Indonesian Anti Corruption Studies
ISSN: XXXX-XXXXX (Online)
Vol. 3, No. 2, 2026, pp. 131-148
Published online since June 30, 2026

# Political Dynasties and Local Corruption in Indonesia: Examining the Relationship between Concentrated Political Power and Public Accountability

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.65815/qxnyca44

| Submitted: 18-01-2026 | Revised: 11-03-2026, 21-05-2026 | Accepted: 20-06-2026 |
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## Abstract

Political dynasties remain an important feature of local political competition in Indonesia and raise questions concerning the relationship between concentrated political power and corruption risks. This article examines whether prolonged political control by interconnected political families may weaken institutional checks and public accountability. Using normative juridical and socio-political analysis, the study evaluates local government structures, political recruitment, conflicts of interest, procurement, licensing, and oversight institutions. The article does not assume that political dynasties automatically produce corruption but argues that concentration of political influence may create structural conditions conducive to conflicts of interest and weakened oversight. The study proposes an anti-corruption framework focused on transparency of political connections, beneficial ownership disclosure, conflict-of-interest regulation, independent local oversight, and stronger civic monitoring. Particular attention is given to local governments where executive, legislative, business, and party networks overlap. The article concludes that anti-corruption policy should address structural power relationships rather than focusing exclusively on individual corrupt acts. Strengthening institutional independence and transparency can reduce the risks associated with concentrated political power while preserving citizens' constitutional rights to participate in elections.

[*Dinasti politik tetap menjadi ciri penting persaingan politik lokal di Indonesia dan menimbulkan pertanyaan mengenai hubungan antara konsentrasi kekuasaan politik dan risiko korupsi. Artikel ini mengkaji apakah kendali politik yang berkepanjangan oleh keluarga politik yang saling terkait dapat melemahkan pengawasan kelembagaan dan akuntabilitas publik. Dengan menggunakan analisis yuridis dan sosio-politik normatif, studi ini mengevaluasi struktur pemerintahan lokal, perekrutan politik, konflik kepentingan, pengadaan, perizinan, dan lembaga pengawasan. Artikel ini tidak berasumsi bahwa dinasti politik secara otomatis menghasilkan korupsi,* *tetapi berpendapat bahwa konsentrasi pengaruh politik dapat menciptakan kondisi struktural yang kondusif bagi konflik kepentingan dan pengawasan yang melemah. Studi ini mengusulkan kerangka kerja anti-korupsi yang berfokus pada transparansi koneksi politik, pengungkapan kepemilikan manfaat, regulasi konflik kepentingan, pengawasan lokal yang independen, dan pengawasan warga yang lebih kuat. Perhatian khusus diberikan pada pemerintahan lokal di mana jaringan eksekutif, legislatif, bisnis, dan partai saling tumpang tindih. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa kebijakan anti-korupsi harus mengatasi hubungan kekuasaan struktural daripada hanya berfokus pada tindakan korupsi individu. Memperkuat independensi dan transparansi kelembagaan dapat mengurangi risiko yang terkait dengan konsentrasi kekuasaan politik sambil tetap menjaga hak konstitusional warga negara untuk berpartisipasi dalam pemilihan.*]

**Keywords:** Political dynasties, local government, corruption, political power, Indonesia

## Introduction

Indonesia's democratic transition created a political environment in which direct elections, decentralization, and local autonomy significantly expanded opportunities for political participation. The transfer of authority from the central government to regional governments was intended to improve responsiveness, strengthen democratic representation, and bring public decision-making closer to citizens. At the same time, decentralization transformed local political offices into strategically valuable positions because regional executives and legislatures gained substantial influence over public budgets, development priorities, administrative appointments, procurement, licensing, and the management of local economic resources. These institutional changes created new opportunities for democratic competition, but they also produced conditions in which political influence could be accumulated and reproduced through family, business, party, and patronage networks (Aspinall 2011; Hadiz 2004; Hadiz and Robison 2005).

Political dynasties consequently emerged as a recurring feature of Indonesian local democracy. Family members of incumbent or former political leaders have contested elections for positions as governors, regents, mayors, legislators, and other public offices. The phenomenon does not necessarily constitute a violation of democratic principles because citizenship and political participation cannot ordinarily be denied solely on the basis of family relationships. Indonesian constitutional law protects the right of citizens to participate in government and to obtain equal opportunities in public affairs. The Constitutional Court, through Decision No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015, invalidated restrictions that broadly prohibited family members of incumbent regional heads from contesting local elections. The

Court considered that such restrictions could unjustifiably limit political rights and create unequal treatment among citizens.

Nevertheless, the constitutional legality of political participation by family members does not eliminate concerns regarding the concentration of political power. A political dynasty may generate corruption risks when formal political authority overlaps with family relationships, party organizations, business networks, and local bureaucratic structures. Under these circumstances, political competition may remain formally democratic while accountability becomes substantively weaker. Elections can determine who occupies public office, but elections alone do not necessarily prevent the consolidation of influence across different institutions. The critical question is therefore not whether political families should be categorically excluded from electoral competition. Rather, it is whether institutions remain sufficiently independent to investigate, monitor, and constrain the exercise of power when politically connected actors occupy multiple strategic positions.

This distinction is particularly important in corruption analysis. Political dynasties should not automatically be equated with corruption. Such an assumption would ignore the fact that corruption may be committed by political leaders without family-based political networks, while members of political families may hold public office without engaging in illegal conduct. Purwaningsih and Widodo (2020) demonstrate this complexity in their analysis of incumbency, political dynasties, and corruption in Indonesia. Their study concludes that corruption is not exclusively performed by dynastic political leaders and argues that reducing corruption requires stronger government control rather than simply prohibiting political dynasties. However, the absence of an automatic causal relationship does not mean that political concentration is institutionally irrelevant. Concentrated political power may alter the probability that conflicts of interest, patronage, collusion, or ineffective oversight will occur.

The relationship between power concentration and corruption can therefore be understood through a structural rather than deterministic framework. Corruption becomes more likely where political actors possess substantial discretion over valuable public resources while facing limited monitoring or weak institutional constraints. Klitgaard's classic analysis emphasizes that corruption risks are related to the interaction between monopoly, discretion, and accountability (Klitgaard 1988). Political dynasties may contribute to this environment when family-based networks extend across institutions that should function as independent checks on one another. For example, risks may increase where related actors simultaneously possess influence within executive government, local legislatures, political parties, private businesses, or state-owned enterprises. Under such conditions, formal institutional separation may remain intact while informal political relationships reduce the practical independence of accountability mechanisms.

Indonesia's legal framework provides several relevant safeguards. The 1945 Constitution establishes democratic principles, equality before the law, and decentralized regional government. Law No. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government regulates the distribution of authority between central and regional governments, while Law No. 10 of 2016 concerning the Election of Governors, Regents, and Mayors establishes the legal framework for direct local elections. Anti-corruption policy is principally governed by Law No. 31 of 1999 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Corruption, as amended by Law No. 20 of 2001, while Law No. 28 of 1999 establishes principles of clean state administration free from corruption, collusion, and nepotism. Law No. 30 of 2014 concerning Government Administration also regulates the lawful exercise of administrative authority and restrictions on the abuse of power.

The normative problem is that these legal frameworks primarily address individual misconduct, formal conflicts, or specific corrupt transactions. They are less capable of directly addressing broader patterns through which concentrated political influence may affect institutional behavior without producing immediately identifiable criminal evidence. A politically connected local government may comply formally with procurement procedures while informal relationships influence which businesses receive information, political support, access to decision-makers, or other advantages. Similarly, public officials may avoid direct ownership of companies while maintaining indirect economic interests through relatives, associates, or complex corporate structures. The regulatory challenge is therefore to identify structural risks before they become completed criminal offenses.

This article adopts a normative juridical and socio-political analytical approach, integrated into the introductory framework rather than presented as a separate methodological section. The normative dimension examines constitutional provisions, election law, regional government law, anti-corruption legislation, administrative law, procurement regulation, public information rules, conflict-of-interest principles, and relevant Constitutional Court decisions. The socio-political dimension evaluates academic research concerning political dynasties, decentralization, patronage, local oligarchy, corruption, electoral competition, and institutional accountability. The article uses a descriptive-analytical approach to explain the development of political family networks and an argumentative approach to assess whether Indonesia's existing accountability institutions are capable of managing the risks associated with concentrated political influence.

The first group of previous studies focuses on the emergence and political development of dynasties in democratic systems. Dal By, Dal By, and Snyder (2009) demonstrate that political power may become hereditary even within formally competitive electoral institutions, particularly where political families possess advantages in name recognition, networks, financial resources, and access to political organizations. Geys (2017) provides a broader comparative review and argues that political dynasties should be examined not only as an electoral phenomenon but also through their consequences for representation, economic policy, political competition, and democratic accountability. Studies of dynastic politics therefore demonstrate that democratic elections do not necessarily eliminate hereditary patterns of political power because families may accumulate political capital that can be transferred between generations or relatives.

A second group of scholarship examines the consequences of political dynasties for governance and corruption. Querubнн (2016) argues that political dynasties can affect the quality of democratic representation because political families may create barriers to political entry and reduce competition. Tusalem and Pe-Aguirre (2013), examining the Philippines, identify negative relationships between dynastic political dominance and aspects of effective democratic governance. Mendoza et al. (2016) similarly find significant relationships between political dynasties and development outcomes in the Philippine context. These comparative studies are important for Indonesia because both countries combine electoral democracy with decentralized government, substantial family-based political networks, and uneven institutional capacity. However, comparative findings cannot simply be transferred to Indonesia without examining the country’s distinctive constitutional and institutional structure.

The third group of studies concentrates specifically on Indonesia. Mariana and Husin (2017) argue that local democratization has produced a paradoxical environment in which electoral competition coexists with the expansion of political dynasties. Purwaningsih and Widodo (2020) provide one of the most directly relevant analyses by examining incumbency, dynastic politics, and corruption at the local level. Their study rejects the simplistic proposition that political dynasties automatically cause corruption and instead emphasizes the importance of institutional supervision, political recruitment, bureaucratic neutrality, transparency, and accountability. Riwanto and Suryaningsih (2023) approach the issue from the perspective of responsive constitutional law and argue that local political dynasties may create conditions for political corruption requiring preventive legal strategies. Widyastuti, Wardiyono, and Sutoyo (2022) further demonstrate that family-based political competition may extend even to village-level governance.

The existing literature nevertheless leaves an important analytical gap. Much of the Indonesian scholarship asks whether political dynasties are legally permissible, whether they undermine democracy, or whether they are directly associated with individual corruption cases. Less attention has been given to the institutional mechanisms through which concentrated political power becomes a corruption risk without automatically constituting corruption itself. The novelty of this article lies in examining political dynasties through the concept of networked accountability. It argues that the principal risk arises when family-based political power overlaps with institutions responsible for controlling one another. The article therefore shifts the analysis from the question “Are political dynasties corrupt?” to the more institutionally relevant question: Under what conditions can concentrated political networks weaken public accountability and facilitate corruption?

## Political Dynasties as a Form of Concentrated Political Capital

Political dynasties should first be understood as mechanisms through which political capital is preserved and reproduced. Family relationships can transmit public recognition, political networks, campaign organizations, financial resources, and symbolic legitimacy. A relative of an established political leader may therefore enter electoral competition with advantages unavailable to ordinary citizens. This advantage does not necessarily violate electoral law because political reputation, family background, and social networks are common features of democratic competition. However, when these advantages become sufficiently concentrated, they may affect the openness of political recruitment. Political parties may prefer candidates connected to established families because such candidates possess financial resources and recognizable political identities, while independent or less-connected candidates face higher barriers to entry.

The concentration of political capital can be reinforced through incumbency. Incumbent leaders often possess visibility, access to political networks, relationships with party organizations, and influence over the distribution of public attention. Although Indonesian election law prohibits the misuse of state facilities for campaign purposes, the distinction between legitimate incumbency advantages and abuse of public resources can be difficult to maintain in practice. When an incumbent family seeks to extend its political influence through another relative, the transfer of political capital may become particularly significant. Purwaningsih and Widodo (2020) argue that direct local elections created opportunities for incumbents to build political dynasties and perpetuate political influence, while emphasizing that stronger institutional supervision remains preferable to categorical prohibition.

The constitutional status of political dynasties further complicates the issue. The right to participate in elections is a fundamental political right, and family relationships cannot automatically disqualify citizens from seeking office. Constitutional Court Decision No. 33/PUU-XIII/2015 therefore represents an important legal recognition that anti-dynasty restrictions must not violate equality and political participation. Yet constitutional protection of candidacy does not imply constitutional immunity from conflict-of-interest rules or anti-corruption oversight. The legal system must distinguish between the right to seek office and the use of office to secure improper benefits for relatives or politically connected businesses.

This distinction suggests that political dynasty regulation should focus less on family identity and more on the consequences of concentrated influence. A legal system that prohibits relatives from participating in elections may violate political rights while failing to prevent corruption committed through non-family networks. Conversely, a legal system that ignores family connections entirely may fail to recognize circumstances in which public authority and private interests overlap. The appropriate approach is therefore neither blanket prohibition nor complete regulatory neutrality. It is the creation of stronger transparency and accountability mechanisms capable of identifying when personal relationships generate conflicts between public duties and private interests.

Political dynasties can also be understood through the broader concept of local oligarchy. Hadiz (2004) argues that decentralization in Indonesia did not simply democratize power but also enabled the reorganization of local predatory interests. Hadiz and Robison (2005) similarly emphasize the capacity of old and new elites to adapt to democratic institutions. Winters (2011) provides a broader analysis of oligarchic power, demonstrating how concentrated wealth can coexist with formal democracy. Political dynasties may therefore function within broader elite networks rather than operating as isolated family structures. Their anti-corruption significance depends on whether political, economic, and bureaucratic power become mutually reinforcing.

## From Family Networks to Corruption Risks: The Institutional Pathways

The first institutional pathway involves the overlap between political authority and private economic interests. Regional governments exercise authority over procurement, licensing, land administration, development planning, public infrastructure, and other economically valuable decisions. A political family may not directly own a company receiving public benefits, yet relatives or trusted associates may hold formal or beneficial interests in relevant businesses. This creates a conflict-of-interest risk where political influence affects decisions from which connected economic actors benefit. Transparency concerning formal company ownership is therefore insufficient when the beneficial owners or politically exposed persons behind corporate structures remain unclear.

Beneficial ownership transparency is particularly important in the context of procurement and licensing. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has repeatedly emphasized the importance of identifying the natural persons who ultimately own or control legal entities. In Indonesia, Presidential Regulation No. 13 of 2018 established the principle of identifying beneficial ownership for corporations in the context of preventing and eradicating money laundering and terrorism financing. Although this framework was not designed exclusively for political dynasty risks, beneficial ownership information can become an important anti-corruption instrument where politically connected individuals or relatives are associated with companies benefiting from public decisions.

The second pathway concerns public procurement. Procurement involves significant public expenditure and creates repeated interaction between government officials and private suppliers. Local political concentration can create corruption risks when businesses associated with politically connected networks obtain privileged access to information, procurement planning, or decision-makers. Nurmandi (2017) found that local political power could affect procurement processes even where electronic procurement systems were used. This finding is important because it demonstrates that technological transparency does not necessarily eliminate political influence. Corruption risks may emerge before a tender is electronically announced, particularly during budget planning, project design, specification development, and the selection of projects for implementation.

Ariani and Setyaningrum's research on e-procurement similarly cautions against technological determinism. Their empirical analysis found no automatic association between e-procurement implementation and anti-corruption strategies in Indonesian local governments. The implication is that formal digital systems can improve procedural transparency while leaving underlying political relationships intact. If procurement specifications are designed to favor particular suppliers or if companies coordinate bids through political connections, electronic procedures may document competition without producing genuine competition. Anti-corruption policy must therefore connect digital procurement with beneficial ownership disclosure, political exposure screening, conflict-of-interest declarations, and independent audit mechanisms.

The third pathway involves bureaucratic neutrality. Political families may accumulate influence over public administration when regional leaders, party networks, and bureaucratic officials become connected through long-term patronage relationships. Indonesian civil-service law formally requires professional neutrality, but practical neutrality may be weakened where appointments, promotions, or institutional careers are perceived to depend on political loyalty. The risk becomes particularly significant during transitions between related political leaders because bureaucratic networks developed under one administration may continue under another. This continuity can provide administrative stability, but it may also reduce the willingness of officials to report irregularities involving politically powerful networks.

The fourth pathway concerns local legislatures and budgetary oversight. Decentralization created local representative institutions with authority over regional budgeting and policy. In principle, regional legislatures should function as democratic checks on executive power. However, oversight can become weaker where political parties, family networks, or transactional relationships align executive and legislative interests. A regional budget may then be formally approved through legal procedures while political bargaining occurs outside public scrutiny. Anti-corruption policy must therefore evaluate not only whether legislatures possess formal powers but whether opposition, budget transparency, public participation, and independent scrutiny are sufficient to ensure that those powers are exercised.

## Accountability Under Conditions of Concentrated Political Power

Public accountability becomes particularly difficult when the institutions responsible for monitoring government are themselves affected by concentrated political influence. Political accountability ordinarily relies on elections, legislative oversight, civil society, the media, administrative supervision, auditing institutions, and law-enforcement agencies. Each institution performs a different function, and the effectiveness of the system depends partly on their relative independence. Political concentration creates a structural risk when the same network exercises influence across several of these institutions. The problem is therefore not the existence of political relationships but the reduction of independent scrutiny.

Electoral accountability alone may be insufficient. Citizens can vote leaders out of office, but elections occur periodically and may not provide voters with complete information about conflicts of interest, beneficial ownership, or informal business relationships. Incumbent families may also possess advantages in name recognition, campaign organization, and political finance. Where citizens lack access to reliable information, elections may validate political authority without necessarily providing meaningful accountability for government decisions. Ferejohn (1986) and Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes (1999) emphasize the importance of information and institutional incentives for electoral accountability. Voters cannot effectively sanction misconduct that remains concealed.

Public information disclosure therefore becomes a central component of anti-corruption policy. Law No. 14 of 2008 concerning Public Information Disclosure provides an important legal basis for transparency in Indonesia. Local governments should make budget information, procurement data, development priorities, licensing decisions, and other relevant information accessible in formats understandable to ordinary citizens. Transparency should also include information concerning companies receiving significant public contracts where legally permissible. The objective is not merely to publish documents but to enable meaningful scrutiny. Lindstedt and Naurin (2010) argue that transparency does not automatically reduce corruption because information must be connected to actors capable of using it for accountability.

Civil society and local media consequently play an important role in converting information into accountability. In areas where formal oversight is weak, journalists, community organizations, academic institutions, and citizen groups may identify conflicts between political authority and private interests. However, civic monitoring requires access to information and protection from intimidation or retaliation. Political concentration can create informal pressures where local economic dependence, party influence, or social relationships discourage criticism. Anti-corruption policy should therefore strengthen not only the right to information but also the institutional security of individuals and organizations engaged in legitimate public oversight.

Independent auditing is another essential safeguard. Indonesia's Audit Board and Government Internal Supervisory Apparatus play important roles in examining public financial management. Yet audit findings must be followed by meaningful corrective action and, where appropriate, investigation. A strong accountability framework requires clear procedures for responding to repeated audit findings, unexplained procurement irregularities, or suspicious financial patterns. Concentrated political power can weaken accountability where audit recommendations are formally accepted but institutionally ignored. The effectiveness of oversight therefore depends on consequences as well as detection.

Law-enforcement institutions provide a final layer of accountability, particularly where corruption has reached the level of criminal conduct. However, anti-corruption policy should not rely exclusively on criminal prosecution. Criminal law usually operates after misconduct has occurred and requires a high evidentiary threshold. Structural risks involving political networks may remain legal until a specific abuse, bribe, fraudulent procurement process, or other offense can be proven. Preventive mechanisms are therefore essential. Conflict-of-interest disclosure, procurement analytics, beneficial ownership information, asset reporting, and independent auditing can identify vulnerabilities before public losses become irreversible.

## Reframing Political Dynasties through Conflict-of-Interest Governance

The central regulatory problem is not that politicians have families. Political and family life inevitably coexist in democratic societies. The problem emerges when public decisions create benefits for persons connected to public officials and when those relationships remain undisclosed or insufficiently regulated. A conflict-of-interest framework therefore provides a more constitutionally balanced response than a blanket prohibition on political dynasties. Rather than restricting citizens because of their family identity, the law should regulate circumstances in which personal relationships create a substantial risk that public authority will be exercised for private benefit.

Conflict-of-interest regulation should require politically exposed persons to disclose relevant family, business, and financial relationships where those relationships intersect with public decision-making. Such disclosure should extend to public procurement, licensing, public-private partnerships, land and natural-resource decisions, and appointments to strategic public positions. The relevant question is whether a relationship could reasonably affect impartial public decision-making or create the appearance of preferential treatment. Disclosure does not itself establish wrongdoing, but it enables institutions and citizens to identify risks requiring monitoring.

Beneficial ownership disclosure should complement conflict-of-interest rules. Formal corporate ownership may not reveal who ultimately benefits from a company. A relative, business associate, nominee, or other intermediary may hold shares while the actual economic relationship remains hidden. Public procurement and licensing agencies should therefore have access to verified beneficial ownership information and should screen for connections with politically exposed persons. Where a company is connected to an official involved in the relevant decision, mandatory disclosure, recusal, or exclusion procedures should apply according to the nature of the conflict.

Asset reporting also requires stronger institutional integration. Public officials may submit wealth declarations, but anti-corruption benefits depend on whether reports are verified and connected with other available information. Risk-based systems could compare declared assets with beneficial ownership records, company affiliations, procurement data, and unexplained changes in wealth. The objective should be preventive detection rather than automatic criminalization. An unusual financial pattern should trigger verification and explanation before more serious legal conclusions are drawn.

Political parties should also become part of the accountability framework. Dynastic politics frequently depends on party nomination because parties function as gatekeepers for electoral recruitment. Where candidate selection is highly centralized or financially dependent, parties may prioritize family-based candidates with access to established resources and networks. Greater transparency in political recruitment can therefore reduce the advantages associated with concentrated political capital. Parties should disclose candidate-selection procedures, campaign-finance arrangements, and potential conflicts involving candidates connected to incumbent governments or major local businesses.

The objective of these reforms is not to eliminate family members from politics. Such a policy would be difficult to justify constitutionally and could create arbitrary discrimination. The more appropriate objective is to prevent family relationships from operating as concealed channels through which public power and private benefit become intertwined. Political rights should remain protected, while accountability requirements should become stronger in proportion to the risks associated with concentrated political and economic influence.

## Building a Networked Anti-Corruption Framework for Local Government

A first component of a networked anti-corruption framework should be political-connection transparency. Candidates and senior public officials should disclose relevant business interests, close family relationships connected to public contracts or licenses, and positions held in corporations or other legal entities. These disclosures should be standardized and periodically updated. Information should be sufficiently detailed to permit institutional verification while respecting legitimate privacy interests unrelated to public accountability.

A second component should be beneficial ownership integration. Procurement authorities, licensing agencies, auditors, and anti-corruption institutions should be able to identify the natural persons who ultimately own or control companies benefiting from public decisions. Procurement systems should include risk indicators where suppliers are connected to politically exposed persons or their close associates. A political connection should not automatically disqualify a company, but undisclosed conflicts should trigger scrutiny and may require recusal or exclusion depending on the circumstances.

A third component should be independent procurement monitoring. Electronic procurement should be supplemented by data analytics capable of identifying unusual patterns, including repeated contract awards, limited competition, suspiciously similar bids, or recurring relationships between particular suppliers and public officials. High-risk projects should be subject to enhanced audit and, where necessary, independent probity review. The aim is to identify networked corruption that cannot be detected merely by checking whether formal tender procedures were completed.

A fourth component should strengthen bureaucratic neutrality and whistleblower protection. Civil servants should have secure mechanisms for reporting political pressure, procurement manipulation, or conflicts of interest. Retaliation against officials who report suspected misconduct must be treated seriously because concentrated political power can create fear within local bureaucracies. Protection should include confidential reporting, independent investigation, safeguards against arbitrary transfer or demotion, and legal support where appropriate.

A fifth component should reinforce civic and media accountability. Local governments should publish machine-readable data concerning budgets, procurement, strategic licenses, development projects, and relevant corporate beneficiaries. Civil society organizations, journalists, universities, and citizens should be able to analyze this information without unnecessary barriers. Public participation should also occur before major decisions are finalized rather than only after contracts have been awarded or policies adopted.

Finally, anti-corruption policy should use network analysis rather than purely individual analysis. Traditional investigations often focus on whether one official received one illegal payment. Such investigations remain essential, but concentrated political power may operate through broader relationships involving family members, companies, party officials, intermediaries, and bureaucratic actors. Institutional monitoring should therefore examine patterns of repeated interaction and potential conflicts. This does not mean that family or political relationships constitute proof of criminality. Rather, they should be treated as relevant risk indicators when combined with access to public resources, undisclosed financial interests, or repeated irregular decisions.

## Conclusion

Political dynasties should not automatically be treated as synonymous with corruption. Members of political families retain constitutional rights to participate in democratic elections, and corruption can occur under both dynastic and non-dynastic political leadership. A blanket prohibition on family members seeking public office would therefore create serious constitutional and democratic concerns. Nevertheless, political dynasties may generate structural corruption risks when family relationships contribute to the concentration of influence across executive institutions, legislatures, political parties, bureaucracies, and private businesses. The critical analytical issue is not family identity but the extent to which interconnected political networks weaken independent accountability.

The Indonesian legal framework already contains important principles relating to democratic participation, clean government, corruption prevention, public information, regional administration, procurement, and beneficial ownership. However, these mechanisms remain insufficient when they operate in isolation. Public procurement transparency cannot fully address corruption when ownership structures remain hidden. Asset reporting cannot provide effective prevention when declarations are not meaningfully verified. Elections cannot ensure accountability when citizens lack access to information about political and economic connections. Likewise, criminal enforcement cannot prevent structural risks that have not yet developed into provable criminal transactions.

This article therefore proposes a networked anti-corruption framework centered on political-connection transparency, beneficial ownership disclosure, conflict-of-interest governance, independent procurement monitoring, bureaucratic neutrality, whistleblower protection, open public data, and strengthened civic oversight. Such an approach preserves citizens' constitutional right to participate in politics while recognizing that concentrated political power requires correspondingly strong accountability mechanisms. The objective should not be to criminalize political families, but to ensure that no family, party, business network, or political elite becomes sufficiently powerful to control the institutions responsible for monitoring public authority. In this sense, the prevention of local corruption requires Indonesia to move beyond an individualistic conception of wrongdoing and toward a more structural understanding of how concentrated power can create, conceal, and reproduce opportunities for corruption.

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## Acknowledgment

None

## Funding Information

None


## Conflicting Interest Statement

The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

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N/A