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Investigating cognitive mechanisms underlying the corrupt intention: The role of moral disengagement and belief in a just world

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Abstract*:* Corruption is unethical behaviour that undermines integrity, erodes social trust, and causes widespread harm to society. Two psychological constructs that may explain individuals' propensity to engage in corrupt behaviour are moral disengagement and belief in a just world. This study aims to investigate the cognitive mechanisms underlying individuals' intentions to engage in corruption by examining the role that these two variables play. The study employed a quantitative design involving 120 participants. Data was analysed to test the predictive contributions of moral disengagement, as well as the general and personal dimensions of belief in a just world, towards corrupt intentions. The results indicate that moral disengagement significantly predicts corrupt intentions. Furthermore, the two dimensions of belief in a just world exhibit distinct patterns of influence. General belief in a just world was found to be significant in predicting corrupt intentions, whereas personal belief in a just world did not show a significant influence. These findings expand our understanding of the psychological factors underpinning corrupt behaviour and provide important implications for the development of prevention strategies and psychological interventions to reduce the propensity to corruption.
Keywords: Corruption; Moral Disengagement; Belief in a Just World

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Introduction

Corruption has become one of the greatest challenges threatening the sustainability of our nation. This behaviour leads to the misuse of resources and inefficiencies in production processes, turning resource potential into a "resource curse" (Cappelen et al., 2021; Lutfi et al., 2020). In this case, Indonesia, as a nation rich in resources, is particularly vulnerable. Corruption is considered the main cause of various social issues, from the misuse of social funds to kinship-based political decisions or nepotism, high unemployment rates, and social inequality among citizens (Zaloznaya, 2014).

Despite its negative and harmful consequences, corruption continues to persist in Indonesia. In 2023 alone, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) recorded 5,079 public reports related to corruption cases across many sectors. The KPK's records for the same year indicated that most perpetrators of corruption were mid-level civil servants in government. This suggests that the civil service sector is vulnerable to corrupt behaviour, largely due to individual belief and environmental factors commonly found in the workplace.

The common reaction uttered in such situation involve condemnation or a sense of hope that perpetrator will receive an appropriate punishment. This mindset reflects psychological defence mechanism used to cope with events that are impactful and difficult to resolve. Within religious context, there is a widespread belief that justice will prevail beyond formal punishment systems—often through unexpected consequences called karma—which has been shown to reduce individuals' tendency to cheat (Wiese, 2023). Karma triggers the belief in a just world and might affect one's willingness to participate in certain social act (Duong et al., 2024). Moreover, this relation-

ship is also strengthened by communal orientation (Guo et al., 2022), which is commonly found in collectivist societies such as Indonesia.

Individuals with low levels of Belief in a Just World may perceive that punishment is not always proportionate to wrongdoing, which increases their likelihood of committing unethical acts. In contrast, individuals with high BJW tend to trust in the fairness of law enforcement (perceived punishment), and thus have lower perceptions of corruption (Modesto et al., 2020; Wiese, 2023). Furthermore, belief in a just world has been consistently linked to prosocial behaviour (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2025).

The belief in a just world (BJW) is one of the factors that may contribute to dishonest and antisocial behaviour (Kiral Ucar et al., 2024; Schindler et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). The belief in a just world plays a role in the intention to engage in corruption. Recent research found that worldview can significantly predict one's corrupt intention and attitude toward corruption (Vilanova et al., 2025). BJW, as a type of world view, refers to the belief rooted from a cognitive bias that everyone will ultimately get what they deserve, and every harmful act will be met with an appropriate punishment (Hafer & Sutton, 2016). This belief discourages individuals from engaging in unethical acts like corruption for fear of negative consequences.

However, we found inconsistencies in the findings of previous research specifically concerning to the two aspects of belief in a just world, namely general belief and personal belief. General belief refers to the belief that the world is generally a just place and is correlated positively with dishonest behaviour (Wenzel et al., 2017). Meanwhile, the personal belief, which refers to the belief that oneself will be treat with fairness and that one's life is just, is found to be the important predictor to academic cheating across nations (Münscher et al., 2020). The findings highlight the need for further investigation into how belief in a just world influences the intention to engage in corruption.

The surrounding environment is also one of the most significant contributors to the emergence of corrupt intention. Individuals who are embedded in environments with high levels of corruption tend to be more tolerant of corrupt acts, believing such behaviour will not be socially condemned and potentially engage with corrupt behaviour in the future (Salmon & Serra, 2017). This perception fosters the idea that corruption is a normal and acceptable practice. The inability to uphold moral values can contribute to an individual's intention to engage in unethical behaviour (Tanner et al., 2022). Individuals activate moral disengagement, thereby increasing the likelihood for corrupt intention (Zhao et al., 2019b).

Individuals are more likely to carry out actions that harm others, like corruption, when they feel less personally responsible for their actions. In such conditions, norms and ethical behaviours are seen as relative and guided by abstract social codes, individuals' perception of harm caused by corruption diminishes, thereby increasing the probability of engaging in such acts (Rotondi & Stanca, 2015). These perceptions, especially descriptive norms, contribute to moral disengagement, which facilitates the emergence of corrupt intention. A common thought that surfaces when individuals are faced with a corruption dilemma is, "If many people are doing it, then it must be the right thing to do"(Tan et al., 2016). Collectivist cultures may further increase the likelihood of engaging in corruption by normalization. Such attitudes are used to sustain corruption networks in a communal country like Indonesia (Prabowo & Cooper, 2016). This displacement is one of the mechanisms of moral disengagement.

Moral disengagement does not change an individual's moral standards; instead, it offers mechanisms that allow individuals to bypass those standards, effectively stripping harmful behaviour of its moral implications and distancing themselves from personal responsibility (Bandura, 2016). The human brain is prewired for justification and dissonance reduction toward oneself (Hartman, 2025). With moral disengagement, individuals are capable of mitigating the guilty feeling when engaging in negative behaviours such as lie telling and academic dishonesty (Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024). Moral disengagement can turn a dishonest act into continuous ethical transgressions (Reeck & Ariely, 2025).

Moral disengagement theory provides a plausible explanation to unethical behaviour that is found across literature (Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Hartman, 2025; Hikmah, 2020;

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Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024; Turan et al., 2026; Zhao et al., 2019a). Moral disengagement consist of eight mechanism: moral justification, which involves committing moral violations for noble or higher purposes; euphemistic labelling, referring to the use of mild or sanitized language to make immoral behaviour appear acceptable; advantageous comparison, which entails comparing one's immoral actions to more severe violations in order to minimize their perceived severity; displacement of responsibility, where individuals shift the blame for their behaviour onto others; diffusion of responsibility, which occurs when individuals avoid blame by claiming that others were also involved; disregard or distortion of consequences, shown through the acts of ignoring or minimizing the impact of one's immoral actions; attribution of blame, where individuals blame others for their own immoral conduct; and dehumanization, in which individuals treat others in an inhumane or degrading manner (Bandura, 2016).

This study focuses on examining corrupt intention in relation to two predictive variables: moral disengagement and belief in a just world, through a quantitative approach. Previous research has demonstrated the influence of moral disengagement on corrupt intention. Moral disengagement explains the cognitive mechanisms behind corrupt intention (Zhao et al., 2019a), offering individuals a way to rationalize unethical actions. Hikmah and Marastuti (2020) found that civil servants with high levels of moral disengagement tend to have stronger corrupt intentions, a pattern that may also extend to individuals in the private sector. Since corruption undermines justice and equality, BJW can reduce individuals' intention to engage in corrupt behaviour. BJW has been shown to influence public service motivation among civil servants. High BJW is associated with a stronger public service motivation (Mulyawan, 2023), wherein individuals view public service as a duty and refrain from taking more than they perceive they deserve. These findings confirm that BJW can serve as a predictor of corrupt intention among civil servants.

Considering the common sense of cultural orientation in Indonesia, this research might produce distinguished results from the other western or eastern countries. The unique communal orientation and karma belief in Indonesia plays a role in the cognitive mechanisms of corruption tendency (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022). Other social contexts like lower system performance is weighed as a catalysator for a belief in a just world (Hadarics & Kende, 2025), aligns with the current Indonesian system performance situation (Banna et al., 2025; Brata et al., 2024).

Corruption is a destructive act that undermines integrity and directly contradicts the values of Pancasila, particularly the principle of social justice for all Indonesian people. Moral disengagement and belief in a just world are two cognitive psychological constructs that help explain morally driven decision-making. However, few studies have examined the intention to engage in corruption by considering BJW and moral disengagement in different context (Hikmah, 2020; Schindler et al., 2019; Stupnianek & Navickas, 2019; Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2019a), but none of them employ both variables simultaneously.

In this research, belief in a just world highlights dispositional factors within the individual, while moral disengagement reflects cognitive mechanisms that are heavily influenced by social contexts. One plausible theory to explain the corruption act is the theory of planned behaviour (Dian, 2021; Wijanarko & Sajili, 2023). Based on this theory, three main factors take part in driving attitudes into behavioural intentions: attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Attitudes toward behaviour are represented by belief in a just world, while moral disengagement with several mechanisms reflects both subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

Elaborating further, belief in a just world shapes individuals interpretation on fairness and justice within their social environment, including whether they perceive corrupt behaviours to be justified or not. Individuals who hold a strong belief that the world is fundamentally fair may interpret or justify unethical actions as an acceptable consequence in certain situations. On the other hand, moral disengagement is a cognitive mechanism that allows individuals to deactivate their moral self-control, thereby enabling corrupt actions to be justified without provoking feelings of guilt or remorse. Withing the framework of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, moral disengagement can influence the intention to engage in corruption by fostering a more permissive attitude towards corrupt behaviour and through rationalisations that reduce the psychological barriers to engaging in such behaviour.

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These mechanisms can be understood comprehensively through a perspective that emphasises the legitimacy of the social system. In system justification theory, individuals tend to view the existing social order as legitimate, natural, and fundamentally fair. To maintain this perception, individuals develop various cognitive schemas that rationalise social inequality, poverty, and other forms of injustice as acceptable or inevitable consequences within prevailing social system (Jost, 2020). This perspective suggests that belief in the fairness of the system can lead individuals to justify morally deviant practices when such behaviours are perceived as a normal or functional part of the existing social order.

These factors interact to form cognitive pathways that influence the emergence of intention to commit corruption. Understanding this mechanism is important in the context of Indonesia, a collectivist society where shared social norms and beliefs play large a role in shaping individuals' judgements and decisions. This study aims to bridge the research gap by examining how two constructs, belief in a just world and moral disengagement, contribute to the intention to corrupt behaviour. The findings are expected to expand the literature on the psychological determinants of corrupt behaviours and support the development of anti-corruption interventions targeting the underlying cognitive and moral processes.

Methods

This study employs a quantitative design with a correlational approach to examine the relationship between belief in a just world, moral disengagement, and the intention to engage in corruption. Data was collected via a field survey and analysed using inferential statistical techniques in line with the objective of this study. The target population comprises civil servants (Aparatur Sipil Negara) and private sector workers based on survey findings reported by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) as discussed in the introduction. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, with the criteria being that they were aged between 18 and 50 years old and worked as civil servants or as employees in private sector. The sample size was determined through a power analysis using G*Power software with an effect size of 0.06, an alpha error probability (α) of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.95. The results of the calculation indicated that this study required at least 100 participants to achieve an adequate level of statistical power.

Measurement and Data Analysis

In conducting this study, the researchers employed three measurement instruments to assess each of the variables examined. These included the Corrupt intention Scale, the Moral Disengagement Scale, and the Belief in a Just World Scale. The Corrupt intention Scale consists of several dimensions that were adapted such as "In some countries, it is alright to pay someone extra in order to get things done quickly even if the law forbids such practices". This measure contains 14 items, rated on a five-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The Moral Disengagement Scale used in this study was originally developed by Albert Bandura (2016)and later translated into Indonesian. This scale comprises eight mechanisms of moral disengagement: moral justification, euphemistic labelling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, disregard or distortion of consequences, attribution of blame, and dehumanization. This measure has 24 items, including such statements as "it is okay to spread rumours to defend those you care about". The items were assessed on a five-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This scale demonstrated good validity (CFI = 0.896). The measurement results also indicated satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's α = .82).

The Belief in a Just World Scale was adapted into Indonesian and includes two dimensions: general belief in a just world, which reflects the belief that the world is generally fair; personal belief in a just world, which refers to the belief that one personally receives fair treatment in life (Hafer & Sutton, 2016). This measure has 13 items, such as "I believe that, by and large, people get what they deserve". The items were assessed on a five-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The research instruments were distributed via Google Forms, which included an introductory section (containing a foreword and demographic questions), the main section (consisting of the

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scale items), and a closing section (expressing appreciation to the participants). To achieve the objectives of this study, the researchers applied regression analysis with the assistance of statistical software JAMOVI.

Results and Discussion

Based on the aforementioned calculation, 120 participants completed the survey via Google Forms. Gender distribution is dominated by female respondents (67%), while the majority of participants are aged between 40-60 years (42.5%). Additionally, 64% of participants are civil servants (n=77) while work experience is dominated by participants who have worked for 1-5 years. Table 1 contains more detailed participant demographic.

Table 1. Participant Demographic (N=120)

Category		N	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	40	33
	Female	80	67
Age	19-29	33	27.5
	30-39	36	30
	40-60	51	42,5
Workplace	Civil Servant	77	64
	Private Sector	43	36
Work Experience (in year)	1-5	57	47,5
	6-15	21	17,5
	16-36	42	35
Religion	Islam	112	93
	Catholic	2	2
	Christianity	6	5

Table 2 presents the results of the correlation analysis among corrupt intention, belief in a just world, and moral disengagement. Belief in a just world was found to have a significant negative correlation with corrupt intention ($r = -.232$, $p = .010$), indicating that higher levels of belief in a just world are associated with lower intentions to engage in corruption. In contrast, moral disengagement showed a significant positive correlation with corrupt intention ($r = .574$, $p < .001$), which can be categorized as a strong relationship. The results indicate that higher levels of moral disengagement are associated with stronger intentions to engage in corrupt behaviour.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix

Correlation Matrix		Corrupt intention	Belief In Just World	Moral Disengagement
Corrupt intention	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Belief In a Just World	Pearson's r	-0.232	—	
	p-value	0.010	—	
Moral Disengagement	Pearson's r	0.574	-0.290	—
	p-value	< .001	0.001	—

As shown in Table 3, the assumption of normality has been satisfied, with the test yielding a non-significant result and normally distributed ($p > .05$; $p = .210$). The results of the Harrison-McCabe test further showed no evidence of heteroscedasticity and yielded a value of $p = .966$ ($p > .05$), this supports the assumption of homoscedastic residuals. Taken together, these results confirm that the data met the assumptions required for regression analysis.

Table 3. Assumption Test

Test	P Value	Interpretation
Normality (Kolmogrov-Smirnov)	0.114	Normal
Heteroscedasticity (Harrison-McCabe)	0.790	No heteroscedasticity

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the contribution of belief in a just world (personal and general) and moral disengagement in predicting the intention to engage in corrupt behaviour. The results of the analysis indicate that the regression model identified moral

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disengagement and general beliefs in a just world as significant predictors. In contrast, personal belief in a just world did not show a significant effect. Moral disengagement was positively associated with the intention to engage in corruption ($\beta = 0.6475$, $p < .001$), indicating that an increase in moral disengagement is associated with an increased intention to engage in corruption. Meanwhile, general belief was found to be a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -0.2828$, $p = .024$), indicating that individuals with higher levels of general beliefs tend to have lower corrupt intentions. However, personal belief was not significantly associated with corrupt intention ($\beta = -0.0960$, $p = .442$), indicating that beliefs about justice on a personal level may not contribute to shaping corrupt intentions.

Table 2. Result of Reggression Analysis

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Stand. Estimate
Intercept	24.6537	2.7485	8.970	< .001	
Personal	-0.0979	0.1270	-0.771	0.442	-0.0960
General	-0.3881	0.1692	-2.294	0.024	-0.2828
Moral Disengagement	0.1720	0.0216	7.978	< .001	0.6475

The results of this study are broadly consistent with those reported by Maksimenko et al. (2025), who found that belief in a just world was associated with lower corrupt intention. Their study suggested that this relationship operates through heightened perceptions of punishment. Evidence from other studies has also highlighted the positive association between general belief and dishonest behaviour (Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). Notably, the current findings indicate that only general belief was significantly associated with corrupt intention, whereas personal belief was not. This pattern indicates that borader perceptions regarding the fairness of the social world may be more relevant to corrupt intention than just belief in one's own life circumstances.

These results differs from earlier studies reporting that personal belief in a just world is more strongly related to corrupt or dishonest behaviour, while general belief shows limited or no predictive value (Schindler et al., 2019; Stupnianek & Navickas, 2019). One possible explanation for this discrepancy lies in contextual differences across regions and countries. Previous research was conducted in Lithuania, a European country, whereas the current study takes place in Indonesia, which is shaped by Eastern cultural values. This argument is supported by another research that illustrated personal belief to be stronger in European populations, such as in England, whereas eastern communities like those in Thailand tend to endorse a general belief (Chobthamkit et al., 2022).

These findings underscore the need for further investigation into the relationship between belief in a just world and corruption, particularly the potential role of other contributing variables such as cultural values. The stronger predictive role of general belief may be attributable to cultural orientations especially communal or collectivist tendencies. Prior studies have shown that karmaic belief was found to be stronger in collectivist societies (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022). This also explains why personal belief does not emerge as a significant predictor of corrupt intention in the present study.

Indeed, general belief and personal belief hold different functions across cultural contexts. In collectivist societies, general belief is often positively associated with cooperativeness, whereas personal belief may show weaker or even negative associations with such outcomes. This distinction highlights how belief in a just world operates differently across cultural settings, producing varying behavioral implications (Ma et al., 2023). Cross-cultural evidence further supports this pattern; general belief is stronger toward well being in Thai respondents than British repsondents. This highlights the tendency of South East Asians, commonly identified as a collectivist society, toward general belief rather than personal belief (Chobthamkit et al., 2022). The present findings from Indonesia are consistent with borader patterns, particularly in the context of dishonest behavior.

The findings may also be linked to how corruption is commonly perceived. Corruption is often viewed as an issue that primarly affects others or society at large, rather than the individual directly. As the result, individuals may feel less personally involved. In this regard, general belief tends

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to be a stronger predictor when injustice was directed at others and personal belief was a stronger when injustice was directed at the self (Mikani et al., 2023). Furthermore, prior studies have shown that personal belief is strongly linked with individual level outcomes such as well being and perceived health risk (Chobthamkit et al., 2022; Kiral Ucar et al., 2022; Lutz et al., 2025; Schniesko & Lüdmann, 2025). Taken together, these findings suggest that general belief may func-tion effectively in explaining responses to collective issues such as corruption, whereas personal belief may be more relevant for understanding individual-level experiences.

However, it is also important to note that individuals with low belief in justice tend to engage in rule-breaking behaviour as they perceive the world to be inherently unfair and therefore feel less compelled to act justly. Previous research indicates that belief in a just world can also increase public service motivation among civil servants with higher level of belief in a just world that corresponds with higher public service motivation (Mulyawan, 2023). These findings suggest that while belief in a just world plays a meaningful role, it alone may not provide a comprehensive explanation of corrupt intention, highliting the need to consider additional psychological factors.

Our findings extend the literature on belief in a just world by examining its assocation with corrupt intention. The findings indicate that general belief in a just world, rahter than personal belief, is associated with intentions to engage in corruption. This study broadens previous work that has primarly focused on the relationship between justice belief and dishonest behaviour more generally (Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). However, the absence of a significant association between personal belief in a just world and corrupt intention suggests that the influence of justice beliefs may be contingent on contextual factors. Cultural values, social norms and the desire for social acceptance may influence the way individuals interpret and apply their beliefs about justice when assessing behaviour related to corruption. Further research is therefore needed to identify the conditions that determine the relevance of various dimensions of belief in a just world to the intention to engage in corruption.

This study also tested the hypothesis regarding the relationship between moral disengagement and corrupt intention. The findings revealed that moral disengagement has the predictive power toward corrupt intention, as indicated by a Standard Estimate coefficient (β) of 0.6475 with a significance level of 0.001 (< 0.05). This result confirms a significant positive effect, meaning that the relationship between moral disengagement and corrupt intention is directl when moral disengagement increases, so does corrupt intention.

Moral disengagement is an individual's cognitive mechanism for justifying morally inappro-priate behaviours and explains the cognitive processes behind corrupt intention. This finding is consistent with the results of previous research that outlined how moral disengagement enables individuals to rationalize corrupt actions and serves as a strong predictor of corrupt intention (Zhao et al., 2019a). In the Indonesian context, employees with high moral disengagement also tend to exhibit higher corrupt intention (Hikmah, 2020).

Moral disengagement is characterized by individuals seeking justifications or rationalizations for their unethical behavior. It comprises eight dimensions, each of which contributes to the for-mation of corrupt intention. Corrupt intention arises from a behaviour stemming from cognitive mechanisms that facilitate rule-breaking. As explained by Rotondi and Stanca (2015), the percep-tion that norms depend on abstract social contexts can reduce individuals' awareness of the harm caused by corruption, thereby increasing their likelihood of engaging in such acts. Liu et al. (2016) also stated that the social environment has a significant impact in encouraging individuals to commit crimes like corruption. This motivational factor is clearly illustrated in one of the items used in this study: "It is okay to lie as long as the group agrees that it is the best solution to a problem."

Public officials often engage in calculative judgement when deciding whether to participate in bribery related activities (Nguyen et al., 2021). In cases of corruption, moral disengagement enables individuals to make communicative mechanism to justify unethical action(Bîzoi & Bîzoi, 2026). Additionaly, desperation can increase individual's susceptibility to rationalize unethical behaviour (Turan et al., 2026). Administrative corruption is therefore more likely to occur when situational opportunities intersect with moral justification (Weißmüller & Ritz, 2026).

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Moral disengagement comprises several loci that reflect distinct mechanisms of individuals' moral evaluation. Within the agency locus, individuals attempt to evade responsibility for the harm they cause, such as through blaming others or displacing responsibility (Bandura, 2016, 2017). This diffusion includes two dimensions: displacement of responsibility and diffusion of responsibility. These dimensions imply that individuals may perceive themselves as not personally accountable for their behavior, either because they are complying with authority figures or because responsibility is perceived as collectively shared (Moore, 2015). This practice is commonly directed to people in power, such as politicians and government agents (Rodrigues, 2025).

Within the victim locus, individuals attribute blame to victims for their negative treatment. Unethical decision making is considered to be due to external pressures, thereby enabling moral justification (Bandura, 2016, 2017). This locus consists of two dimensions—dehumanization and attribution of blame. Both dimensions shift responsibility for aggressive behaviour onto the victim and frame the victim as deserving of such treatment (Moore, 2015). Based on System Justification Theory, individuals tend to construct existing social arrangements as legitimate, functional, and inherently just. To serve that purpose, individuals adopt a range of system-justifying schemas to rationalize social inequalities tha include racist and sexist beliefs and forms of social and economic conservatism (Jost, 2020). Inequalities are reframed as natural and inevitable, thereby reducing psychological tension.

In the behavioral locus, harmful actions are cognitively reconstructed as acceptable through comparative mechanisms, allowing individuals to normalize their misconduct (Bandura, 2016, 2017). This locus encompasses moral justification, euphemistic labeling, and advantageous comparison indicating that adolescents tend to perceive their actions as less harmful by comparing themselves to more severe behaviors exhibited by others (Moore, 2015). Within unjust social contexts, these mechanisms facilitate the reinterpretation of harmful or inequitable practices as morally acceptable or even necessary. For instance, systemic inequalities may be morally justified as outcomes of meritocratic processes, while responsibility for injustice may be diffused across institutions or attributed to disadvantaged groups themselves. In this way, individuals not only rationalize the status quo at an ideological level but also disengage from the moral implications of sustaining or benefiting from such systems. Individuals tend to perceive acts of corruption in organizations as an appeal to higher loyalties (Rodrigues, 2025).

Within the effects locus, individuals tend to minimize or disregard the negative consequences of their harmful behavior. Moral evaluation is contingent upon awareness of consequences; when such consequences are ignored or cognitively suppressed, aggressive behaviour is no longer perceived as a moral issue (Bandura, 2016, 2017). Moreover, corruption commonly occurs on a large scale and can be distant from direct consequences (Rodrigues, 2025), while it goes through several chains of procedures.

Moral disengagement is a well-established theory for explaining unethical behaviour (Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Bandura, 2016; Hartman, 2025; Hikmah, 2020; Moore, 2015; Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024; Turan et al., 2026). The findings of this study extend the application of moral disengagement to the workplace context, specifically in relation to corrupt intention. This may serve as a foundational basis for developing public policies aimed at addressing unethical behaviours in the workplace.

This study contributes to strengthen programs based on certain principles. First, public transparency across institutes may weaken the moral justification and advantageous comparison as part of moral disengagement. Second, narrative reformulation on collective justice that highlights the shift of corruption as individual morality to collective impact. With comprehensive understanding of this, employees can widen their understanding that corruption's impact couldn't be "solved using karma" only, representing belief in a just world. Those principles can be best implemented through role playing programs that employees engage in with real situation scenarios on how corruption can exhibit negative impacts on individual.

Based on the results of a multiple regression analysis using JAMOVI, it was found that personal belief, general belief, and moral disengagement played a significant role of 60.4% ($R2 = 0.604$, $F = 22.2$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, it could be concluded that the research hypothesis was accepted, meaning that general belief in a just world, but not personal belief, and moral disengagement can predict the

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intention to engage in corruption. Overall, the research findings indicate that moral disengagement plays a more prominent role than belief in a just world in explaining variations in the intention to engage in corruption. On the other hand, general belief in a just world shows a negative relationship with the intention to engage in corruption, although its contribution is relatively smaller. These findings underscore the importance of distinguishing between the personal and general dimensions of belief in a just world, whilst also demonstrating that moral reasoning mechanisms are a key component in understanding the emergence of intentions to engage in corrupt behaviour.

Conclusion

Belief in a just world and moral disengagement were found to significantly predict the intentions to engage in corruption. However, only general belief was significantly associated with corrupt intention, whereas personal belief showed no significant relationship. Moral disengagement and emerged as the strongest predictor, suggesting that mechanisms of moral justification play a crucial in role in the formation of intentions to corrupt behaviour. These findings underscore the importance of distinguishing between personal and general dimensions of belief in a just world and highlight the relevance of cognitive and moral processes in understanding corrupt intention.

Despite its contribution, several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, the assessment of morality-related construct presents unique challenges within Indonesian society, as strong normative and social expectations may increase likelihood of social desirability. Second, the measure of corrupt intention employed in this study may not fully capture the complexity of decision making associated with Indonesia's collectivist cultural orientation. Future research is encouraged to develop more culturally sensitive instruments and identify related contextual factors.

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Mekanisme kognitif dalam intensi korupsi: Peran moral *disengagement* dan *belief in a just world*

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Abstrak: Korupsi merupakan tindakan yang merugikan karena melemahkan nilai-nilai integritas dan berdampak negatif bagi banyak orang. Dua variabel psikologis yang berpotensi memberikan penjelasan mendalam terhadap intensi korupsi adalah moral disengagement dan belief in a just world. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji mekanisme kognitif yang mendasari intensi individu dalam melakukan korupsi. Desain penelitian kuantitatif digunakan untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut. Data dikumpulkan dari 120 partisipan dan dianalisis untuk menguji pengaruh prediktif dari kedua variabel tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa moral disengagement secara signifikan memprediksi intensi korupsi. Selain itu, dua dimensi belief in a just world menunjukkan pengaruh yang berbeda terhadap intensi korupsi. General belief in a just world terbukti signifikan dalam memprediksi intensi korupsi, sedangkan personal belief tidak menunjukkan pengaruh yang signifikan. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pemahaman yang lebih luas mengenai faktor psikologis yang mendorong perilaku tidak etis serta memberikan wawasan penting bagi pengembangan program intervensi..
Kata Kunci: Korupsi; *Moral Disengagement; Belief in just world*

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Pendahuluan

Korupsi telah menjadi ancaman serius terhadap keberlanjutan bangsa kita. Perilaku ini ditandai dengan penyalahgunaan sumber daya dan proses produksi yang tidak efisiensi, mengakibatkan berubahnya potensi sumber daya menjadi "kutukan sumber daya" (Cappelen et al., 2021; Lutfi et al., 2020). Dalam hal ini, Indonesia yang kaya akan sumber daya merupakan negara yang rentan. Korupsi ditengarai sebagai penyebab utama dari berbagai persoalan sosial seperti penyalahgunaan bantuan sosial sampai keputusan politik berbasis kekerabatan atau nepotisme, tingginya pengangguran dan kesenjangan sosial (Zaloznaya, 2014).

Meskipun memiliki dampak yang negatif dan merugikan, kasus korupsi terus terjadi di Indonesia. Pada tahun 2023 saja, Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK) mencatat sebanyak 5.079 laporan publik terkaait korupsi di berbagai sektor. Catatan yang sama juga menunjukan bahwa pelaku dari korupsi didominasi oleh pegawai negeri tingkat menengah di pemerintahan. Hal in menegaskan bahwa sektor pelayanan publik menjadi yang paling rentan terhadap perilaku korupsi, sebagian besar karena keyakinan individu dan faktor lingkungan yang kerap kali ditemukan di dunia kerja.

Reaksi yang umumnya muncul dalam situasi tersebut termasuk kecaman atau harapan bahwa pelaku akan mendapat hukuman yang setimpal. Pola pikir demikian mencerminkan mekanisme pertahanan psikologis untuk menghadapi peristiwa yang berdampak besar namun sulit diselesaikan. Dalam konteks relijius, terdapat nilai yang diyakini secara luas bahwa keadilan akan tetap terwujud melampaui sistem hukuman formal, sering kali melalui konsekuensi yang tidak terduga yang disebut karma, yang terbukti dapat mengurangi kecenderungan untuk melakukan kecurangan (Wiese, 2023). Mekanisme karma ini memunculkan keyakinan terhadap dunia yang adil atau belief in a just world (BJW) dan dapat memengaruhi kemauan individu untuk ikut serta dalam tindakan sosial tertentu (Duong et al., 2024). Selain itu, hubungan ini juga diperkuat dengan

orientasi komunal (Guo et al., 2022), yang umumnya ditemukan pada masyarakat kolektif seperti Indonesia.

Individu yang memiliki tingkat BJW rendah cenderung memandang bahwa hukuman tidak selalu sebanding dengan pelanggaran yang dilakukan, yang meningkatkan kecenderungan untuk melakukan perilaku tidak etis. Sebaliknya, individu dengan tingkat BJW yang tinggi cenderung mempercayai adanya keadilan dalam penegakan hukum (hukuman yang dipersepsikan), dan dengan demikian memiliki persepsi yang lebih rendah terhadap korupsi (Modesto et al., 2020; Wiese, 2023). Selain itu, BJW juga secara konsisten dikaitkan dengan perilaku prososial (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2025).

Belief in just world (BJW) merupakan salah satu faktor yang berpengaruh terhadap perilaku tidak jujur dan antisosial (Kiral Ucar et al., 2024; Schindler et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). BJW berperan dalam membentuk intensi untuk terlibat dalam korupsi. Penelitian terbaru menunjukkan bahwa *worldview* secara signifikan memprediksi intensi korupsi dan sikap terhadapnya (Vilanova et al., 2025). Sebagai salah satu bentuk *worldview,* BJW merujuk pada keyakinan yang berakar pada bias kognitif bahwa setiap orang pada akhirnya akan mendapatkan apa yang pantas mereka terima, dan setiap tindakan merugikan akan memperoleh hukuman yang setimpal (Hafer & Sutton, 2016). Keyakinan ini dapat menghambat individu untuk melakukan tindakan tidak etis seperti korupsi karena adanya kekhawatiran terhadap konsekuensi negatif yang harus ditanggung.

Namun demikian, terdapat inkonsistensi dalam temuan penelitian sebelumnya, khususnya terkait dua aspek BJW, yaitu *general belief* dan *personal belief. General belief,* yang merujuk pada keyakinan bahwa dunia pada umumnya adalah tempat yang adil, ditemukan berkorelasi positif dengan perilaku tidak jujur (Wenzel et al., 2017). Sementara itu, *personal belief,* yaitu keyakinan bahwa diri sendiri akan diperlakukan secara adil dan kehidupannya berlangsung secara adil, terbukti menjadi prediktor penting terhadap kecurangan akademik lintas negara (Münscher et al., 2020). Temuan ini menunjukkan perlunya kajian lebih lanjut mengenai bagaimana BJW memengaruhi intensi untuk terlibat dalam korupsi.

Lingkungan sekitar juga merupakan salah satu faktor signifikan dalam munculnya intensi korupsi. Individu yang berada dalam lingkungan dengan tingkat korupsi tinggi cenderung lebih toleran terhadap perilaku korupsi, karena mereka memendang bahwa tindakan tersebut tidak akan mendapatkan sanksi sosial, bahkan berpotensi untuk ditiru di masa depan (Salmon & Serra, 2017). Persepsi demikian mendorong anggapan bahwa korupsi adalah praktik yang normal dan dapat diterima. Ketidakmampuan dalam mempertahankan nilai moral turut meningkatkan kecenderungan individu untuk terlibat dalam perilaku tidak etis (Tanner et al., 2022). Dalam kondisi ini, individu yang mengaktifkan moral disengagement, yang pada akhirnya meningkatkan kemungkinan munculnya intensi korupsi (Zhao et al., 2019b).

Individu lebih mungkin untuk melakukan tindakan yang merugikan orang lain seperti korupsi ketika mereka merasa memiliki tanggung jawab personal yang rendah. Dalam kondisi tersebut, norma dan perilaku etis dipandang relatif serta dipandu oleh kode sosial yang abstrak, sehingga persepsi terhadap dampak kerugian akibat korupsi menjadi berkurang dan meningkatkan kemungkinan keterlibatan dalam tindakan tersebut (Rotondi & Stanca, 2015). Persepsi demikian khususnya norma deskriptif berkontribusi terhadap moral disengagement yang memfasilitasi munculnya intensi korupsi. Salah satu pemikiran yang sering muncul ketika individu menghadapi dilema korupsi adalah "jika banyak orang yang melakukannya maka itu pasti benar untuk dilakukan" (Tan et al., 2016). Budaya kolektivis juga dapat meningkatkan kemungkinan keterlibatan dalam korupsi melalui normalisasi. Sikap demikian seringkali mempertahankan jaringan korupsi dalam negara komunal seperti Indonesia (Prabowo & Cooper, 2016), yang mencerminkan mekanisme *displacement of responsibility* dalam *moral disengagement*.

Moral disengagement tidak mengubah standar moral individu, melainkan menyediakan mekanisme yang memungkinkan individu untuk mengabaikan standar tersebut sehingga perilaku merugikan kehilangan makna moralnya dan individu dalam menghindari tanggung jawab pribadi (Bandura, 2016). Secara kognitif, manusia memang memiliki kecenderungan untuk melakukan justifikasi dan reduksi disonansi terhadap dirinya sendiri (Hartman, 2025). Melalui moral *disengagement*, individu mampu mengurangi perasaan bersalah saat melakukan tindakan yang

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negatif seperti berbohong dan ketidakjujuran akademik(Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024). Moral disengagement bahkan dapat mengubah tindakan tidak jujur menjadi pelanggaran yang berkelanjutan (Reeck & Ariely, 2025).

Teori *moral disengagement* memberikan penjelasan yang kuat terhadap berbagai tindakan tidak etis sebagaimana banyak ditemukan dalam berbagai literatur terdahulu (Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Hartman, 2025; Hikmah, 2020; Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024; Turan et al., 2026; Zhao et al., 2019a). Mekanisme Moral disengagement terdiri dari delapan bentuk, yaitu *moral justification* (membenarkan pelanggaran moral demi tujuan yang dianggap lebih tinggi); *euphemistic labeling* (menggunakan istilah yang lebih halus untuk menyamarkan tindakan tidak etis); *advantageous comparison* (membandingkan tindakan sendiri dengan pelanggaran yang lebih berat untuk mengurangi dampak seriusnya); *displacement of responsibility* (mengalihkan tanggung jawab kepada banyak pihak); *diffusion of responsibility* (menyebarkan tanggung jawab kepada banyak pihak), *disregard or distortion of consequences* (mengabaikan atau meremahkan dampak dari tindakan), *attribution of blame* (menyalahkan pihak lain atas tindakan sendiri) serta *dehumanization* (memperlakukan orang lain secara tidak manusiawi atau merendahkan martabatnya) (Bandura, 2016).

Penelitian ini berfokus pada pengujian intensi korupsi dengan mempertimbangkan dua variabel prediktor, yaitu *moral disengagement* dan *belief in a just world* (BJW), melalui pendekatan kuantitatif. Penelitian sebelumnya telah menunjukkan adanya peran *moral disengagement* terhadap intensi korupsi. *Moral disengagement* menjelaskan mekanisme kognitif di balik munculnya intensi korupsi (Zhao et al., 2019a), dengan memberikan cara bagi individu untuk merasionalisasi tindakan tidak etis. Hikmah dan Marastuti (2020) menemukan bahwa pegawai negeri sipil dengan tingkat *moral disengagement* yang tinggi akan cenderung memiliki intensi korupsi yang lebih kuat, dan pola ini juga berpotensi terjadi pada individu di sektor swasta juga. Mengingat korupsi merusak keadilan dan kesetaraan, BJW dapat menurunkan intensi individu untuk terlibat dalam perilaku korupsi. BJW juga terbukti memengaruhi motivasi pelayanan publik pada aparatur sipil negara. Tingkat BJW yang tinggi berkaitan dengan motivasi pelayanan publik yang lebih kuat (Mulyawan, 2023), di mana individu memandang pelayanan publik sebagai kewajiban dan menahan diri untuk tidak mengambil lebih dari yang seharusnya. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa BJW dapat menjadi prediktor intensi korupsi pada pegawai negeri sipil.

Dengan mempertimbangkan orientasi budaya yang khas Indonesia, penelitian ini berpotensi menghasilkan temuan yang berbeda dibandingkan dengan negara Barat maupun Timur lainnya. Orientasi komunal yang kuat serta kepercayaan terhadap konsep karma di Indonesia berperan dalam mekanisme kognitif yang mendasari kecenderungan korupsi (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022). Konteks sosial lain seperti rendahnya kinerja sistem juga dapat berfungsi sebagai katalisator terhadap *belief in just world*(Hadarics & Kende, 2025), yang selaras dengan kondisi kinerja sistem di Indonesia saat ini (Banna et al., 2025; Brata et al., 2024).

Korupsi merupakan tindakan destruktif yang merusak integritas dan secara langsung bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai Pancasila, khususnya prinsip keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia. Moral disengagement dan belief in a just world merupakan dua konstruk psikologi kognitif yang membantu menjelaskan pengambilan keputusan berbasis moral. Namun demikian, masih sedikit penelitian yang mengkaji intensi korupsi dengan mempertimbangkan kedua variabel tersebut secara bersamaan dalam konteks yang berbeda (Hikmah, 2020; Schindler et al., 2019; Stupnianek & Navickas, 2019; Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2019a), namun belum ada yang secara simultan menguji keduanya dalam satu model penelitian.

alam penelitian ini, belief in a just world merepresentasikan faktor disposisional dalam diri individu, sementara moral disengagement mencerminkan mekanisme kognitif yang sangat dipengaruhi oleh konteks sosial. Salah satu teori yang relevan untuk menjelaskan perilaku korupsi adalah *Theory of Planned Behavior* (Dian, 2021; Wijanarko & Sajili, 2023). Berdasarkan teori ini, terdapat tiga faktor utama yang mendorong sikap menjadi intensi perilaku, yaitu sikap terhadap perilaku, norma subjektif, dan persepsi kontrol perilaku. Sikap terhadap perilaku direpresentasikan oleh BJW, sedangkan *moral disengagement* dengan berbagai mekanismenya mencerminkan norma subjektif sekaligus persepsi kontrol perilaku.

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Lebih lanjut, belief in a just world membentuk cara individu menafsirkan keadilan dalam lingkungan sosialnya, termasuk dalam menilai apakah perilaku korupsi dapat dibenarkan atau tidak. Ketika individu memiliki keyakinan yang kuat bahwa dunia bersifat adil, mereka dapat melakukan rasionalisasi terhadap keputusan tidak etis sebagai respons yang wajar dalam kondisi tertentu. Sementara itu, moral *disengagement* berfungsi sebagai mekanisme kognitif yang memungkinkan individu melepaskan diri dari standar moral, sehingga lebih mudah membenarkan tindakan koruptif tanpa disertai rasa bersalah. Dalam kerangka Theory of Planned Behavior, mekanisme ini mencerminkan internalisasi norma sosial sekaligus persepsi individu terhadap kemampuannya untuk melakukan perilaku tersebut.

Pemahaman demikian dapat diperkaya melalui perspektif teoritis lain seperti System Justification Theory, yang menyatakan bahwa individu cenderung memandang tatanan sosial sebagai sesuatu yang sah dan adil secara fungsional. Individu kemudian mengembangkan skema kognitif untuk merasionalisasi ketimpangan sosial dan kemiskinan (Jost, 2020).

Berbagai variabel psikologis tersebut saling berinteraksi membentuk jalur kognitif dan sosial yang mengarah pada munculnya intensi korupsi. Memahami mekanisme ini menjadi sangat penting, terutama dalam masyarakat kolektivistik seperti Indonesia, di mana keyakinan bersama dan justifikasi moral berbasis norma sosial memainkan peran signifikan dalam pengambilan keputusan individu. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini memiliki nilai penting tidak hanya bagi pengembangan teori dan kontribusi ilmiah, tetapi juga dalam memberikan dasar bagi perancangan intervensi yang bertujuan mengurangi korupsi dengan menargetkan mekanisme kognitif melalui sistem keyakinan dan proses penalaran moral. Kerangka teoretis ini menegaskan urgensi dilakukannya penelitian ini sebagai upaya untuk menjelaskan mekanisme mendasar yang melatarbelakangi munculnya intensi untuk terlibat dalam korupsi.

Metode

Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif-korelasional dengan memanfaatkan data lapangan yang diolah berdasarkan prinsip-prinsip statistik untuk mencapai tujuan penelitian. Subjek penelitian ini adalah aparatur sipil negara (ASN) dan pekerja di sektor swasta, merujuk pada data yang dirilis oleh Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi (KPK) sebagaimana telah dijelaskan pada bagian pendahuluan. ASN maupun pekerja pada umumnya dianggap rentan terhadap praktik korupsi di berbagai sektor.

Partisipan dalam penelitian ini dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling, dengan kriteria individu berusia antara 18 hingga 50 tahun yang bekerja sebagai ASN di instansi pemerintah atau di sektor swasta. Ukuran sampel ditentukan dengan memasukkan nilai effect size sebesar 0,06, tingkat kesalahan alpha (α) sebesar 0,05, serta kekuatan statistik (statistical power) sebesar 0,95 ke dalam perangkat lunak G*Power. Berdasarkan hasil perhitungan tersebut, jumlah minimal partisipan yang dibutuhkan adalah 100 orang.

Instrumen Pengukuran dan Analisis Data

Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan tiga instrumen pengukuran untuk menilai masing-masing variabel yang diteliti, yaitu *Corruption Intention Scale, Moral Disengagement Scale,* dan *Belief in a just world Scale*. *Corruption Intention Scale* terdiri dari beberapa dimensi yang diadaptasi, dengan contoh pernyataan seperti "Di beberapa negara, memberikan uang tambahan untuk mempercepat urusan diperbolehkan meskipun hal tersebut melanggar hukum". Instrumen ini terdiri dari 14 aitem yang diukur menggunakan skala Likert lima poin, mulai dari sangat tidak setuju (1) hingga sangat setuju (5)

Moral Disengagement Scale yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini dikembangkan oleh Albert Bandura (2016) dan telah diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Indonesia. Skala ini mencakup delapan mekanisme moral *disengagement*, yaitu *moral justification, euphemistic labeling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, disregard or distortion of consequences, attribution of blame,* dan *dehumanization*. Instrumen ini terdiri dari 24 aitem, dengan contoh pernyataan seperti "Menyebarkan rumor diperbolehkan untuk membela orang yang kita pedulikan". Seluruh aitem diukur menggunakan skala Likert lima poin dari sangat tidak setuju (1)

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hingga sangat setuju (5). Skala ini menunjukkan validitas yang baik (CFI = 0,896) serta reliabilitas yang memadai (Cronbach's α = 0,82).

Belief in a just world Scale yang digunakan telah diadaptasi ke dalam bahasa Indonesia dan mencakup dua dimensi, yaitu *general belief in a just world* (keyakinan bahwa dunia pada umumnya adil) dan *personal belief in a just world* (keyakinan bahwa individu secara pribadi diperlakukan secara adil dalam kehidupan) (Hafer & Sutton, 2016). Instrumen ini terdiri dari 13 aitem, dengan contoh pernyataan seperti "Saya percaya bahwa pada umumnya orang akan mendapatkan apa yang pantas mereka terima". Seluruh aitem diukur menggunakan skala Likert lima poin dari sangat tidak setuju (1) hingga sangat setuju (5).

Instrumen penelitian disebarkan melalui Google Forms yang terdiri dari tiga bagian, yaitu bagian pembuka (berisi pengantar dan pertanyaan demografis), bagian inti (berisi aitem-aitem skala), dan bagian penutup (berisi ucapan terima kasih kepada partisipan). Untuk mencapai tujuan penelitian, peneliti menggunakan analisis regresi berganda dengan bantuan perangkat lunak statistik JAMOVI.

Hasil dan Pembahasan

Berdasarkan perhitungan yang telah dilakukan, sebanyak 120 partisipan mengisi survei melalui Google Forms. Distribusi jenis kelamin didominasi oleh responden perempuan (67%), sementara mayoritas partisipan berada pada rentang usia 40–60 tahun (42,5%). Selain itu, 64% partisipan merupakan aparatur sipil negara (n = 77), dan pengalaman kerja didominasi oleh individu dengan masa kerja 1–5 tahun. Rincian demografi partisipan secara lebih lengkap disajikan pada Tabel 1.

Tabel 1. Gambaran Demografi Partisipan (N=120)

Kategori		N	Persentase (%)
Jenis Kelamin	Laki-laki	40	33
	Perempuan	80	67
Usia	19-29	33	27,5
	30-39	36	30
	40-60	51	42,5
Tempar kerja	Pegawai Negeri	77	64
	Swasta	43	36
Pengalaman kerja (dalam tahun)	1-5	57	47,5
	6-15	21	17,5
	16-36	42	35
Agama	Islam	112	93
	Katolik	2	2
	Kristen	6	5

Tabel 2 menyajikan hasil analisis korelasi antara intensi korupsi, *belief in a just world*, dan *moral disengagement*. *Belief in a just world* memiliki korelasi negatif yang signifikan dengan intensi korupsi (r = −0,232, p = 0,010), yang menunjukkan bahwa semakin tinggi tingkat keyakinan terhadap dunia yang adil, semakin rendah intensi individu untuk terlibat dalam korupsi. Sebaliknya, *moral disengagement* menunjukkan korelasi positif yang signifikan dengan intensi korupsi (r = 0,574, p < 0,001), yang dapat dikategorikan sebagai hubungan yang kuat. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa individu dengan tingkat *moral disengagement* yang lebih tinggi cenderung memiliki intensi yang lebih besar untuk melakukan perilaku koruptif.

Tabel 2. Analisis Korelasi

Analisis Korelasi		Intensi Korupsi	*Belief In Just World*	*Moral Disengagement*
Intensi Korupsi	Pearson's r	—		
	p-value	—		
Belief In Just World	Pearson's r	-0.232	—	
	p-value	0.010	—	
Moral Disengagement	Pearson's r	0.574	-0.290	—
	p-value	< .001	0.001	—

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Tabel 3 menunjukkan bahwa asumsi normalitas telah terpenuhi, karena data terdistribusi secara normal (p > 0,05; p = 0,210). Hal ini mengindikasikan bahwa distribusi data tidak menyimpang secara signifikan dari normalitas. Selain itu, hasil uji heteroskedastisitas menggunakan uji Harrison–McCabe menunjukkan nilai p = 0,966 (p > 0,05), yang berarti tidak terdapat gejala heteroskedastisitas dalam data.

Tabel 3. Uji Asumsi

Uji Statistik	P Value	Interpretasi
Normality (Kolmogrov-Smirnov)	0.114	Normal
Heteroscedasticity (Harrison-McCabe)	0.790	No heteroscedasticity

Analisis regresi berganda dilakukan untuk menguji apakah *belief in a just world* (personal dan general) serta *moral disengagement* secara signifikan memprediksi intensi korupsi. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa *moral disengagement* dan *general belief in a just world* merupakan prediktor yang signifikan, sedangkan *personal belief in a just world* tidak menunjukkan pengaruh yang signifikan. Secara spesifik, *moral disengagement* memiliki hubungan positif dengan intensi korupsi (β = 0,6475, p < 0,001), yang menunjukkan bahwa semakin tinggi tingkat *moral disengagement*, semakin besar kemungkinan individu untuk terlibat dalam perilaku koruptif. Sebaliknya, *general belief in a just world* ditemukan sebagai prediktor negatif yang signifikan (β = -0,2828, p = 0,024), yang mengindikasikan bahwa semakin kuat keyakinan umum terhadap keadilan, semakin rendah intensi korupsi. Namun demikian, *personal belief in a just world* tidak terbukti sebagai prediktor yang signifikan (β = -0,0960, p = 0,442), yang menunjukkan bahwa keyakinan individu mengenai keadilan pada tingkat personal tidak berperan dalam membentuk intensi korupsi.

Tabel 4. Hasil analisis regresi

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p	Stand. Estimate
Intercept	24.6537	2.7485	8.970	< .001	
Personal	-0.0979	0.1270	-0.771	0.442	-0.0960
General	-0.3881	0.1692	-2.294	0.024	-0.2828
Moral Disengagement	0.1720	0.0216	7.978	< .001	0.6475

Hasil penelitian ini sejalan dengan temuan sebelumnya oleh Maksimenko dkk. (2025) yang menyimpulkan bahwa *belief in a just world* berkontribusi signifikan dalam menurunkan intensi korupsi. Menurut penelitian tersebut, keyakinan terhadap dunia yang adil dapat menimbulkan keengganan untuk terlibat dalam korupsi melalui mediasi persepsi terhadap hukuman. Penelitian lain juga menekankan adanya hubungan positif antara *general belief* dan perilaku tidak jujur (Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). Meskipun demikian, dalam penelitian ini, kesimpulan tersebut tidak berlaku untuk *personal belief*, karena hasil analisis regresi tidak menunjukkan peran signifikan variabel ini dalam memprediksi intensi korupsi.

Hasil ini tidak sejalan dengan penelitian sebelumnya yang justru menemukan bahwa *personal belief* merupakan prediktor signifikan perilaku koruptif atau tidak jujur, sementara *general belief* tidak (Schindler et al., 2019; Stupnianek & Navickas, 2019). Perbedaan ini kemungkinan disebabkan oleh variasi persepsi keadilan antar wilayah dan negara. Penelitian sebelumnya dilakukan di Lithuania sebagai bagian dari konteks Eropa, sedangkan penelitian ini dilakukan di Indonesia yang dipengaruhi oleh nilai-nilai budaya Timur. Argumen ini didukung oleh penelitian lain yang menunjukkan bahwa *personal belief* lebih dominan pada populasi Eropa seperti Inggris, sementara masyarakat Timur seperti Thailand cenderung lebih menekankan *general belief* (Chobthamkit et al., 2022).

Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya penelitian lanjutan terkait hubungan antara *belief in a just world* dan korupsi, khususnya dengan mempertimbangkan variabel lain seperti nilai budaya. Peran prediktif yang lebih kuat dari *general belief* dapat dijelaskan oleh orientasi budaya komunal atau kolektivistik. Penelitian sebelumnya menunjukkan bahwa kepercayaan terhadap karma lebih kuat pada masyarakat kolektif (Duong et al., 2024; Guo et al., 2022). Hal ini juga menjelaskan mengapa *personal belief* tidak muncul sebagai prediktor signifikan dalam penelitian ini.

Secara konseptual, *general belief* dan *personal belief* memiliki fungsi yang berbeda dalam konteks budaya. Dalam masyarakat kolektivistik, *general belief* cenderung berkorelasi positif

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dengan perilaku kooperatif, sedangkan *personal belief* menunjukkan hubungan yang lebih lemah atau bahkan negatif terhadap hasil tersebut. Perbedaan ini menunjukkan bahwa *belief in a just world* beroperasi secara berbeda dalam berbagai konteks budaya dan menghasilkan implikasi perilaku yang beragam (Ma et al., 2023). Bukti lintas budaya juga mendukung pola ini, di mana *general belief* lebih kuat dalam memprediksi kesejahteraan pada responden Thailand dibandingkan Inggris, mencerminkan kecenderungan masyarakat Asia Tenggara yang kolektivistik untuk lebih mengandalkan *general belief* (Chobthamkit et al., 2022). Temuan dari Indonesia dalam penelitian ini konsisten dengan pola tersebut, khususnya dalam konteks perilaku tidak jujur.

Hal ini juga berkaitan dengan bagaimana korupsi dipersepsikan. Korupsi sering dipandang sebagai masalah yang lebih berdampak pada orang lain atau masyarakat luas, bukan pada individu secara langsung, sehingga individu merasa kurang terlibat secara personal. Dalam konteks ini, *general belief* menjadi prediktor yang lebih kuat ketika ketidakadilan ditujukan pada orang lain, sedangkan *personal belief* lebih berperan ketika ketidakadilan dialami secara langsung (Mikani et al., 2023). Penelitian lain juga menunjukkan bahwa *personal belief* lebih berkaitan dengan hasil pada level individu, seperti kesejahteraan dan persepsi risiko kesehatan (Chobthamkit et al., 2022; Kiral Ucar et al., 2022; Lutz et al., 2025; Schniesko & Lüdmann, 2025). Secara keseluruhan, temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa *general belief* lebih efektif dalam menjelaskan respons terhadap isu kolektif seperti korupsi, sementara *personal belief* lebih relevan untuk memahami pengalaman individu.

Meskipun demikian, penting untuk dicatat bahwa individu dengan tingkat kepercayaan terhadap keadilan yang rendah cenderung lebih mudah melanggar aturan karena memandang dunia sebagai tidak adil, sehingga merasa tidak perlu bertindak secara adil. Penelitian sebelumnya juga menunjukkan bahwa *belief in a just world* dapat meningkatkan motivasi pelayanan publik pada aparatur sipil negara, di mana tingkat BJW yang lebih tinggi berkaitan dengan motivasi pelayanan publik yang lebih tinggi (Mulyawan, 2023). Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun BJW memiliki peran penting, variabel ini saja tidak cukup untuk menjelaskan intensi korupsi secara komprehensif, sehingga diperlukan pertimbangan faktor psikologis lainnya.

Temuan penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting terhadap pengembangan teori *just world* dengan memperdalam pemahaman mengenai hubungan antara BJW dan intensi korupsi. Secara khusus, penelitian ini menegaskan peran prediktif *general belief* terhadap intensi korupsi, bukan sekadar perilaku tidak jujur secara umum (Tan et al., 2024; Wenzel et al., 2017). Namun, tidak signifikannya *personal belief* menunjukkan bahwa nilai budaya dan faktor seperti *social desirability* juga berpotensi berperan penting dan perlu diteliti lebih lanjut.

Penelitian ini juga menguji hubungan antara *moral disengagement* dan intensi korupsi. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa *moral disengagement* memiliki kekuatan prediktif yang signifikan terhadap intensi korupsi, dengan koefisien $\beta = 0{,}6475$ dan tingkat signifikansi $p < 0{,}05$. Hal ini menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif yang kuat, di mana peningkatan *moral disengagement* diikuti oleh peningkatan intensi korupsi.

Moral disengagement merupakan mekanisme kognitif yang memungkinkan individu membenarkan perilaku yang secara moral tidak dapat diterima, serta menjelaskan proses kognitif di balik intensi korupsi. Temuan ini konsisten dengan penelitian sebelumnya yang menunjukkan bahwa *moral disengagement* memungkinkan individu merasionalisasi tindakan koruptif dan menjadi prediktor kuat intensi korupsi (Zhao et al., 2019a) Dalam konteks Indonesia, individu dengan tingkat *moral disengagement* yang tinggi juga cenderung memiliki intensi korupsi yang lebih tinggi (Hikmah, 2020).

Moral disengagement ditandai dengan upaya individu untuk mencari justifikasi atas perilaku tidak etisnya, yang terdiri dari delapan dimensi. Intensi korupsi muncul sebagai hasil dari mekanisme kognitif yang memfasilitasi pelanggaran norma. Persepsi bahwa norma bergantung pada konteks sosial yang abstrak dapat menurunkan kesadaran individu terhadap dampak korupsi, sehingga meningkatkan kemungkinan keterlibatan dalam tindakan tersebut (Rotondi & Stanca, 2015). Lingkungan sosial juga berperan besar dalam mendorong individu melakukan tindakan seperti korupsi (Tan et al., 2016). *This motivational factor is clearly illustrated in one of the items used in this study: "It is okay to lie as long as the group agrees that it is the best solution to a problem*."

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Dalam praktiknya, pejabat publik sering melakukan pertimbangan rasional ketika memutuskan untuk terlibat dalam kegiatan suap (Nguyen et al., 2021). Dalam konteks ini, *moral disengagement* memungkinkan individu membangun mekanisme komunikasi untuk pembenaran (Bîzoi & Bîzoi, 2026). Selain itu, kondisi seperti tekanan atau keputusasaan juga dapat meningkatkan kecenderungan individu untuk merasionalisasi perilaku tidak etis (Turan et al., 2026). Korupsi administratif lebih mungkin terjadi ketika peluang situasional bertemu dengan justifikasi moral (Weißmüller & Ritz, 2026).

Moral disengagement terdiri dari beberapa *locus* yang mencerminkan mekanisme berbeda dalam evaluasi moral individu. Pada *agency locus*, individu berupaya menghindari tanggung jawab atas dampak yang ditimbulkan, misalnya dengan menyalahkan pihak lain atau mengalihkan tanggung jawab (Bandura, 2016, 2017), Lokus ini mencakup dua dimensi, yaitu *displacement of responsibility* dan *diffusion of responsibility*. Kedua dimensi ini menunjukkan bahwa individu dapat memandang dirinya tidak bertanggung jawab secara personal atas perilakunya, baik karena mengikuti otoritas maupun karena tanggung jawab dipersepsikan sebagai tanggung jawab bersama (Moore, 2015). Perilaku demikian sering diarahkan kepada pihak yang memiliki kekuasaan, seperti politisi dan aparat pemerintah (Rodrigues, 2025).

Pada *victim locus*, individu mengatribusikan kesalahan kepada korban atas perlakuan negatif yang diterima. Pengambilan keputusan tidak etis dianggap sebagai akibat tekanan eksternal, sehingga memungkinkan terjadinya *moral justification* (Bandura, 2016, 2017). Lokus ini terdiri dari dua dimensi, yaitu *dehumanization* dan *attribution of blame*. Kedua dimensi tersebut mengalihkan tanggung jawab perilaku agresif kepada korban serta memposisikan korban sebagai pihak yang pantas menerima perlakuan tersebut (Moore, 2015). Berdasarkan *System Justification Theory*, individu cenderung memandang tatanan sosial yang ada sebagai sesuatu yang sah, fungsional, dan adil. Untuk mempertahankan pandangan tersebut, individu mengembangkan berbagai skema pembenaran sistem guna merasionalisasi ketimpangan sosial, termasuk keyakinan rasis dan seksis, serta bentuk konservatisme sosial dan ekonomi (Jost, 2020). Ketimpangan kemudian direkonstruksi sebagai sesuatu yang alami dan tidak terhindarkan, sehingga mengurangi ketegangan psikologis.

Pada *behavioral locus*, tindakan yang merugikan direkonstruksi secara kognitif menjadi sesuatu yang dapat diterima melalui mekanisme perbandingan, sehingga individu dapat menormalisasi perilaku menyimpangnya (Bandura, 2016, 2017). Lokus ini mencakup *moral justification*, *euphemistic labeling*, dan *advantageous comparison*, yang menunjukkan bahwa individu cenderung memandang tindakannya sebagai kurang berbahaya dengan membandingkannya dengan perilaku lain yang lebih serius (Moore, 2015). Dalam konteks sosial yang tidak adil, mekanisme ini memfasilitasi reinterpretasi praktik yang merugikan atau tidak setara menjadi sesuatu yang dapat diterima secara moral, bahkan dianggap perlu. Misalnya, ketimpangan sistemik dapat dibenarkan sebagai hasil dari proses meritokrasi, sementara tanggung jawab atas ketidakadilan disebarkan ke berbagai institusi atau dibebankan kepada kelompok yang dirugikan. Dengan demikian, individu tidak hanya merasionalisasi status quo secara ideologis, tetapi juga melepaskan diri dari implikasi moral atas keberlanjutan sistem tersebut. Individu juga cenderung memandang tindakan korupsi dalam organisasi sebagai bentuk loyalitas terhadap kepentingan yang lebih tinggi (Rodrigues, 2025).

Pada *effects locus*, individu cenderung meminimalkan atau mengabaikan konsekuensi negatif dari perilaku merugikan yang dilakukan. Evaluasi moral sangat bergantung pada kesadaran terhadap konsekuensi; ketika konsekuensi tersebut diabaikan atau ditekan secara kognitif, perilaku agresif tidak lagi dipandang sebagai persoalan moral (Bandura, 2016, 2017). Selain itu, praktik korupsi sering terjadi dalam skala besar dan jauh dari konsekuensi langsung, serta melalui rangkaian prosedur yang panjang (Rodrigues, 2025).

Moral disengagement merupakan teori yang telah mapan dalam menjelaskan perilaku tidak etis (Ayala-Enríquez & Guerrero-Dib, 2023; Bandura, 2016; Hartman, 2025; Hikmah, 2020; Moore, 2015; Septiana & Hakim, 2022; Sunawan et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2024; Turan et al., 2026). Temuan penelitian ini memperluas penerapan konsep tersebut dalam konteks tempat kerja, khususnya terkait intensi korupsi. Hal ini dapat menjadi dasar dalam pengembangan kebijakan publik untuk mengatasi perilaku tidak etis di lingkungan kerja.

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Penelitian ini juga berkontribusi dalam memperkuat program berbasis prinsip tertentu. Pertama, peningkatan transparansi publik di berbagai institusi dapat melemahkan *moral justification* dan *advantageous comparison* sebagai bagian dari *moral disengagement*. Kedua, diperlukan reformulasi narasi keadilan kolektif yang menekankan pergeseran pemaknaan korupsi dari sekadar isu moral individu menjadi dampak kolektif. Dengan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif, individu dapat menyadari bahwa dampak korupsi tidak dapat diselesaikan hanya melalui mekanisme "karma" semata, sebagaimana tercermin dalam *belief in a just world*. Prinsip-prinsip ini dapat diimplementasikan secara efektif melalui program *role-playing* yang melibatkan karyawan dalam simulasi situasi nyata untuk memahami dampak negatif korupsi secara langsung.

Berdasarkan hasil analisis regresi berganda menggunakan JAMOVI, ditemukan bahwa *personal belief*, *general belief*, dan *moral disengagement* secara bersama-sama menjelaskan 60,4% varians intensi korupsi (R^2 = 0,604; F = 22,2; p < 0,01). Dengan demikian, hipotesis penelitian diterima, yang menunjukkan bahwa *general belief in a just world* (bukan *personal belief*) dan *moral disengagement* mampu memprediksi intensi korupsi. Secara keseluruhan, temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa mekanisme kognitif *moral disengagement* memainkan peran dominan dalam menjelaskan intensi korupsi, sementara keyakinan umum mengenai keadilan berperan sebagai faktor protektif meskipun dengan kontribusi yang lebih moderat. Pola ini menegaskan pentingnya membedakan antara keyakinan keadilan personal dan umum, serta menekankan peran krusial proses penalaran moral dalam memahami dan mengatasi korupsi.

Simpulan

Belief in a just world dan *moral disengagement* terbukti secara signifikan memprediksi intensi untuk terlibat dalam korupsi. Secara khusus, *general belief* muncul sebagai prediktor yang signifikan terhadap intensi korupsi, sementara *personal belief in a just world* tidak menunjukkan pengaruh yang signifikan secara statistik, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh hasil analisis regresi. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa keyakinan umum terhadap dunia yang adil memiliki pengaruh yang lebih kuat, terutama dalam konteks budaya kolektivistik seperti Indonesia. Sebaliknya, *personal belief* tidak menunjukkan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap intensi korupsi. Selain itu, individu dengan tingkat *moral disengagement* yang lebih tinggi cenderung memiliki intensi yang lebih kuat untuk terlibat dalam perilaku koruptif. Secara keseluruhan, hasil ini menegaskan pentingnya mempertimbangkan *general belief* dan *moral disengagement* dalam upaya pencegahan korupsi serta promosi integritas.

Meskipun memberikan kontribusi penting, penelitian ini memiliki beberapa keterbatasan. Pertama, topik moralitas menghadirkan tantangan tersendiri dalam konteks masyarakat Indonesia, karena norma sosial dan ekspektasi yang kuat dapat meningkatkan kemungkinan munculnya respons yang bersifat *socially desirable*. Kedua, skala intensi korupsi yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini mungkin belum sepenuhnya mampu menangkap kompleksitas yang terkait dengan orientasi budaya kolektivistik di Indonesia. Oleh karena itu, penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk mengembangkan instrumen yang lebih sensitif terhadap konteks budaya serta menguji konstruk-konstruk ini pada sampel yang lebih luas dan beragam.

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