systems (Utami, 2024). Unlike reactive governance approaches, wise leadership focuses on system design that eliminates opportunities for misconduct before they occur (Nur et al., 2025; Xu & Xu, 2024).

In educational practice, *fathonah* is reflected in curriculum innovation and institutional design, such as integrating anti-corruption values into learning activities, developing experiential integrity-based programs, and creating context-based ethical learning environments (Aprilia & Munifah, 2022). Furthermore, wisdom is also required in designing information systems that are accessible and understandable, ensuring that transparency is meaningful rather than symbolic. The synergy between *tabligh* and *fathonah* demonstrates that effective anti-corruption governance requires both communication clarity and system intelligence, where transparency ensures visibility and wisdom ensures sustainability.

## Discussion

The integration of the four prophetic dimensions results in a comprehensive conceptual model of Prophetic Leadership for Anti-Corruption Culture in Schools. The synthesis of findings confirms that *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* operate not as independent attributes but as an interconnected system that collectively shapes institutional integrity. The literature strongly indicates that the absence of any single dimension weakens the overall effectiveness of anti-corruption governance (Cheema et al., 2024; Hou et al., 2023; Amanquandor, 2024). The proposed model follows an inside-out transformation logic, beginning with internal moral integrity (*siddiq*), progressing to structural accountability (*amanah*), expanding through communicative transparency (*tabligh*), and stabilizing through strategic innovation (*fathonah*). This sequential structure suggests that anti-corruption culture emerges through continuous interaction between ethical values, governance systems, communication practices, and institutional innovation.

The model further positions school leadership as a multi-dimensional governance system, where ethical behavior, administrative accountability, communication transparency, and strategic intelligence operate as mutually reinforcing components. This shifts the paradigm from rule-based compliance to culture-based transformation, where integrity becomes embedded within the organizational DNA of the school. To summarize the synthesis, prophetic leadership functions as an integrated system in which integrity builds ethical legitimacy, accountability ensures structural governance, transparency enables participatory oversight, and wisdom guarantees long-term adaptability. Together, these dimensions form a sustainable anti-corruption ecosystem within educational institutions.

The synthesis presented in **Table 2** demonstrates that the four dimensions of prophetic leadership—*siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*—operate as an integrated and mutually reinforcing system in shaping anti-corruption culture within schools. Rather than functioning as independent variables, each dimension contributes to a layered governance structure that begins with moral formation and extends toward systemic institutional

transformation. *Siddiq* establishes the ethical foundation through integrity-based role modeling, which creates a normative climate of honesty within the school environment. This moral baseline is then operationalized through *amanah*, which translates ethical trust into structured accountability mechanisms, particularly in financial management and resource allocation systems.

Table 2. Synthesis of Prophetic Leadership Dimensions in Anti-Corruption Culture

Prophetic Trait	Core Function	Key Mechanism	Outcome
<i>Siddiq</i>	Moral foundation	Role modeling, ethical consistency	Ethical school climate
<i>Amanah</i>	Governance system	Transparent finance, fair procurement	Clean institutional governance
<i>Tabligh</i>	Communication system	Open dialogue, stakeholder engagement	Public trust and oversight
<i>Fathonah</i>	Strategic system design	Curriculum innovation, system redesign	Sustainable integrity system

Subsequently, *tabligh* strengthens this system by ensuring that governance processes are transparently communicated and socially monitored, thereby enhancing stakeholder participation and institutional legitimacy. Finally, *fathonah* provides the strategic and cognitive capacity necessary to sustain and innovate anti-corruption practices, ensuring that ethical values are embedded into pedagogical and organizational systems (Ghazali, 2023; Zarghami, 2025; Koeswayo et al., 2024). Collectively, these dimensions indicate that anti-corruption culture is not the result of isolated ethical behavior, but rather the outcome of a holistic leadership system in which moral integrity, accountability structures, communicative transparency, and strategic innovation interact dynamically to produce sustainable institutional integrity in educational settings.

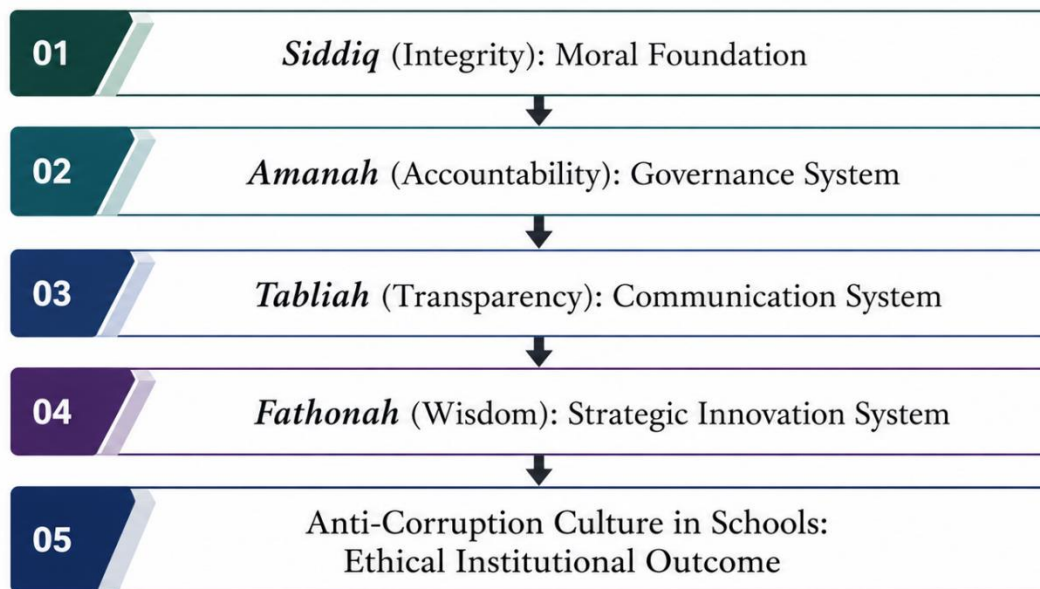


Figure 2. Conceptual Model Labels

Source: Processed by the authors (2026)

Figure 2 illustrates the Prophetic Leadership Framework for fostering an anti-corruption culture in schools. The model demonstrates an inside-out transformation process beginning with moral integrity (*Siddiq*), followed by accountable governance systems (*Amanah*), strengthened by transparent communication (*Tabligh*), and sustained through strategic wisdom and innovation (*Fathonah*), culminating in a systemic anti-corruption culture within educational institutions.

The findings carry concrete implications for educational management, not just a general claim about leadership theory. Theoretically, treating *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* as one operational system reframes anti-corruption governance as a function of management practice rather than personal virtue, extending prophetic leadership theory into the financial and human resource management of schools. In practice, the framework lands in four specific areas. *Amanah* requires that BOS budgeting, reporting, and procurement follow documented, auditable procedures instead of a principal's discretion. The same accountability principle pushes human resource management toward merit-based recruitment, promotion, and evaluation, closing off nepotism-prone hiring. *Tabligh* turns financial and administrative transparency into a routine reporting habit toward teachers, parents, and school committees, not an occasional disclosure. *Fathonah* asks principals to build anti-corruption values into how learning activities and institutional procedures are designed, not bolt them on as a separate subject. Together, these four areas reposition prophetic leadership away from a list of personal virtues and toward a managerial agenda: concrete financial, personnel, communication, and curricular practices a school can adopt, audit, and sustain.

## CONCLUSION

Corruption in education resists straightforward fixes. Normative or cognitively oriented anti-corruption education has not been enough on its own, largely because it rarely changes how a school is actually run day to day. Drawing on a systematic literature review guided by PRISMA and a thematic analysis of 44 selected studies, this article develops a conceptual framework of Prophetic Leadership as an integrated, value-based model for building an anti-corruption culture in schools. The four prophetic attributes, *siddiq* (integrity), *amanah* (accountability), *tabligh* (transparency), and *fathonah* (wisdom), are not four separate traits a principal happens to hold; integrity sets the ethical baseline, and accountability is what turns that baseline into actual governance. Transparency keeps oversight open to teachers, parents, and the wider school community, and wisdom is what keeps the whole system adapting rather than calcifying into another compliance checklist. The result is a shift in where leadership sits: not above the day-to-day running of a school, but inside it, shaping how the institution operates from the inside out. This gives the study a theoretical contribution, in extending prophetic leadership into institutional governance, and a practical one, in offering school leaders a concrete basis for integrity-driven management aimed at preventing corruption in education.

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