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# An Integrity-Based Development Philosophy for Vietnamese Civil Servants to Fulfill the Nation's Aspiration for Progress and Renewal

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## Abstract

As President Ho Chi Minh taught, Vietnam's public administration must prioritize the interests of the nation and its people above all else. That is, it must serve the citizens and the Fatherland of Vietnam. Therefore, this interdisciplinary study has shown that Vietnam's ongoing public administration reforms all prioritize serving the people and the Fatherland as their highest priority. The philosophy of development based on integrity for Vietnamese civil servants today is not just an attitude, but also a concrete action and aspiration. That is to make Vietnam a developed, high-income country by 2045. This vision demands the establishment of a modern, transparent, and honest public administration. Civil servants must perform their duties with a spirit of public service, democracy, rule of law, professionalism, modernity, and transparency. This service is generally based on four fundamental pillars: First, transparent and accountable institutions create a clear legal framework, ensuring that public officials perform their duties

correctly and are accountable to society. Second, public service ethics must guide the behavior of public officials towards the values of integrity, impartiality, and dedicated service to the people. Third, the competence and professionalism of public officials determine the quality of public service performance, thereby ensuring the efficiency and modernity of the administration. Fourth, social oversight must be implemented, including citizen participation to create control pressure, contributing to increased transparency and accountability of public officials. Research results show that if public officials maintain integrity in performing their duties, it will create a foundation for effective national governance. This means strengthening social trust, enhancing national dignity, and increasing competitiveness to realize Vietnam's development aspirations.

**Keywords:** public servant integrity; public governance; development philosophy; Vietnam

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Vietnam aspires to become a developed, high-income country by 2045. To realize this goal, Vietnam is focusing on institutional breakthroughs, innovating its growth model based on science and technology, and building a transparent public administration system. Integrity and competence of civil servants are considered core "keys" to transforming policies into practical effectiveness. As Truong [1] noted, "integrity is a core value of public service ethics." In fact, in recent years, Vietnam has made significant progress in administrative reform. However, we must still acknowledge that challenges such as corruption, waste, harassment, and bureaucracy in administrative procedures still exist [2]. These limitations highlight the urgent need to establish a development philosophy for civil servants based on integrity [3]. Only such a philosophy can pave the way for democracy, prosperity, and social progress.

Therefore, this study seeks to address fundamental questions: for example, what is the philosophy of development based on integrity for Vietnamese civil servants? How should it be understood and applied? Why is integrity essential for civil servants? And why does this philosophy hold such importance for Vietnam's national aspiration for progress? The article aims to clarify the role of this philosophy and suggest future research directions to further refine the development philosophy for integrity-based civil servants in Vietnam.

## 2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND APPROACHES TO THE INTEGRITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

### 2.1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

From a philosophical perspective, Marx and Engels asserted that: "... Men make their own history, but they do so under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past; the material conditions of life... ultimately determine the course of development and form the red thread running through all history" [4].

They further emphasized that "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" [4]. In this sense, civil servants - holders of public authority - bear the responsibility to serve the people and safeguard the public interest. This notion resonates with Kant's *deontological ethics* [5] and Aristotle's *virtue ethics*, which views integrity as the outcome of moral cultivation and virtuous habits [6]. Likewise, John Rawls's [7] *theory of justice* provides a philosophical foundation for building a fair and integrity-based public service as a prerequisite for realizing social justice.

President Ho Chi Minh once spoke of four virtues of a public official: "diligence, thrift, integrity, uprightness, and impartiality." These four virtues serve as the long-term ethical foundation for all public service policies [8]. Legal documents such as the Law on Public Officials [9] and the Law on Prevention and Combat of Corruption [10] clearly stipulate integrity as a core principle in the Vietnamese administrative system. In the context of modern governance, global frameworks such as Good Governance and the System of Public Integrity [11] also emphasize integrity as the foundation of public and government trust.

From the perspective of public service ethics, integrity is a fundamental value in Vietnamese political culture. It represents the harmony between the awareness, beliefs, and actions of civil servants in upholding ethical standards and complying with the law. Therefore, building a team of honest civil servants should not only focus on management or professional training, but also emphasize raising awareness and shaping ethical behavior in the performance of their duties. According to Hoang Thi Bich [13] in the document "Core Values of State Governance: Integrity, Responsibility, Fairness, and Service to the People," the civil service system in Vietnam is facing new ethical challenges in a constantly changing society. State governance needs to continuously strengthen and maintain core values such as fairness, responsibility, and integrity, while placing people at the center to achieve balanced and sustainable development. Therefore, a team of honest public servants plays an indispensable role as a foundation for long-term innovation and development.

At the practical level, at the 2024 National Academy of Public Administration Conference on "Integrity in Public Service: Theory and Practice" [14], researchers examined key issues including: the importance of integrity in building a fair and transparent public administration; the theoretical and legal framework for integrity in public service; a comparison of integrity standards between countries and their impact on Vietnam; an assessment of Vietnam's legal framework on public integrity and recommendations for effective improvement; and other specialized topics. Among the emphasized points was the need to institutionalize ethical standards. This would gradually integrate ethical standards into the legal framework to promote integrity in public service in Vietnam. Previous research by Cao and Nguyen [15] also considers integrity as a fundamental component of public service ethics: "Integrity is a core value of every public service system. It is the opposite of corruption... Public officials must publicly disclose their personal income as required by law, and protect state assets, not using public resources for personal gain" [15].

Integrity is an indispensable virtue for human beings. Those lacking integrity easily fall into the trap of personal gain. President Ho Chi Minh emphasized: "Integrity means being upright and selfless. Greed for money, position, fame, or comfort—all are signs of corruption" [8]. President Ho Chi Minh also reminded us that: "The government serves the

people. All government work must be directed towards the sole goal of ensuring freedom and happiness for all the people. Therefore, the people's government must always put the interests of the people first" [16].

## 2.2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This study uses a combination of document analysis and comparison with objective indicators such as the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), the Global Governance Index (WGI), and the Provincial Public Administration and Governance Performance Index (PAPI). Our philosophy of development based on integrity has been considered through an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach. It is based on a development perspective that is inter-sectoral and intercultural. It transcends class or national boundaries and aims for universal standards of integrity. It is people-centered, therefore inclusive and global. This approach has integrated three theoretical frameworks:

New Public Governance (NPM), which emphasizes efficiency, accountability, and market-oriented public services. However, NPM needs to be supplemented with ethical integrity to avoid excessive commercialization of public services. Good Governance. This theory emphasizes the principles of transparency, accountability, efficiency, and fairness. Global public service ethics. This theory stresses the creation of an "integrity ecosystem" encompassing legal frameworks, oversight institutions, organizational culture, and individual accountability [11].

As the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) affirms: "Integrity is one of the pillars of the political, economic, and social structure, and the foundation of good governance. However, no country is immune to integrity breaches. At all levels and departments of government, integrity breaches occur at all stages of the policymaking process. Addressing this challenge requires a whole-society and whole-government approach." [12]

## 3. THE CONCEPT OF THE INTEGRITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY FOR CIVIL SERVANTS

The philosophy of public service integrity is closely linked to ethical and political philosophy. Essentially, it views integrity as the ethics of state power. This means ensuring that state power is exercised legally, fairly, and humanely, by the people and for the people. This philosophy of integrity considers integrity a core issue of public administration. It emphasizes building a culture of integrity within public organizations and establishing high standards of conduct for public servants. According to the OECD, "The OECD recommendations on integrity in public service emphasize the importance of defining clear standards of conduct and promoting a culture of integrity within public organizations." Specifically, this theory provides guidance on establishing appropriate standards of conduct for public servants. For example, we can integrate integrity standards into organizational policies. This can help prevent violations of public integrity standards, while identifying and managing actual or potential conflicts of interest" [11].

Ensuring the integrity of the leadership and management team is a crucial requirement in building a team of qualified, capable, and reputable officials commensurate with their tasks in Vietnam today. To achieve this, identifying integrity, clearly defining the issues at hand, and implementing solutions to ensure the integrity of the leadership and management team is an urgent requirement today [17]. This is a consistent system of values and viewpoints, taking public service ethics as the foundation for the formation and development of the civil servant team. Integrity is considered a core virtue. It ensures the transparent exercise of state power, aiming to serve the interests of the people.

In Vietnam, this philosophy of civil servants is not a distant or abstract concept. Public service is a type of activity carried out in the name of state power. Speaking of public service means speaking of the responsibility of officials and civil servants in exercising their rights and obligations to serve the people and society. Public service responsibility is the self-awareness of officials and civil servants regarding their assigned rights and duties, as well as their obligation to fulfill those rights and duties. An effective and efficient public service is based on upholding responsibility with a spirit of dedication, diligence, and fulfilling one's duties. According to the Vietnamese dictionary, the concept of "responsibility" is defined as "something that must be done, borne, or accepted"; or "understood as a binding obligation to one's words and actions, ensuring that one acts correctly, and bearing the consequences if wrong"; or "a task assigned or considered assigned, which must be completed, and if the result is unsatisfactory, one must bear the consequences." And "the responsibility is to ensure that assigned tasks are completed. If the results are not good, then the consequences must be borne." Although philosophy is often considered to belong to the intellectual class, in the case of Vietnam, it can also stem from practical service to the community. As Marx emphasized: "Revolution is the work of the masses" [18], this implies that moral renewal and public service reform are only meaningful when they stem from the practical needs of the people and are directed towards serving them.

According to the Dictionary of Legal Terms, public service responsibility is "the responsibility of state officials and civil servants to act in accordance with the law, choose the most optimal and reasonable course of action, report the results of their activities, and bear the consequences of failing to perform or improperly performing their duties." Public service responsibility is a concept expressed in both positive and negative aspects. From a positive perspective, public service

responsibility reflects the scope of specific requirements of the State through legal regulations on the content of duties and the qualities of officials and civil servants when performing their duties. Public service responsibility in the negative sense is the bearing of legal consequences for failing to perform or improperly performing duties. The concept of public service responsibility also reflects the requirements of law and professional ethics for officials and civil servants regarding proactiveness and creativity in performing their duties. This is the obligation to choose the most optimal and reasonable course of action.

#### 4. THE CORE ROLE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF DEVELOPING AN INTEGRITY-ORIENTED CIVIL SERVANT IN VIETNAM

The philosophy of developing a civil servant workforce focused on integrity in Vietnam is a necessary issue. It's not merely a political slogan or empty rhetoric, but a powerful spiritual driving force and a core principle of action. Furthermore, it serves as an inspiration to foster dedication and responsibility among civil servants, thereby motivating them to fulfill their assigned duties. This philosophy should be considered a solid foundation for the entire policy-making process, from formulation to implementation. Without it, all flowery words, no matter how persuasive, are meaningless and have no practical impact. President Ho Chi Minh once emphasized the crucial role of putting the people's interests first: "Whatever benefits the people, we must strive with all our might; whatever harms the people, we must avoid at all costs" [19].

Vietnam is striving to advance during the period of reform, aiming to achieve the goal of becoming a developed nation and strengthening its position in the region and the world, as clearly stated in the 13th National Congress, with its "current international position, potential, status and prestige" [20]. Cultivating a civil servant workforce based on the principle of integrity requires a high sense of responsibility and intellectual enlightenment. As philosopher Hegel once affirmed: A country's constitution must reflect the collective will and common moral values of society [21].

Currently, Vietnam has set a strategic vision to become a developed, high-income country by 2045 [20]. This is not merely a political aspiration but also a long-term goal towards modernizing the country, improving people's living standards, and participating deeply in global integration. However, achieving this aspiration requires Vietnam to overcome the middle-income trap, build a transparent institutional system, and develop a professional and efficient public administration. In this journey, the role of civil servants is extremely important. They are the ones who create and implement policies; ensure the maintenance and protection of legal principles; and directly serve the community and businesses. However, when public officials lack integrity, problems such as corruption, waste, and bureaucracy will erode public trust, hinder economic growth, and weaken the effectiveness of national governance [22].

Integrity in public service is not merely a moral requirement, but also a prerequisite for achieving national development goals. The role of public officials with integrity can be clearly identified through the following four key points:

Firstly, public officials need to ensure effective governance. Only by working based on the principle of integrity can they implement policies transparently and fairly, minimize resource waste, and allocate national assets rationally to meet development goals.

Secondly, it is necessary to properly and fully exercise the assigned powers, obligations, and duties, and to be accountable for the results of their performance. Each individual official and public servant is granted rights by law, and associated with these are obligations that they must fulfill correctly and completely. Officials and public servants only perform and must perform what the law permits and requires. The obligations of an official or public servant in public service are not only understood as obligations during the performance of their duties, but also include the general obligations of the official or public servant to the Party, the State, and the People, and obligations associated with the role of the head or the person performing the public service.

Thirdly, perform duties honestly, avoid conflicts of interest, and do not pursue personal gain. In carrying out their assigned duties and responsibilities, officials and civil servants also face the reality that, in many cases, their personal interests may conflict with the proper and complete performance of their assigned duties and responsibilities. At this point, officials and civil servants must make a difficult choice between personal interests and the interests of the agency, the State, and their work. Integrity requires officials and civil servants to always prioritize the interests of the agency and the State above personal interests, and to honestly fulfill their duties, responsibilities, and responsibilities assigned by the State.

Fourth, protecting and using public assets safely and economically, and avoiding corruption. If integrity is one of the fundamental values of integrity in general, then integrity in public service means not being greedy, not taking public assets, and protecting and using public assets economically and efficiently. Public assets are assets formed from taxes contributed by citizens to the state budget, revenues from the state's economic activities, contributions from organizations and individuals, aid, etc., which are used by officials and civil servants in the course of performing their duties and exercising their powers.

Integrity in public service refers to the values and standards in public service activities. An honest public service will bring positive effects to public service activities, promote the socio-economic development of the country, and contribute

to preventing corruption and conflicts of interest. This article analyzes the basic contents of integrity in public service activities and proposes requirements and solutions for building integrity among officials and civil servants in Vietnam today.

## 5. DISCUSSION: REFLECTIONS BASED ON THE PAPI, WGI, AND CPI INDICATORS IN VIETNAM (2020–2024)

Regarding this, the summary report on 10 years of anti-corruption and anti-negative practices from 2012 to 2022 clearly stated: "From the beginning of the 13th National Congress term to the present, nearly 4,200 cases/7,572 defendants have been prosecuted and investigated for corruption, official misconduct, and economic crimes (of which, 455 cases/1,054 defendants have been prosecuted and investigated for corruption crimes). The Steering Committee alone has placed 977 serious, complex, and socially significant corruption and negative cases under monitoring and guidance at three levels" [23].

Our study uses indicators from statistical datasets. When we combine the PAPI, WGI, and CPI indicators for the period 2020–2024, they show significant progress in the implementation of public sector integrity. Tables 1 and 2 show that Vietnam's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has improved significantly, increasing from 36 points in 2020 to 42 points in 2022. This is a very impressive figure.

**Table 1.** Selected PAPI indicators from 2020 to 2024

Year	CPI Score (0–100)	Change from Previous Year	Rank among 180 Countries
2020	36	–	104
2021	42	+6	87
2022	42	0	88
2023	41	-1	93
2024	40	-1	88

Source: Compiled from Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) data. Note: The CPI 2024 score, published in early 2025, reflects perceptions of corruption during the previous year. Data summarized by the author.

**Table 2.** Corruption perceptions index (CPI)

Year (Report)	Score (0–100) / Rank	Trends and Analysis
CPI 2020	36/100 (Rank 104/180)	Reflected that corruption remained a persistent issue.
CPI 2021	39/100 (Rank 87/180)	Significant improvement with a 3-point increase, indicating growing international recognition of Vietnam's anti-corruption efforts.
CPI 2022	42/100 (Rank 77/180)	Continued improvement with another 3-point gain, reaching the highest score in Vietnam's history. Marked the peak of positive international assessment.
CPI 2023	41/100 (Rank 83/180)	Slight decline (by one point). This reflected the exposure and prosecution of several major corruption cases, which may have temporarily heightened public perception of widespread corruption despite ongoing anti-corruption efforts.

Source: Transparency International. (2020–2024). Corruption Perceptions Index annual reports. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/en/news/cpi-2020-2024-highlights-insights-corruption-climate-crisis>

According to a report by Transparency International, Vietnam has made significant progress in strengthening its anti-corruption efforts during the 2020–2024 period. From Transparency International's data, we can see indicators such as the Global Governance Index (WGI) and the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). This reflects Vietnam's commitment to building public administrative integrity. The positive results achieved by Vietnam in recent years demonstrate the effectiveness of its public integrity building measures. However, many challenges remain in maintaining integrity [24].

In recent years, Vietnam has made significant progress in preventing economic crimes and corruption. Many economic and corruption cases have been detected and prosecuted. These factors have garnered public support. These achievements not only contribute to raising public awareness of the fight against corruption, but more importantly, they strengthen public trust in the government. In the process of public service delivery, civil servants are gradually changing their behavior. They use public satisfaction as a measure of their work effectiveness.

Transparency International [25] places integrity at the core of public administration. They emphasize that combating corruption is essential to achieving the goals of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). Therefore, governments must implement strong anti-corruption measures. Our research shows that transparency is crucial to ensuring effective policy implementation. Addressing corruption is about achieving transparency, helping to restore public trust.

The international community and all countries must consider combating corruption a top and long-term priority. This requires more vigorous, effective, and closely coordinated anti-corruption efforts among stakeholders [25]. Data from

Tables 3 and 4 (PAPI) show improvements in local public sector governance, particularly in aspects such as transparency, administrative processes, and citizen satisfaction. Therefore, integrity in the public sector cannot be maintained solely through deterrence but must rely on equal opportunities to access public services and citizen trust.

**Table 3.** PAPI trends (2020–2024) in Vietnam

<i>Integrity Reference Dimension</i>	<i>PAPI Trends (2020–2024) in Vietnam</i>
Integrity in Administrative Transactions	The survey asked about instances of bribery in procedures related to land use rights, construction permits, job applications, etc. The overall trend indicates improvement over several years, particularly in provinces that have made strong efforts in administrative reform. PAPI 2024 recorded a noticeable increase in citizens’ satisfaction with the effectiveness of governance and public administration.
Accountability Capacity	The "Accountability to Citizens" index measures the willingness and ability of public officials to listen, resolve complaints, and ensure transparency of information. Integrity encompasses not only the absence of corruption but also a strong sense of responsibility.
Perceptions of Grand Corruption	PAPI also surveys citizens’ perceptions of corruption in civil service recruitment (ensuring fairness and integrity within the bureaucracy) and corruption across different levels of government.

*Source: Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI), 2020–2024, Vietnam.*

**Table 4.** Trends in the "control of corruption" indicator

<i>Year (Report)</i>	<i>Trends in the "Control of Corruption" Indicator</i>	<i>Key Notes</i>
2020	Positive growth	Continued the improvement trend from previous years. Reflected citizens’ satisfaction with reduced bribery in administrative procedures.
2021	Stable/Improving	Anti-corruption and administrative reform efforts were further strengthened amid the COVID-19 context.
2022	Strong improvement	Several provinces achieved higher scores. Reflected the effectiveness of enhanced inspection, monitoring, and sanctioning of misconduct.
2023–2024	Improvement (However, concerns remain high)	The 2024 PAPI Report recorded a clear upward trend in citizens’ satisfaction with governance effectiveness, including corruption control. However, "corruption", together with poverty and employment, remains among the three most pressing public concerns, indicating progress yet persistent challenges.

*Source: Annual PAPI Reports by UNDP in Vietnam (in collaboration with CECODES and other partners).*

The integrity of public officials in performing their duties is a core foundation for effective national governance. This is clearly reflected in the PAPI trends in Vietnam from 2020–2024. Table 3 shows that Vietnam has intensified its anti-corruption campaign. Through investigations and prison sentences for corrupt officials, significant changes have been made in public perception (PAPI data). The PAPI index, one of the most direct reflections of integrity in public service delivery at the grassroots level, is based on lived experience and assesses people’s perceptions of corruption. These perceptions also indicate that administrative reforms have positively impacted public trust in integrity. However, recent PAPI reports (e.g., PAPI 2024) still indicate that "corruption" and especially waste remain a top concern for the public. They signal the need for further strengthening the integrity of public servants in the performance of public services.

In our study, Table 4 clearly shows the PAPI index on provincial governance and public administration efficiency, and people’s experiences and perceptions of provincial-level public administration efficiency. This index focuses on integrity in local public services. The Provincial Public Administration and Governance Performance Index (PAPI) in Vietnam is a tool for monitoring policy implementation, truthfully reflecting the voice of the people on the level of efficiency in state administration, policy implementation, and public service delivery by all levels of government. The PAPI index aims to improve the efficiency of local governments in serving the people to better meet the increasingly high demands of the people. This is achieved by collecting public opinions from a representative survey sample, ensuring demographic diversity of Vietnam’s population. From this, the State and all levels of government understand the thoughts and aspirations of the people regarding the efficiency of the public administration system.

With this approach, PAPI hopes to contribute to the process of institutional and policy innovation towards building a "service-oriented state" culture at all levels of government, supporting improved efficiency in policy planning, public resource management, and the provision of quality public services. These are crucial elements in promoting public sector integrity. However, alongside these positive developments, maintaining the integrity of public officials remains a complex endeavor. As the Communist Party of Vietnam has emphasized: "Corruption and waste remain serious and complex problems... They continue to be one of the major threats to the nation’s existence. Moral and ideological degradation, individualism, and indifference have not yet been completely reversed." [20]

Improving the professional ethics of public officials has become an urgent societal requirement. This is demonstrated through integrity in the performance of public duties. Tables 5 and 6 (WGI data) confirm that Vietnam has achieved

impressive results in combating corruption and improving the efficiency of state management. Vietnam will continue to assert its strong position in improving the efficiency of state management. The Vietnamese government is accelerating the handling of important cases while implementing measures to overcome obstacles in public investment projects. This will enhance management efficiency and strengthen the trust of officials and public servants.

**Table 5.** Trends in WGI and control of corruption (CC) in Vietnam (2020–2024)

<i>Integrity Reference Dimension</i>	<i>Trends in WGI and CC in Vietnam (2020–2024)</i>
Institutional Integrity (Control of Corruption – CC)	This indicator measures the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain. Between 2020 and 2022, Vietnam showed a significant improvement in the Control of Corruption (CC) indicator, reaching its highest historical value in 2022. This improvement reflects the effectiveness of high-level anti-corruption campaigns and the tightening of public service discipline.
Government Effectiveness (GE)	This indicator measures the quality of public services and the competence of civil servants. Integrity is reflected in the professionalism and independence of the civil service in policy implementation. The WGI GE trend generally demonstrates stability or slight improvement, aligning with the pillars of professional capacity and fair compensation.

*Source: Vietnam Corruption Perceptions – Transparency International; data and charts retrieved from TheGlobalEconomy.com.*

**Table 6.** Control of corruption (CC) index in Vietnam

<i>Year (Data Reflected)</i>	<i>Control of Corruption (CC) Index</i>	<i>Key Notes</i>
2020	Positive/Stable value	Reflected the initial effectiveness of the national anti-corruption campaign ("the burning furnace" initiative).
2021	Continued growth	Indicated improved policy and institutional transparency, contributing to reduced corruption.
2022	Historical peak	Clearly reflected the success of the anti-corruption campaign, particularly through the handling of major high-level corruption cases. (Vietnam’s estimated CC value reached its highest level on record in 2022.)
2023	Slight decline from 2022 peak	The 2024 WGI (reflecting 2023 data) may record a minor adjustment or slight decrease from the peak, though still higher than pre-2020 levels.

*Source: World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) – Control of Corruption (Estimate) dataset.*

President Ho Chi Minh once spoke of five virtues that officials must possess: "Diligence, thrift, integrity, honesty, and fairness." These are five core revolutionary ethical standards according to Ho Chi Minh’s thought. They form the foundation of revolutionary public official ethics. Therefore, practicing these qualities is a key factor in building a clean and strong political system. For the reasons mentioned above, the study concludes that Vietnam’s efforts to combat corruption and build public service integrity have made significant progress. The legal framework for preventing and combating corruption has begun to be perfected.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In today’s era, Vietnam is striving towards higher development goals such as freedom, fairness, and equality. Sustainable development can only be achieved when integrity is upheld. Practicing a development philosophy based on integrity among Vietnamese civil servants is particularly important. Civil servants must apply this philosophy to their daily work. A truly effective public administration must serve the people and the country with integrity and responsibility. Integrity enhances competitiveness, attracts investment, promotes innovation, and facilitates sustainable development.

### 6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Firstly, institutional improvements and mechanisms for controlling power must be strengthened, accompanied by legal reforms. Especially comprehensive reforms in combating corruption and promoting integrity in line with international standards (UNCAC, OECD). The World Bank [26] emphasizes key directions for Vietnam’s institutional development, including: Vietnam must strive towards higher-level governance, while simultaneously enhancing the capacity and accountability of the state and creating higher incomes for its citizens [26].

Secondly, the State must reform the system of recruitment, remuneration, and incentives for civil servants. Recruitment must ensure that those selected possess both professional competence and ethical conduct; well-rounded individuals. Simultaneously, civil servants need to be objectively evaluated and rewarded to encourage good performance in both competence and ethics. According to Ho Chi Minh [8], as emphasized in his Testament, each official needs to demonstrate revolutionary spirit through diligence, frugality, integrity, honesty, and selflessness. At the same time, it is necessary to reform the salary system, linking it to accountability; in which, high salaries must be accompanied by strict disciplinary measures when violations occur, especially those related to corruption and waste.

Thirdly, it is necessary to codify ethical values for the civil servant workforce, transforming ethical guidelines into



legally binding rules in governance. As Cao Minh Cong [27] analyzed, this includes: building a legal framework to reflect the ethical commitment of civil servants and establishing basic behavioral norms; (ii) clearly defining the ethical principles required to be followed in all public duties; defining the rights and obligations regarding reporting or handling integrity violations; ensuring transparency and openness in the process of implementing ethical principles; and applying disciplinary measures appropriate to the level of violation of ethical commitments.

Fourth, emphasis should be placed on developing professional capacity alongside educating public servants on ethical qualities, including self-respect, compassion, conscience, and civic responsibility. In particular, education on integrity must be prioritized to promote the core values of public administration. This ensures that the exercise of power always complies with the law, is consistent with the constitution, achieves high efficiency, and best serves the interests of the people.

Fifth, it is necessary to expand oversight from the social community and promote citizen participation. Digital governance technologies and e-government initiatives can help reduce direct interaction between parties, thereby limiting the risk of corruption. At the same time, it is necessary to enhance the role of the media, civil society organizations, and the business community in monitoring the activities of civil servants. These solutions will help Vietnam build a professional, transparent, and responsible civil servant workforce, ready to lead the country into a new era.

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### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to the content of this study.

### DATA AVAILABILITY

All materials analyzed in this study are contained in the cited literature, public survey releases, and institutional reports. The analytical tables are derived from Transparency International, PAPI reports, and World Bank WGI data as cited in the references.

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