

Reconstructing the Character Building of Leaders from Islamic and Pancasila Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Pancasila serves as the ideological and ethical foundation for leadership, aiming to shape leaders with integrity and morality grounded in divine, humanitarian, unity, civic, and social justice values harmonizing with Islamic leadership principles. This study uses a qualitative and normative (doctrinal) method, focusing on the philosophical and conceptual foundations of Pancasila. Data were collected through bibliographic research, analyzing books, journals, and previous studies to build a strong theoretical framework. The findings reveal that the de-ideologization of Pancasila's leadership ethics stems from weak political systems, ineffective oversight, and the failure of character education based on Pancasila values. These issues undermine public trust and threaten national stability. Pancasila thus functions as both a moral fortress against ideological distortion and a benchmark distinguishing leaders guided by Pancasila values from those driven by power. Practically, this research provides insights and guidance for ethical leadership practice. Theoretically, it contributes to leadership studies, particularly regarding the integration of Pancasila's ethical and ideological dimensions in fostering just, moral, and responsible leadership.

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1. Introduction

Pancasila, which originates from the cultural richness and high values of the Indonesian nation, has been established as the foundation of the nation and its ideology [1]. Since independence was proclaimed, Pancasila has served as an ideological bastion, protecting Indonesia from the threat of fragmentation, whether from internal or foreign ideological influences [2]. The five principles contains range from belief in one God, humanity that is just and compassionate, unity of Indonesia, justice led by wisdom in consultation and social justice for all Indonesian people [3]. It becomes a moral and ethical compass that should guide every step of the Indonesian nation, especially in leadership

practices, which should serve as a role model and embody the philosophical values of Pancasila in every policy and action.

But in state practice, it can be seen that there is de-ideologization of Pancasila values in leadership, which is the deviation of Pancasila fundamental values [4] namely the morality and integrity of leadership that should be oriented towards Pancasila values, such as consensus on the fourth principle, social justice on the fifth principle [5], currently often shifting towards pragmatism, populism, even authoritarianism. Public decisions are no longer fully based on the interests of the community, but on electoral calculations, group benefits, or mere power. The numerous acts of corruption, collusion, and nepotism, as well as social inequality, discrimination, and legal uncertainty, are caused by the erosion of Pancasila values.

Not only the declining actions but also the de-ideologising policies of the ruling party have led to widespread abuse of power in Indonesia, especially among public officials. Among them, the increase in the salary of members of the RI House of Representatives, amid the economic crisis and poverty experienced by the Indonesian people, caused controversy over the plan to increase the PPN by 12 per cent. On August 25, 2025, protests took place in front of the RI House of Representatives building (Idn News, 2025), until their peak on August 28, 2025, which resulted in loss of life.

Many factors contributed to the demonstration on August 25. This demonstration was an outpouring of public anger and frustration over various issues, ranging from economic to political and legal. There were specific causes that triggered the demonstration. Economic and Welfare Issues, Increase in DPR Allowances: The decision to raise allowances and provide new facilities, such as official residences, for DPR members drew public anger. This was perceived as insensitive, particularly amid difficult economic conditions and high unemployment rates. Social Inequality Issues: Although the economy is growing steadily, its distribution is perceived as uneven. Many communities live above the poverty line and feel the government's policies favor capital-intensive sectors rather than the welfare of the people. Political and Legal Issues. Democracy Backsliding: The public perceives a decline in the democratic climate, marked by restrictions on freedom of speech and the criminalisation of activists. Human rights and the rule of law. The death of Online Ride-Hailing Driver: Affan Kurniawan, an online ride-hailing driver, who died after being hit by a police tactical vehicle during a demonstration, became the main trigger for the widespread wave of protests. This incident has sparked public anger, demanding justice and the rule of law. Overall, the August 15 demonstration was an accumulation of public dissatisfaction with economic issues, legal injustice, and democratic decline, which was exacerbated by the tragic incident that killed a civilian.

Furthermore, nickel mining activities on Gag Island, Kawe Island, and Manuran Island have damaged the environment of the Raja Ampat region [6]. Nickel exploitation has destroyed more than 500 hectares of forest and native vegetation. However, these three islands are protected by Law Number 1 of 2014 on the Management of Areas, Coastal Areas, and Small Islands because they are included in small islands that are prohibited from being mined [7]. And there are still many policies that are taken inappropriately in line with the philosophical values contained in Pancasila.

Based on the problem mentioned, strengthening the Pancasila ideology as the foundation of the Indonesian nation must be made the final bastion of the nation's defence in facing this issue. Furthermore, Pancasila, as part of the national ideology and state philosophy, holds the status of a framework of thought that must be followed by leaders, legislation, and other legal instruments. From the background described, the researcher takes the title "The Implementation of Pancasila Ideology as a Bastion of National Resilience in Addressing Leadership Ethics Crisis Impacted by the 18 August 2025 Sense of Disappointment in Indonesia." The purpose of this research and article is to explore and understand the role of Pancasila ideology in addressing the de-ideologization of leadership in national and state practices.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Islamic Leadership

The character of Islamic leadership is strongly emphasized by following the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad saw. The style of leadership of the Prophet Muhammad is strongly emphasized in several fundamental aspects. The values of these fundamental qualities can be explained as follows:

- a. *Siddiq*, etymologically, means true, sincere, honest, and not hiding anything and is the opposite of deceit. *Siddiq* is divided into three categories, namely, *siddiq* in speech, *siddiq* in attitude, and *siddiq* in action. As a leader, it is essential to avoid speech, attitude, and actions that are not praiseworthy, such as lying and deceit.
- b. *Amanah* (trustworthiness) [8] refers to the leader's responsibility for the tasks entrusted by the community and the position that requires accountability not only to others but also to Allah SWT.
- c. *Tabliq* (communication/reporting) *Tabligh* emphasizes the openness of information and communication within the wider community, always maintaining respectfulness. It also demonstrates that one of the duties of an Islamic leader is to advise and guide the community towards achieving common goals in both nationhood and governance [9].
- d. *Fathanah* (wisdom) is one of the four qualities possessed by Prophet Muhammad, which is his wise and thoughtful consideration before making decisions for the success and prosperity of his people. This quality must be possessed by current leaders, who are wise and clearly understand the direction of policy and the direct benefits felt by the public. Leaders must truly understand the issues and create solutions and decisions.

2.2. Ethics of Leadership According to Pancasila Values

The most relevant concept regarding leadership ethics based on Pancasila is the theory proposed by Suwardi Suryaningrat, better known as Ki Hajar Dewantara, known as the Trilogi Kepemimpinan, *Ing ngarsa sung tulodho*, *Ing madya mangun karso*, and *Tut Wuri Handayani*.

When the Leader is in Front (*Ing Ngarso Sun Tulodho*), this phrase is part of the Indonesian leadership philosophy proposed by Ki Hajar Dewantara, meaning that a leader must have a humble nature, be dignified, and set an example for those they lead, as well as possess high integrity and morality. The leader must be consistent between words and actions, so that he can motivate his followers to follow the same path [10].

Ing Ngarso Sung Tuladho aligns with the values of the One Supreme God and Just and Courteous Humanity. A leader who provides an example must have high moral integrity, reflecting piety and honesty. Additionally, the attitude of fairness and courtesy in leading is a true manifestation of human values, where the leader treats every individual with the same dignity.

When the Leader is in the Middle or (*Ing Madyo Mbangun Karso*), the second phrase is very closely related to the meaning of togetherness, solidarity, unity, and cooperation. The leader, who is among those he leads, must possess qualities of justice, the ability to inspire, motivation, and the ability to manage existing resources (empowering). Therefore, it is highly disapproved if a leader remains silent and does nothing; besides, the leader must have a broad and creative vision in addressing every problem and protect all those they lead [11].

The principle of *Ing Madya Mangun Karso* is closely related to the values of Indonesian Unity and People's Sovereignty, Guided by Wisdom in consultation and representation. The leader who is in the middle of his team to collaborate and motivate directly strengthens unity and solidarity. This process also reflects the spirit of consultation, aiming to reach a consensus, where the leader encourages active participation from all members.

When the Leader is Behind or (*Tut Wuri Handayani*) principle emphasizes the importance of guidance and encouragement from behind by the leader, supporting optimal human resource

development. This is important considering the success of a leader depends on the leadership style chosen according to the situation faced [12].

The value of Tut Wuri Handayani (who provides encouragement from behind) aligns with the principle of Social Justice for all Indonesian people. A leader who provides encouragement and trust from behind plays a role in creating equal opportunities and justice. This ensures that every individual, regardless of background, has the same opportunity to develop and contribute independently, which is the essence of social justice. Additionally, a leader's success also lies in their ability to understand the importance of investing in human resources (SDM), not only to improve team performance but also to create a foundation for long-term growth and sustainability. The various results of the literature above demonstrate the importance of a leader's role, not only as someone who gives orders, but also as a role model to those they lead.

2.3. Concept of Leadership Ethics

The Concept of Ethical Leadership Ethical leadership is a discipline that examines the moral principles and values underlying a leader's behavior and decisions. This concept extends beyond mere adherence to rules, focusing instead on a leader's moral integrity and its impact on followers, the organisation, and society as a whole [13]. According to experts, ethical leadership is not just about "what is right and wrong," but also about how a leader can embody goodness and justice in every action. Trevino and Brown (2005) argue that ethical leadership consists of two main components [14].

Moral Leadership refers to the personal qualities of a leader. A moral leader possesses strong character, is honest and trustworthy, and upholds ethical values in both personal and professional life. They are ethical leaders. Moral Management refers to the leader's actions in promoting ethical behaviour among followers. This involves communicating ethical values, establishing standards, and implementing systems that promote proper behaviour. These leaders are moral managers. Ciulla (2003) states that leadership ethics always involves a double dilemma: effectiveness and ethics [15]. An ethical leader must not only be effective in achieving goals but also must use moral means.

For example, achieving sales targets cannot justify business practices that deceive consumers. Factors Affecting Leadership Ethics. Factors affecting leadership ethics are highly complex, involving interactions between a leader's personal characteristics and the environment in which they operate. Several key factors are often discussed in academic literature, including individual factors that suggest individuals, including leaders, go through different stages of moral development. Leaders at higher stages tend to make decisions based on universal principles rather than just rules or personal consequences. Character and Personal Values: Past experiences, education, and personal beliefs shape a leader's moral compass. Leaders with high integrity tend to be more resistant to pressure to behave unethically [16]. Situational and Organizational Factors: Organizational Culture: Norms, values, and practices within the organization have a significant impact. A culture that fosters accountability and transparency will promote ethical behaviour [17]. Pressure for Conformity and Loyalty: Leaders may be influenced by pressure from superiors, peers, or stakeholders to make unethical decisions for the sake of the group. Crisis and Time Pressure: Crisis situations that demand quick decisions can erode the time for mature ethical consideration, potentially leading to questionable decisions.

2.4. De-Ideologization: Definition and Its Impact on Leadership

Deideologization is a process or state in which a society, institution, or nation stops or reduces its dependence on a particular ideology, either officially or unofficially [18] so from this understanding, it can be interpreted as: The spread of ideology is no longer actively carried out, Values and ideologies begin to be forgotten or not prioritized and common goals or group decisions are more determined by pragmatism (what is considered most useful) than by ideological beliefs.

The impact of de-ideologization in leadership refers to the weakening of the commitment and ideological guidance of Pancasila in Indonesia. This is not an overnight phenomenon, but a process that has specific characteristics in the behavior and policies of leaders. The impact of de-ideologization in leadership:

- a. Extreme Pragmatism [19]: Leaders prioritize gains or short-term results over values or principles they hold firmly. Decisions are made based solely on practical benefits, not because they are grounded in a clear ethical or ideological vision.
- b. Transactional: The relationship between leaders and the people, or among elites, becomes a "buy-sell" relationship. Political support is given in exchange for positions, projects, or other financial gains. This erodes the essence of public service and moral responsibility.
- c. Centralisation of Power: Leaders tend to concentrate power in their own hands or within their group, disregarding democratic principles and checks and balances [20]. This can hinder public participation and reduce transparency.
- d. Loss of Long-Term Vision: Due to the focus on immediate results rather than considering the nation's future, de-ideologised leaders often lose a grand vision for the country's future. Policies made are only to solve current problems without considering their impact on future generations.
- e. Populist Without Substance: Leaders adopt populist rhetoric to gain support, but it is not balanced by substantive policies and ideology-based governance. They may make emotionally appealing promises, but they are difficult or impossible to implement.
- f. The Erosion of Integrity and Corruption: Without strong moral guidance, leaders are more susceptible to corruption and the abuse of power [21]. The lack of commitment to high values such as justice and honesty opens the door to illegal and unethical practices.

3. Method

3.1. Type of Research

Normative (doctrinal) research is employed, which involves studying norms, values, or principles, as well as the basis of rules that should apply [22]. The research object or focus is on the foundations or basis of Pancasila as a guide for leaders in acting or making legal policies.

3.2. Method of Analysis:

First, the philosophical approach [23], the philosophical approach is used because the researcher wants to conduct an in-depth review of the Pancasila ideology material. This aligns with the nature of philosophy, which is fundamental, comprehensive, and speculative; therefore, this philosophical approach will thoroughly examine the research material. Second, the conceptual approach [24] involves studying various views and doctrines, which enables the researcher to identify ideas that give rise to concepts relevant to the problem being studied. Additionally, the conceptual approach allows the researcher to formulate arguments in response to the leadership.

3.3. Data Collection Technique

using the library research method [25], by collecting data and reviewing various references and previous research results that are similar, such as books, journals, and others, to obtain a theoretical basis related to the problem being studied.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The Causes of De-Ideologizing Islamic Values and Pancasila in National and State Leadership Practice

De-ideologization of leadership refers to a condition in which leading figures, whether at the national or local level, fail to demonstrate the integrity, ethics, and competence that should serve as role models for society [26]. This phenomenon is not just an individual problem but reflects systemic issues that can erode public trust and hinder national progress. The Causes of the Leadership Crisis. There are several key factors contributing to this crisis, which can be detailed as follows:

- a. **Weak Political System:** A political system that overly focuses on popularity, money, and image rather than integrity and competence will produce flawed leaders. Money, politics, and nepotism thrive, allowing unqualified individuals to rise to positions of power [27].
- b. **Low Integrity and Morality of Leaders:** This is the root of the problem. Many current leaders are trapped in corruption and abuse of power [28]. They prioritise personal wealth and group interests over serving the public good. This behavior erodes public trust and sets a very poor example.
- c. **Lack of Accountability and Oversight [29]:** Weak oversight mechanisms, whether from parliament, judicial institutions, or the public, lead leaders to feel less accountable for their actions. The absence of strict sanctions for violations makes leaders feel secure in deviating from the norm.
- d. **Failure in Character Education:** Education in Indonesia [30] generally focuses too much on academic aspects and fails to instil the values of honesty, integrity, and responsibility. This results in the younger generation lacking the necessary skills to become ethical leaders of the future.

4.2. The Impact of De-Ideologizing Leadership

4.2.1. Direct Impact on the Political System

The impact on Indonesia's political system is the emergence of transactional politics, which is a practice where decisions are based on the exchange of benefits or material compensation. This practice contradicts the principles of democracy, which should be based on ideology, programs, and integrity. Here are some types of transactional political practices that often occur in Indonesia:

- a. **Political Expense:** This refers to the money paid by political candidates to political parties to secure support or endorsements for running in elections, whether legislative or executive. Political expenses are not regulated officially and often become a heavy financial burden for candidates. If elected, there is a strong tendency for them to repay the "investment," which often leads to corruption.
- b. **The Dawn Attack:** This term refers to the provision of money or goods (such as food supplies) to voters shortly before election day (dawn). The purpose is to influence voters' choices instantly [31]. This practice is a form of political money that undermines election integrity and violates the law.
- c. **Political Barter** occurs between political parties: For example, two parties agree to support each other's candidates in two different regions. This exchange is often not based on shared vision and mission, but rather on pragmatic interests to gain power.

These practices have serious impacts on Indonesia's political system and governance:

- a. **High Political Costs [32]:** Making it difficult for integrity-driven individuals without financial capital to compete.
- b. **Corruption Incites:** Politicians who have already spent a lot of money tend to look for ways to get it back, one of which is through corruption [33].
- c. **Damages Meritocracy system [34]:** Political positions or roles are no longer filled by the most competent individuals, but by those with the largest financial resources.
- d. **Uneven Development [35]:** Government policies may favor the interests of groups or individuals who provide financial support, rather than the welfare of the general public.

4.2.2. Direct Impact on Society

The leadership crisis is not merely a personal problem of the leader, but has broad and serious impacts on society and the nation. These impacts are interconnected and can erode a nation's foundation. The following are some of the main impacts of the leadership crisis:

- a. **Loss of Public Trust** When leaders fail to be role models, the public will lose trust in them and the institutions they lead. Trust is the cornerstone of the relationship between the government and the people. If trust is eroded, people will feel apathetic, cynical, and less motivated to participate in development [36]. This can also trigger social resistance or non-compliance with existing policies.

- b. Moral and Ethical Damage of Leaders [37] who should be role models instead set bad examples, such as through corruption, nepotism, or unethical behavior. This can gradually erode moral values in society. Young people may grow up with the perception that success does not have to be achieved honestly, but can be attained through means. Integrity, honesty, and hard work are no longer considered important.
- c. The weakening of State Institutions. Crisis leadership is often rooted in corrupt practices and abuse of power. This makes state institutions ineffective and fragile. The judiciary may lose its independence, parliament becomes a transactional arena, and bureaucracy becomes slow and unresponsive. Weak institutions cannot serve the people well, and can even become tools to consolidate unhealthy power.
- d. The stagnation in development decisions made by leaders lacking integrity or competence is often based on personal or group interests, not public interests. Development projects that should benefit the people can stall or be diverted. This leads to economic and social stagnation. The nation's resources are wasted, and opportunities to improve community welfare are lost.
- e. The potential for social conflict can be triggered by injustice and inequality caused by poor leadership. If people feel unheard or treated unfairly, they may react with anger or protest. On a larger scale, this can lead to political instability and division within society.

4.2.3. Direct Impact on National Stability

- a. Vulnerability to fragmentation and conflict from leaders lacking integrity and unable to serve as role models often leads to a loss of morale [38]. As a result, they struggle to unite diverse groups within society. They may resort to identity politics or divisive issues to maintain power, rather than building unity. This can escalate social tensions and trigger horizontal fragmentation among groups, whether based on ethnicity, religion, or economics, ultimately threatening national sovereignty and integrity.
- b. Political instability and insecurity, often accompanied by leadership crises, are frequently marked by corruption scandals, abuse of power, or the inability to govern effectively. This sparks mass protests and opposition movements demanding change. If these demands are not addressed properly, the situation can worsen into political chaos and even civil unrest. Security institutions, such as the military and police, can also fragment or lose public trust, further endangering national security and stability.
- c. The Deterioration of a Country's Position on the International Stage with Leadership Crisis Tends to Have a Negative Image in the Eyes of the World [39]. They are perceived as unstable, unreliable, and high-risk for investment. This can affect diplomatic relations, trade, and international cooperation [40]. Other countries may be reluctant to form partnerships or provide aid, fearing that the funds provided will be misused. This situation weakens the country's position in global forums, such as the UN or G20 [41], and reduces the country's ability to advocate for its national interests. Long-Term Effects In the long term, a leadership crisis creates uncertainty and a lack of clear direction for the country. Without strong vision and credible role models, the public and private sector become hesitant to invest or plan for the future. This hinders sustainable development and can push the country into a cycle of political, economic, and social decline.

4.2.4. Reconstruction of Islamic Leadership Ethics and Pancasila.

The way to strengthen the ideology and ethics of government leaders in Indonesia cannot be separated from Pancasila values. This strengthening can be done by implementing structured Pancasila character education by the government and the community. The following are ways of Strengthening Based on Pancasila Values and the ethics of the government, which can be done by integrating the five principles of Pancasila into the working mechanism and culture of the bureaucracy as follows:

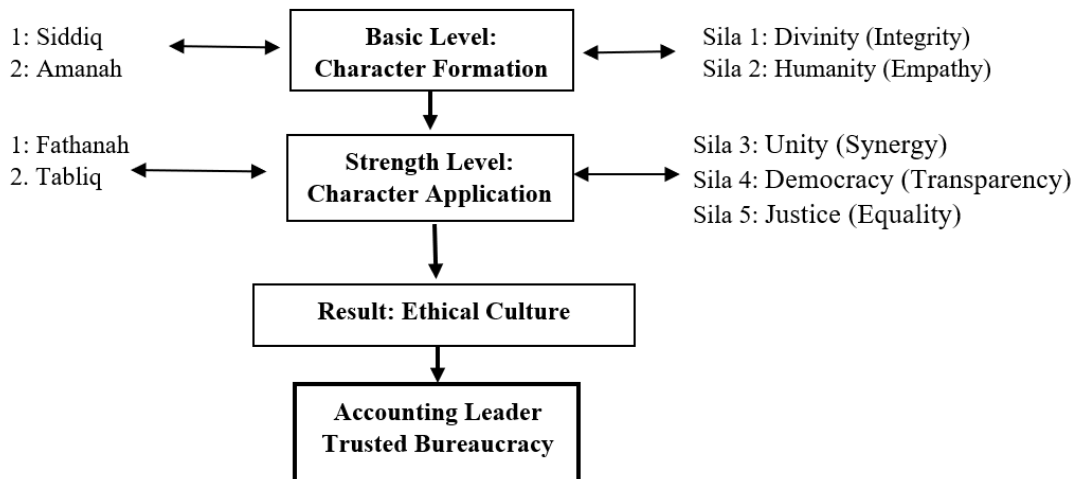


Fig.1. Leadership Enhancement Framework Based on Islamic Values and Pancasila

- The Almighty and Humanity that is Just and Courteous [42]. This strengthening focuses on the development of the moral integrity and personal ethics of officials. Every official must receive continuous education and training about the importance of integrity, honesty, and responsibility.
- Union aims to promote collaboration and synergy among government agencies [43]. Synchronizing policies between ministries and agencies to avoid overlap and conflicts of interest. Building an effective communication forum among agencies to strengthen coordination.
- This People and Social Justice [44] strength focuses on increasing accountability and public trust in the government [45], by involving the community in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, for example, through digital platforms or public forums. By internalizing and implementing these values, the government's ideological and ethical institutions will become stronger, thus able to prevent leadership crises and build public trust.

By applying the five Islamic values in strengthening character education for leaders or officials, it can be implemented in government institutions such as the Pancasila Ideology Development Agency (BPIP) [46], by conducting coordination and synchronization among state institutions, ministries, and regional governments. Organizing education and training about Pancasila for state officials and the community. And strengthening character [47] from the education levels (SD, SMP, SMA, and University) [48].

The focus on leadership ethics in a society that adopts the Pancasila ideology is on integrity, service, and accountability. A leader should not act arbitrarily or base their decisions on personal or group interests. Instead, they must be able to accommodate various perspectives and interests of the diverse community. Characteristics of Leadership Ethics in Pancasila Ideology. Here are some ideal characteristics of leadership ethics in a society with an open ideology:

- Service and Participation: Leaders must see themselves as servants of the people, not rulers. Decisions are made through consultation and active participation from the people, not from the top down.
- Integrity and Transparency: Leaders must be honest, consistent, and transparent in every action. They must be willing to open data and information to the public to prevent corruption and abuse of power.
- Tolerance and Justice: Leaders must act fairly and non-discriminatory towards any group, whether it is minorities or majorities. They must be role models in respecting differences, whether in terms of ethnicity, religion, or political views.

- d. Accountability and Openness: Leaders are accountable for every decision they make and are willing to accept criticism from the public. They should not shut themselves off from input or avoid dialogue, even with opposing parties.
- e. Focused on Common Welfare: Ethical leadership focuses on improving the welfare of all community members. This includes not only economic development but also social justice, education, and environmental protection. Thus, ethical leadership in an open ideology does not merely demand competence but also strong character, which can prioritize the common good above all else.

Differences in character strengthening and leadership ethics based on Pancasila values can be distinguished based on Pancasila's philosophical values and leaders oriented towards power. As follows:

Table 1. Characteristic of leadership

Distinguishing Aspects	Pancasila and Islam	Power Orientation
Goals	To give birth to leaders who are integrity, dedicated souls, and serve the people	Giving birth to a capable and secure power base
Main Focus	Character development, morality, and leadership ethics	Increased popularity, political capital, and electability
Relationship with the People	Prioritizing people's aspirations, emphasizing consultation, and transparency	Tends to use people as political objects to curry favor
Decision-making	Based on wisdom, prudence, and mature consideration for the general welfare	Based on pragmatic calculation and the interests of the group or individual
Leadership Characteristics	Serving, caring, and advocating for social justice.	To dominate, control, and enrich oneself or one's group.
Success	Public confidence, social stability, and the realization of justice for all the people	Victory in elections, mastery of strategic positions, and political influence

5. Conclusion

The Pancasila Ideology is the foundation of leadership ethics and a de-ideologization bastion; the impact of de-ideologization on leadership ethics creates leaders oriented towards power, creating political and state instability. The Pancasila mechanism as a leadership ethics bastion can be implemented in three stages: the first stage is the basic stage (character formation) with the principles of belief in God and humanity, the second stage (character application) with the principles of unity, democracy, and justice, and the final stage (Ethical Culture) producing accountable leaders and a trusted bureaucracy. Giving birth to leaders with integrity, a spirit of dedication, and serving the people, the practical benefit of this research is expected to be directly used by the community as a practical reference and in selecting leaders, and can become a reference for bureaucracy in character education and recruitment processes. The theoretical benefit is expected to be that this research can contribute to science and the development of Pancasila theory.

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