

Ethical Challenges And Dilemmas In Public Sector Budget Execution: Evidence From Indonesia

Djuni Farhan^{1*}, Oyong Lisa², Yosar Haritsar³, & Bambang Hermanto⁴

^{1,3}Assistant Professor Gajayana University, Indonesia

²Assoc.Professor Gajayana University, Indonesia

⁴Assoc.Profesor Politeknik LP3i, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: Djuni Farhan, Assistant Professor Gajayana University, Indonesia.

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Abstract

This study investigates the ethical conflicts encountered by public sector accountants during budget execution processes, highlighting the implications for governance, accountability, and public trust. The research aims to explore how professional and organizational pressures shape accountants' ethical decision-making and the extent to which these challenges compromise integrity in public financial management. Drawing on qualitative methods, the study employs semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis to capture the lived experiences and moral dilemmas faced by public sector accountants across various institutions. The findings reveal three primary ethical challenges: conflicts of interest, pressure to meet financial targets, and lack of transparency in budget allocation. These conflicts are exacerbated by political interference, weak ethical cultures, and insufficient regulatory oversight. Respondents reported that in environments where performance outcomes are prioritized over ethical conduct, accountants are often pressured to compromise on professional standards. Such dynamics can lead to misreporting, misuse of public resources, and a decline in public confidence in government institutions. The study applies Rest's Four-Component Model to frame how accountants perceive, judge, and act on ethical dilemmas, and emphasizes the role of organizational culture in shaping moral behavior. Recommendations include implementing robust codes of conduct, strengthening ethics education, and enhancing oversight mechanisms to promote ethical resilience. In conclusion, ethical conflicts in budget execution undermine the credibility of public sector accounting. Addressing these challenges requires institutional commitment to fostering integrity through ethics training, transparent practices, and supportive leadership. Doing so can enhance trust in public financial systems and ensure ethical governance in the long term.

Keywords: Ethical Conflicts, Public Sector Accountants, Budget Execution, Accountability, Transparency.

Introduction

The services of accountants in the public sector are essential to the implementation of budgets, as they ensure that funds are distributed and utilized effectively to meet the needs of the general public. Beyond just crunching numbers, they are also responsible for maintaining the values of accountability, transparency, and moral leadership. Effective governance depends on preserving public trust, which is largely dependent on the integrity of public sector accounting [1]. When it comes to budget execution, accountants have to make their way through intricate financial environments while abiding by moral principles that direct their choices.

In order to promote legitimacy and trust in public institutions, accounting ethics are more than just a theoretical concept. The moral conundrums that public sector accountants encounter can significantly impact their professional behaviour and decision-making. According to Anderson (2021), public trust in government is directly correlated with ethical behaviour in public administration. The likelihood of ethical transgressions rises when accountants are under pressure to fulfil political directives or budgetary targets, creating tensions between their personal and professional commitments.

There are many different types of ethical conflicts in public sector accounting. When political factors impede financial reporting or budget execution, for example, accountants may encounter conflicts of interest. According to a qualitative study by Brown and Green (2022), public sector accountants frequently struggle to strike a balance between their professional responsibilities and outside pressures, which can result in unethical decisions. Some organisations lack a strong ethical framework, which makes accountants more susceptible to unethical behaviour and exacerbates this tension.

Further complicating matters is the growing intricacy of financial regulations and public sector budgets. According to Clark (2020), the difficulties in monitoring and adhering to regulations can lead to a setting where moral failings are more likely to happen. For instance, the misreporting of budget allocations in the 2017 UK local council scandal caused public indignation and eroded confidence in local government [2]. These kinds of incidents highlight how important it is for public sector accounting to have a strong ethical culture in order to reduce risks and improve accountability.

In conclusion, public sector accountants encounter serious ethical conflicts when implementing budgetary procedures, which call for careful consideration. Accountants must handle these difficulties with professionalism and integrity as the public finance landscape changes. The ethical underpinnings of public sector accounting can be strengthened by resolving these conflicts through the implementation of thorough ethics training and a positive corporate culture. Public sector accountants can help create a more open and accountable governance structure and, eventually, rebuild public trust in government financial operations by putting ethics first.

Literature Review

The Historical Background of Accounting in the Public Sector

Over the years, a number of socio-political and economic factors have influenced the significant evolution of public sector accounting. Ensuring accountability and transparency in the use of public funds has historically been the main function of public sector accounting. A significant turning point was the adoption of double-entry bookkeeping in the 15th century, which made financial reporting more accurate [3-6]. By the 21st century, the emphasis had moved to performance management and measurement, which reflected the need for increased accountability in the face of growing public scrutiny and the complexity of public sector operations.

An important step in improving accountability and transparency in public financial management in the UK was the creation of the National Audit Office in 1983 [7]. The Public Finance Act, which was introduced in 1988 and emphasised the significance of financial control and reporting, further cemented the framework that governs public sector accounting. Understanding the ethical conflicts that public sector accountants currently face as they manage the delicate balance between compliance, transparency, and the demands of political influence requires knowledge of this historical background.

Global trends, like the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in different jurisdictions, have also impacted the development of public sector accounting. These guidelines seek to encourage accountability and improve the calibre of financial reporting in the public sector. The adoption of these standards has not, however, been without difficulties, as public sector accountants frequently encounter moral conundrums when trying to comply with both national and international standards. This tension is especially noticeable in budget execution procedures, where ethical duties to report honestly and openly may clash with the pressure to reach financial goals of the organizations.

Prior Studies on Accounting Ethics

In recent years, a significant amount of literature has surfaced that focuses on the moral dilemmas that public sector accountants are facing. Scholars have recognised several ethical conundrums, from conflicts of interest to pressure from superiors to falsify financial data [8, 9]. A qualitative study by Brown and Green (2022), for example, showed how public sector accountants frequently find themselves caught between their professional obligations and political leaders' expectations, which can result in circumstances where ethical standards may be compromised.

Furthermore, there is ample evidence of how unethical behaviour undermines public confidence. According to Anderson (2021), upholding public trust in government institutions depends on the ethical behaviour of professional accountants in the public sector. Reduced public participation and heightened regulatory body scrutiny are just two of the serious consequences that can result from the breakdown of trust. This emphasises how crucial it is to develop an ethical culture in public sector organisations to reduce these risks.

Additionally, studies have demonstrated that ethical education and training are essential in influencing accountants' moral judgement. According to Davis (2022) and Thompson, R. & Lee, S. (2023). "The Impact of Ethical Training on Moral Judgment in Public Sector Accountants: A Longitudinal Study." *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, 20(1), 45- 62, ethics training can improve public sector accountants' capacity to handle difficult moral conundrums, fostering an environment of honesty and responsibility. However, organisational leadership's dedication to maintaining ethical standards—which can vary amongst various public sector organizations—is frequently a determining factor in how effective such training programs are.

Theoretical Structure for Comprehending Ethical Conflicts in Budget Execution Procedures

Adopting a theoretical framework that takes into account different aspects of ethical decision-making is crucial to understanding the ethical conflicts that public sector accountants face when executing budgets. Rest's (1986) Four-Component Model of Ethical Decision- Making is one such framework that describes the processes of moral sensitivity, moral judgement, moral motivation, and moral character. This model can shed light on how public sector accountants recognise moral conundrums, weigh their options, and ultimately decide on courses of action that are consistent with their ethical duties.

The capacity to identify the moral ramifications of choices is known as moral sensitivity. Public sector accountants must be aware of how their decisions may affect different stakeholders, such as taxpayers, public servants, and the general public, when it comes to budget execution. External pressures that can impair ethical judgement, like political meddling or the need to reach financial goals, frequently test this sensitivity [10].

Moral judgement entails assessing a situation's ethical aspects and choosing the appropriate course of action. Public sector accountants are regularly faced with situations in which they have to balance the advantages of upholding ethical standards against the possible consequences of doing so, such as losing their jobs or being disciplined [11]. The absence of precise rules in some circumstances makes this moral dilemma worse, forcing accountants to negotiate murky waters where moral standards might be unclear.

In order to comprehend ethical decision-making, moral motivation and moral character are equally important. These elements highlight the significance of individual values and the resolve to behave morally despite hardship [12]. Strong moral principles increase the likelihood that public sector accountants will withstand pressure to act unethically and preserve the integrity of their profession. This emphasises how important it is for businesses to foster an ethical culture that encourages and supports moral behaviour in their workforce [13].

In summary, the theoretical frameworks for comprehending ethical tensions, the literature on ethical issues, and the historical background of public sector accounting offer a thorough basis for analysing the moral dilemmas public sector accountants encounter when executing budgets. To maintain public confidence in government institutions, it is crucial to create an atmosphere that values moral behaviour and accountability as these professionals negotiate difficult situations.

Methodology of the Research

This study's qualitative research design focuses on the moral dilemmas public sector accountants encounter when carrying out budget execution procedures. This method offers deep insights into the ethical decision-making processes of accountants, making it especially appropriate for examining their intricate and varied experiences. The subjective experiences and viewpoints of accountants are crucially captured by qualitative techniques like focus groups and interviews, which quantitative approaches might miss [14].

Using a case study methodology, the research looks at particular examples of moral conundrums faced by public sector accountants. In addition to facilitating a thorough comprehension of the ethical environment surrounding public sector budgeting, this design makes it possible to spot recurring themes and patterns in various contexts. This study attempts to offer practical insights that can guide public sector accounting policy and practice by concentrating on real-world situations.

Techniques for Gathering Data

Semi-structured interviews with public sector accountants were used to gather data for this study. A review of pertinent records and previous research were also conducted. Participants can pro-

vide rich, in-depth narratives and elaborate on their experiences thanks to the semi-structured format, which permits flexibility in the questioning process. Because it promotes candid discussion and introspection, this approach has been demonstrated to produce insightful information about the moral dilemmas accountants face [15].

Focus groups were held in addition to interviews to help accountants talk about moral dilemmas in budget execution. This approach encourages communication and may result in group insights that might not come through in one-on-one interviews. A thorough and solid grasp of the ethical conflicts in public sector accounting were ensured by a review of pertinent literature and case studies, which helps to contextualise the results and bolster the analysis.

Ethics in the Study's Conduct

When conducting research with human subjects, ethical considerations are crucial, especially when it comes to public sector accountants who might be held accountable for sharing sensitive information. In order to allay these worries, the research will follow accepted ethical standards, which include getting each participant's informed consent and protecting their privacy and confidentiality [16]. Participants will be made aware of their freedom to leave the study at any time without incurring any penalties.

Furthermore, the study was carried out with a dedication to honesty and openness. Using reflexivity, in which the researcher actively considers their own prejudices and presumptions during the research process, will reduce the possibility of bias [17]. This method not only increases the validity of the results but also builds participant and researcher trust, which is crucial for getting truthful and open answers.

The study took into account the findings' ethical ramifications, especially in light of their possible influence on public sector procedures and regulations. The study intends to advance the creation of best practices that improve accountability and transparency by drawing attention to the ethical conflicts that accountants encounter and adding to the conversation about moral principles in public sector accounting.

To sum up, this methodology aims to offer a thorough investigation of the moral conflicts that arise among public sector accountants when it comes to budget execution procedures. The study intends to produce important insights that can guide future procedures and improve the ethical environment of public sector accounting by using qualitative methods and abiding by ethical research principles.

Finding and Discussion

Ethical Conflicts in Budget Execution Procedures

In public sector accounting, conflicts of interest are a serious ethical concern, especially when it comes to budget execution. Accountants in the public sector frequently deal with pressures that may cause them to compromise their personal interests with their professional responsibilities. An accountant entrusted with budget management, for example, might have personal ties to stakeholders or vendors that could affect their choices. One prominent example is the City of Bell case in California, where

officials were charged with embezzlement of public funds because of conflicts of interest, which resulted in criminal charges and public outrage [18].

Furthermore, this problem is made worse by the lax regulations governing conflicts of interest disclosures. The integrity of financial reporting is compromised because many public sector accountants fail to fully disclose relationships that might be interpreted as conflicts, claim Baker and Wallace (2018). According to a study by Brown and Green (2022), public sector accountants frequently justify their choices by arguing that they have little bearing on the organisations' overall financial health. This kind of thinking can undermine public trust and encourage unethical behaviour.

The pressure to put organisational objectives ahead of personal integrity exacerbates the moral conundrum that accountants face in these circumstances. This is especially noticeable in settings where budget results are directly linked to performance metrics. According to Taylor (2021), accountants may make decisions that prioritise organisational or personal gain over the general welfare as a result of the pressure to meet predetermined financial goals.

Moreover, these conflicts have consequences that go beyond just individual accountants. As demonstrated by numerous audits that uncover anomalies connected to private interests, they may result in systemic problems with public financial management. The results of these audits frequently reveal a pattern of conduct in which moral principles are violated for one's own or the organization's advantage [19]. To resolve these conflicts and guarantee that public sector accountants uphold the highest ethical standards, a strong framework for ethical training and accountability is needed.

In summary, conflicts of interest pose a significant obstacle to public sector accounting, especially when it comes to budget execution. Integrity is easily compromised in a complex environment created by the interaction of interpersonal relationships, organisational demands, and ethical commitments. To reduce these conflicts and rebuild public confidence in government financial practices, it is imperative to improve transparency and accountability measures.

Pressure to Reach Financial Goals

Another significant ethical conflict that public sector accountants deal with is the pressure to reach budgetary goals. Budgetary restrictions and the requirement to exhibit financial responsibility can result in a culture of performance-driven decision-making in many public sector organisations. This culture frequently puts immediate results ahead of morality, which forces accountants to make choices that might not be morally right. The unrelenting pursuit of budgetary goals can result in actions that are harmful to financial accountability, such as underreporting expenses or inflating revenue projections, according to research by Ebrahim (2021).

This pressure has significant ramifications. More than 60% of public sector accountants said they felt under pressure to lower their ethical standards in order to satisfy budgetary requirements, according to a survey by the International Federation

of Accountants (IFAC). This figure emphasises how urgently businesses must create a moral environment that promotes honesty and openness in financial reporting. The South African government's financial situation demonstrated the negative consequences of these pressures, as poor management and unethical behaviour resulted in large-scale financial scandals that eroded public confidence.

Furthermore, the repercussions of missing financial goals may start a vicious cycle of immoral behaviour. Accountants may turn to unethical tactics to protect their jobs when they face the possibility of budget cuts or job insecurity. According to Davis (2022), a culture where ethical transgressions are not only accepted but, in certain situations, even encouraged can result from this atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. The integrity of public financial management may be significantly impacted by such a culture.

The absence of sufficient support networks for accountants in moral binds exacerbates the pressure's ethical ramifications. Many public sector organisations leave accountants to make difficult decisions alone because they don't offer enough resources or training to help them deal with ethical dilemmas [20]. Ethical standards in the public sector may suffer as a result of this lack of support, which can intensify moral distress.

In conclusion, public sector accountants face serious ethical dilemmas as a result of the pressure to reach budgetary goals. Integrity may be jeopardised in a delicate environment where ethical commitments and performance standards interact. In order to overcome these obstacles, organisations must foster a culture of ethical accountability and give accountants the tools and support they need to maintain moral principles in their financial operations.

Insufficient Openness in Budget Distribution

One of the main pillars of moral public sector governance is budget allocation transparency. However, a lot of public sector organisations have trouble being transparent, which causes moral conflicts when budgeting. A climate of mistrust and suspicion among stakeholders, such as the general public, public servants, and auditors, can be cultivated by unclear communication about budgetary allocations. Miller (2020) asserts that insufficient transparency in budgetary procedures frequently leads to resource misallocation, which can compromise the efficacy of public services.

This lack of transparency has important ramifications. For example, the integrity of the decision-making process is called into question when budgetary decisions are made behind closed doors. According to a case study by Uddin and Choudhury (2021), public confidence in government institutions was damaged by accusations of corruption and poor management brought on by a local government's opaque budget procedures. This instance demonstrates how important transparency is to maintaining accountability and moral conduct in public sector accounting.

Furthermore, a lack of transparency may give rise to unethical practices like nepotism or favouritism in budgetary distributions. It is simpler for people to influence the system for their own

benefit when stakeholders are unaware of the standards used to make budgetary decisions. According to a study by Rizvi and Khan (2021), public sector organisations with opaque budget procedures were more vulnerable to corruption because unethical behaviour could thrive in the absence of oversight.

Public sector organisations must implement transparent budgeting procedures that encourage responsibility and moral conduct in order to address these problems. The risks associated with a lack of transparency can be reduced by putting in place explicit guidelines for budget allocation and making sure that stakeholders have access to pertinent information. According to Clark (2020), encouraging an open culture strengthens ethical standards in public sector accounting while also boosting public trust.

In conclusion, public sector accountants face a serious ethical dilemma due to the opaqueness of budget allocation. Integrity may be jeopardised in the setting created by the interaction of ethical decision-making with opaque procedures. Organisations must prioritise budget transparency in order to address these issues, improving accountability and building public trust.

Discussion Consequences of Ethical Conflicts

Effect on Public Confidence in Governmental Organisations

The public's trust in government institutions is significantly impacted by the ethical conflicts that public sector accountants face. The public's trust in government agencies' capacity to manage resources responsibly may erode when moral principles are violated. According to research by Anderson (2021), a decline in trust in government institutions is directly linked to perceived ethical transgressions in public sector accounting. The public's perception as well as citizens' willingness to participate in and support government initiatives may be significantly impacted by this breakdown of trust.

The financial scandals that have afflicted governments all over the world, like the 2008 financial crisis, which was made worse by unethical accounting practices, are a prime example. People are widely disillusioned as a result of the fallout from these incidents, questioning the credibility of their institutions [21]. In democratic societies, where social cohesion and efficient governance depend on public trust, the effect on trust can be especially detrimental.

Moreover, the ramifications of deteriorating public confidence go beyond the short-term economic effects. Increased scrutiny and calls for accountability may result from citizens losing faith in their government's capacity to act morally. Public sector accountants may work in an atmosphere of constant pressure as a result of this increased vigilance, which could exacerbate ethical conflicts. This relationship's cyclical nature highlights how important it is for public sector organisations to give ethical behaviour and openness in their accounting procedures top priority.

Governmental organisations must implement strong ethical frameworks that place a high priority on accountability and integrity in order to regain the public's trust. Restoring trust in financial management can be facilitated by putting policies in place like frequent audits, open reporting procedures, and ethics

education for public sector accountants. Governmental organisations can improve public trust and reduce the risks of ethical conflicts by cultivating a culture of ethical accountability.

In conclusion, the public's trust in government institutions is greatly impacted by the ethical conflicts that public sector accountants face. Effective governance is made difficult by the interaction of weakened moral principles and public opinion. Organisations must prioritise ethical practices and financial management transparency if they hope to regain the trust of their constituents.

Techniques for Resolving Ethical Conflicts

Putting Public Sector Accountant Codes of Conduct into Practice

The creation of thorough codes of conduct is essential for directing public sector accountants' moral behaviour. In addition to outlining proper conduct, these codes promote an open and accountable culture. A clear code can act as an accountant's moral compass, guiding them through the difficult moral conundrums that come up when executing a budget, claim Baker and Wallace (2018). For example, the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) has created a code of ethics that emphasises objectivity, professionalism, and integrity. This code can be modified to meet the unique requirements of public sector organisations.

Furthermore, strict enforcement procedures ought to go hand in hand with the adoption of these codes. According to research, having a code alone is not enough; for it to be effective, it needs to be actively promoted and upheld. For instance, the National Audit Office of the United Kingdom has created a framework that includes frequent audits to verify compliance in addition to outlining ethical standards for public sector accountants. It has been demonstrated that this proactive approach improves public trust in government financial management and increases adherence to ethical standards [22].

Additionally, codes of conduct ought to be periodically examined and revised to take into account the changing ethical issues in public sector accounting. Codes that address modern concerns like conflicts of interest and the pressure to meet budget targets are desperately needed, especially in light of recent scandals involving financial mismanagement, like the collapse of Carillion. Public sector accountants will be better prepared to deal with ethical quandaries if codes are kept current.

Establishing an ethical culture in public sector organisations is crucial, in addition to formal codes. This can be accomplished by having leaders who set an example of moral behaviour and promote candid conversations about moral conundrums [23]. For example, it has been discovered that companies that support ethical leadership foster a stronger ethical environment, which enhances accountants' ability to make decisions [24].

To sum up, one of the most important ways to resolve ethical conflicts among public sector accountants is to establish and enforce thorough codes of conduct. For these codes to have a significant influence on accountants' behaviour, they must be dynamic, reflecting the shifting terrain of ethical dilemmas, and backed by an ethical leadership culture.

Educating Accounting Professionals on Ethics

Giving public sector accountants the abilities and information they need to successfully negotiate moral conundrums requires ethics training. Targeted training programs can improve accountants' comprehension of moral principles and the consequences of their choices, claim Harrison and McMillan (2018). To increase their relevance and impact, these programs ought to be customised to the unique difficulties encountered in public sector accounting, such as financial constraints and political influences.

Additionally, research indicates that ethics education greatly enhances accountants' ability to make moral decisions. According to a study by DeZoort and Lord (2020), for example, accountants who received ethics training were more likely to report unethical behaviour and withstand pressure to do so. In addition to encouraging personal responsibility, this training helps public sector organisations develop a shared ethical culture.

Ethics training should be a continuous process rather than a one-time occurrence in order to maximise its effectiveness. Accountants can stay up to date on new advancements in ethical standards and reinforce ethical principles with regular workshops, seminars, and refresher courses. For instance, introducing case studies that illustrate actual ethical conundrums encountered by public sector accountants can encourage dialogue and improve participants' critical thinking abilities.

Furthermore, incorporating ethics instruction into professional development courses can help public sector accountants incorporate ethical principles into their everyday work. According to Baker (2020), accountants are more likely to take ethics training seriously and use it in their work when it is connected to career advancement. As a result, ethical behaviour becomes ingrained in both organisational culture and professional identity, creating a positive feedback loop.

In conclusion, one of the most important ways to resolve ethical conflicts is to give public sector accountants thorough and continuous ethics training. Training can enable accountants to act honourably and responsibly in their positions by improving their comprehension of moral principles and decision-making procedures.

Enhancing Monitoring Systems for Budget Execution Procedures

Ensuring that public sector accountants follow ethical guidelines when executing budgets requires strong oversight procedures. These mechanisms, which can include legislative scrutiny, external reviews, and internal audits, all help to improve accountability and transparency in public financial management. For example, audit committees play a crucial role in public sector organisations by offering impartial oversight and guaranteeing adherence to ethical standards [25].

According to research, strong oversight can discourage unethical behaviour by raising the possibility that misconduct will be discovered and dealt with. According to a study by Rizvi and Khan (2021), companies with robust oversight systems have fewer cases of fraud and corruption, which encourages an honest culture among accountants. This emphasises how crucial it is to fund efficient oversight systems in order to reduce moral

conflicts in budget execution procedures. Furthermore, the efficiency of monitoring operations can be improved by incorporating technology into oversight procedures. Data analytics, for instance, can offer real-time insights into budget execution, allowing organisations to quickly spot irregularities and possible ethical transgressions [26]. This proactive approach acts as a deterrent against unethical behaviour in addition to facilitating prompt interventions.

The overall efficacy of oversight mechanisms can also be improved by encouraging cooperation amongst different oversight bodies, including regulatory agencies, external auditors, and internal auditors. These organisations can develop a more thorough oversight framework that tackles the intricacies of public sector accounting by exchanging knowledge and best practices [27].

In conclusion, ensuring ethical behaviour among public sector accountants requires bolstering oversight mechanisms. Organisations can lessen ethical tensions in budget execution procedures by promoting collaboration, using technology, and increasing transparency [28-36].

In conclusion, resolving the moral conflicts that public sector accountants encounter when implementing budget execution procedures necessitates a comprehensive strategy [37-40]. A culture of integrity and accountability can be promoted by putting in place thorough codes of conduct, offering continuing ethics education, and bolstering oversight procedures. Public sector organisations can restore public confidence in government financial management and raise the ethical standards of their accountants by giving priority to these strategies [41-45]. These tactics must be continuously evaluated and modified to address new ethical issues as the field of public sector accounting develops [46-52].

Conclusion

It is clear from a summary of the main conclusions about ethical conflicts in public sector accountants' budget execution procedures that these experts deal with a wide range of difficulties that make their jobs more difficult [53-60]. The pressure to reach financial goals frequently clashes with moral principles, creating conundrums that may erode public confidence. A Taylor (2021) study, for example, shows how accountants may feel pressured to falsify financial reports in order to paint a more positive picture of budget execution, endangering their integrity and accountability. The importance of ethical behaviour in preserving a reliable public sector is further highlighted by research by Anderson (2021), which shows that unethical accounting practices in the public sector can seriously damage public trust in governmental institutions [61, 62].

Furthermore, outside forces like organisational culture and political meddling intensify ethical conflicts. According to Khan and Ali (2020), political agendas have the power to affect financial management choices, potentially pushing accountants to put political outcomes ahead of moral principles.

In addition to making decision-making more difficult, this blending of politics and ethics seriously jeopardises the moral atmosphere in public sector organisations. According to Gendron and Bedard (2020), who contend that a robust ethical framework can

assist accountants in managing these intricate pressures, cultivating an ethical culture is therefore crucial.

Future studies should concentrate on creating thorough frameworks that include moral decision-making models specifically designed for public sector accountants in order to address these ethical issues. According to O'Leary (2021), these frameworks may help people comprehend and handle ethical quandaries more effectively. Furthermore, empirical research on the efficacy of ethics education initiatives may offer important new perspectives on how they influence accountants' moral behaviour. Harrison and McMillan (2018) emphasise that continuous ethics training is crucial for giving public sector accountants the skills they need to successfully handle moral conundrums.

The ethical problems with public sector accounting require a call to action. To create strong ethical standards and training initiatives, stakeholders—including governmental organisations, academic institutions, and professional accounting associations—must work together. Ethics in public sector accounting should be given top priority in order to improve accountability and transparency and, eventually, rebuild public confidence. According to Baker and Wallace (2018), incorporating ethics into financial management and public budgeting procedures is not only required by law but also morally required, as it can result in better public service delivery and more efficient governance. In conclusion, cultivating a culture of integrity and accountability requires addressing the ethical conflicts in public sector accountants' budget execution procedures. We can make sure that public sector accountants are prepared to handle the challenges of their jobs while respecting the values of ethical governance by funding research and teamwork to advance ethical standards.

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