

Managing Ethics in Public Sector: Integrity Approaches¹

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Received 21 August 2016
Revised 13 September 2016
Accepted 17 October 2016

ABSTRAK

Terdapat dua pendekatan utama etika yang diterapkan dalam administrasi publik yaitu integritas dan pemenuhan. Penelitian ini fokus pada pendekatan integritas terutama pendidikan dan pelatihan etika serta model-model etika. Metode yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah kajian pustaka. Integritas dapat dikatakan sebagai pendekatan lunak (*soft*) sedangkan pemenuhan sebagai pendekatan keras (*hard*). Pendekatan integritas menggunakan kontrol internal dan pendekatan pemenuhan menggunakan kontrol eksternal agar dapat berfungsi sebagai etika organisasi. Pendekatan integritas dianggap lebih efektif. Penelitian menjelaskan orientasi dan komponen pendekatan integritas sebagai etika dalam organisasi. Program-program pendidikan dan pelatihan etika yang tertanam dalam pendekatan integritas merupakan program-program kognitif dalam pembuatan kebijakan etika. Beberapa model etika yang dibahas dalam penelitian ini, yaitu *Ethics Triangle Model*, *Ethical Decision-making Model*, *Ethical Problem-solving Model*, dan *Moral Development Model*, dapat digunakan untuk membantu individu dan kelompok dalam organisasi untuk menganalisa dilema-dilema etika yang dihadapi sehari-hari. Model-model tersebut dianggap sebagai alat yang efektif untuk meningkatkan pembuatan kebijakan oleh para pejabat publik.

Kata Kunci: Etika, Mengelola Etika, Sektor Publik, Integritas, Pendekatan Integritas

ABSTRACT

There are two main approaches of ethics, integrity and compliance approach, applying in public administration. In this paper, I would like to study specifically about integrity approach, focusing on ethics education and training and ethical models. Methodology used in the study is a documentary research. The finding might be help public officials in decision-making when they have to encounter some ethical dilemmas in public administration. Integrity and compliance can be perceived as a soft and a hard approach, respectively. An integrity approach uses internal controls and a compliance approach uses external controls in order to operate as an ethical organization. The integrity approach is assumed to be more effective. This paper has focused on the integrity approach to organizational ethics, therefore describing its orientation and components. Moreover, it clarified the way of implementing this approach within an organization. Ethics education and training programs, which are embedded in an integrity approach, are cognitive programs in ethical decision-making. Ethical models studying in this paper; *Ethics Triangle Model*, *Ethical Decision-making Model*, *Ethical Problem-*

solving Model, and Moral Development Model; can be used to help individuals and groups of individuals in organizations to analyze ethical dilemmas they are faced with in daily practice. These *models*, consequently, are considered as effective means for enhancing decision-making of public officials.

Keywords: Ethics, Managing Ethics, Public Sector, Integrity, Integrity Approaches

INTRODUCTION

Ethics might be defined as the way values are practiced. It is both a process of inquiry (deciding how to decide) and a code of conduct (a set of standards that govern action). It is a system of right and wrong and a means to live accordingly. It is a quest for the good life. Ethics, then, studies how one ought to live, principles of right and wrong, and what it is to live fulfilled life. ([Bowman and West, 2015, p. 46](#))

Ethics in public sector might be defined as a process in which a public administrator identifies the ethical standards involved in issues within an agency context, independently critique those decision standards, and becomes personally and professionally accountable for the decisions rendered. Consequently, such a definition entails two aspects: a content component in terms of the ethical standards that serve as guidelines for the administrator, and a process component that establishes a method to determine and critique ethical decisions in order to act rightly. ([Cooper and Wright; cite from Hejka-Ekins, 2001, p. 80](#))

Ethics management is relatively new. It has never received the attention that the hallmark values of efficiency, economy, and effectiveness have in modern public administration scholarship or practice. This is due largely to the assumptions of 19th century civil service reformers like Woodrow Wilson and his intellectual successors over the decades. Administrators, from the Wilson's assumptions, were expected to be men and women of high moral character and integrity. From this opinion, there was little reason to be concerned about the need to add a fourth "e" (ethics) to the holy trilogy of efficiency, economy, and effectiveness. ([Menzel, 2001, pp. 355-356](#))

In the last quarter of the 20th century, ethics has become academic talk and shop talk. It is increasingly common to find pub-

lic administration graduate programs offering ethics courses and public organizations providing in-house ethics training. This trend is a result of an increasing incidence of wrongdoing in government. Moreover, there is a more compelling explanation, that is, a growing recognition by private and public sector managers that productive, high performing units are value driven units that place ethics high on their list of value. When such a relation exists between ethics and organizational performance, prudent managers and scholars have focused on understanding and studying the dynamics of the ethical workplace and the role that professional associations and ethics codes and pronouncements play in the scheme of things. ([Menzel, 2001, p. 356](#))

There are two main approaches of ethics, integrity and compliance approach, applying in public administration. In this paper, I would like to study specifically about integrity approach, focusing on ethics education and training and ethical models. The finding might be help public administrators in decision-making when they have to encounter some ethical dilemmas in public administration. The topics, I will present, are as follow:

1. Integrity and Compliance Approaches
2. Ethics Education and Training
3. Ethics Triangle Model
4. Ethical Decision-making Model
5. Ethical Problem-solving Model
6. Moral Development Model
7. Conclusion

INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE APPROACHES³

John Rohr was one of the first scholars who made a clear distinction between an integrity approach and a compliance approach, between the 'high road' of integrity and the 'low road' of compliance. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 118](#))

The integrity approach is a virtue-based or characteristic strategy to organizational ethics. Programs within this type of approach aim to define organizational (moral) values and encourage em-

ployee commitment to act upon these leading values and ethical aspirations. Integrity approach is based on the principles within the organization and the wider environment. An important role in this strategy to organizational ethics is played by managers. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 118](#))

The compliance approach is a rule-based or legal strategy to organizational ethics, which focused on the prevention of unethical conduct by detecting integrity violations and sanctioning employees who transgress the law, rules and organizational norms. Programs within this type of approach tend to emphasize the prevention of unlawful conduct, primarily by increasing surveillance and control and by imposing penalties for wrongdoers. Organizations that follow a compliance approach are mainly concerned with avoiding legal sanctions and conceive ethics as 'that what is legal and within the law'. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 118](#))

Cooper distinguishes internal and external controls, which can be employed to foster responsible behavior in organizations. Internal controls are instruments that aim to internalize moral values to foster employee ethical conduct, such as ethical dilemma training, exchange of information and experiences, and reinforcement by rewarding exemplary behavior. Ethical leadership and the fostering of an ethical culture and climate are important ways to accomplish desired behavior of employees. Internal controls are important instruments within an integrity approach. In the opposite side, external controls are imposed, top-down instruments to steer employee ethical conduct, such as laws, rules and codes, and monitoring and reinforcement of such rules by sanctioning wrongdoers. External controls fit with the compliance approach. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 118](#)). The features of the two approaches are shown in table 1 and table 2.

ETHICS EDUCATION AND TRAINING⁴

From the previous topic, it shows that a compliance approach will stress the importance of objective responsibilities, whereas

TABLE 1: INTEGRITY APPROACH

ASPECT	INTEGRITY APPROACH
Ethics	Self-governance and subjective responsibility according to chosen standards within organization
Aim	Enable ethical conduct and moral reasoning
Behavioral assumptions	Social beings guided by values, principles, (public service) motivation and leaders and peers
Methods and instruments	Internal controls, ethics education and training, communication and deliberation, ethical leadership, ethical culture and climate, reinforcement by rewards
Standards	Organizational mission, values and aspirations, social obligations, including law, rules, codes and norms
Leadership and staffing	Managers, ethics officers
Activities	Lead (bottom-up) development of organizational values and standards, training and communication, integration in organizational system and culture, providing guidance and consultation, assessing values and performance, identifying and resolving problems and dilemmas
Education and training	Ethical decision-making and values, dilemma training

Source: based on the "Compliance Versus Integrity Approach" by Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen (2013, p. 121)

TABLE 2: COMPLIANCE APPROACH

ASPECT	COMPLIANCE APPROACH
Ethics	Conformity with externally imposed standards and objective responsibilities
Aim	Prevent and combat unethical conduct and integrity violations
Behavioral assumptions	Autonomous beings guided by economic self-interest
Methods and instruments	External controls, education of rules and codes of conduct, reduced discretion and autonomy, auditing, monitoring and controls, reinforcement by sanctions
Standards	Criminal and regulatory law
Leadership and staffing	Lawyers, compliance officers
Activities	Developing (top-down) compliance standards, education and communication, handling reports of misconduct, conducting investigations, overseeing compliance audits and monitoring, enforcing standards with clear sanctions
Education and training	Compliance standards and system, codes of conduct

Source: based on the "Compliance Versus Integrity Approach" by Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen (2013, p. 121)

an integrity approach will stress the significance of subjective responsibilities in ethical decision-making by public officials. These will subsequently become emphasized within organizational edu-

education and training programs, which can, in turn, support the individual ethical decision-making of employees. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 123](#))

Normally, education and training refer to processes and experiences that are designed to impart knowledge, understanding and skills. More specifically, ethics education and training often offer cognitive programs in ethical decision-making. The aim and focus of ethics education and training is to prevent unethical conduct by raising individual moral awareness and improve moral judgment (both integrity and compliance) because these serve as an internal psychological guideline or condition for actual ethical behavior. It is supposed that how people think is related to what they do. ([Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, p. 123-4](#))

Although ethics education and training is relevant to all employee, four key moments in a person’s organizational career are seen as most important to advance and maintain professional ethical acting. They are (1) right from the start (2) shortly after the start (3) when moving to a new ethically vulnerable position and (4) when moving to a leadership position, as shown in table 3.

TABLE 3: KEY MOMENTS OF ETHICS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

KEY MOMENT	ETHICS EDUCATION AND TRAINING
1. Right from the start	To become aware of the ethics aspects of professional life and understand the meaning of the guiding organizational values and principles in daily practice, public officials should be best educated and trained right from the start in the organization.
2. Shortly after the start	To reflect on specific work-related dilemmas and to confront objective with subjective responsibilities, and formal with informal practices, public officials should be educated and trained shortly after the start in their working environment.
3. When moving to a new ethically vulnerable position	To become aware and discuss the specific ethics issues, aspects and risks of their position, public officials should be educated and trained when moving to a new ethically vulnerable position.
4. When moving to a leadership position	To become ethically competent as a leader and be able to realize ethical leadership, public officials should be educated and trained in special leadership programs, when moving to a leadership position.

Source: based on the “Ethics Learning Moments in the Professional Career” by Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen (2013, p. 126)

Most education and training programs in cognitive moral reasoning are offering a practical ethical decision-making model. Four of such widely used and applied models, and I would like to study here, are: (1) Ethics Triangle Model, (2) Ethical Decision-making Model, (3) Ethical Problem-solving Model, and (4) Moral Development Model.

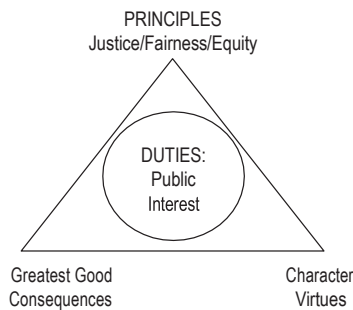


FIGURE 1: ETHICS TRIANGLE MODEL

Source: based on "the ethics triangle" by Svava (2015, p. 82)

ETHICS TRIANGLE MODEL⁵

As a scholar who has supported the combined use of all ethical theories; virtues, principles, and consequences; Svava argued that each of the three depends on and is supported by the others. Furthermore, the responsibilities from duty give a focus and direction to the ethical commitments of public administrators. Drawing on the philosophical perspectives, what virtues, principles, and consequences are in the public interest? The elements can be combined to form a triangle with duty at the center. Using this graphic representation of the model suggests that the four elements are interconnected and contained within a common space. The central ideal is the public interest, and the ideal at each point of the triangle are virtues, principles, and the consequences. The ethics triangle conveys the idea that administrators should act on their duty to promote the public interest by seeking a balance of virtues, principles, and good consequences.

(Svara, 2015, p. 82) The ethics triangle model is presented in figure 1.

TABLE 4: QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE DISCUSSION IN EACH ELEMENT

ELEMENT	QUESTION
Duty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can the public interest be advanced in general and in particular situations? 2. What are my responsibilities to the organization, political superiors, and to the public?
Virtues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What virtues should public administrators generally or persons working within a specific field or agency have? 2. What do these virtues mean, and how does one act in terms of each? 3. In general, what does it mean to have integrity and character?
Principles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What should one do to promote justice, to ensure fairness, and to expand equity? 2. What are the most important principles that should guide any public administrator or person working in a specific field or agency? 3. How would one prioritize the principles? 4. Are there any that can never be set aside to advance another principle? 5. What does it mean to apply these principles to specific situations?
Consequences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can the greatest good for the greatest number be achieved in making a specific decision? 2. What ends should public administrators or persons working within a specific field or agency seek to advance? 3. How should one ensure that all stakeholders have been identified and that the calculation of benefits and costs is universal, equal, and complete? 4. Can the means to be used be reconciled with the standards of the public interest, virtue, and principle?

Source: based on the "Promoting Use of the Ethics Triangle" by Svara (2015, pp. 85-86)

Svara (2015, p. 83) pointed that the elements of the model; duty, virtues, principles, and consequences; serve as distinct filters that reveal different aspects of a situation requiring an ethical choice. This method helps to clarify the options and ethical considerations associated with each approach. Using all the approaches together helps to prevent the shortcomings of using any of the approaches alone. The use of all three approaches also balances different ways of thinking about ethical issues. The virtue-based approach relies on feeling and reflection, the principle-based approach uses reason, and the consequence-based approach stresses analysis. Individual weaknesses in one of these ways of thinking can be offset by strengths in others.

In order to draw out key ideas associated with each approach, public administrators should internalize these ideas. Questions to guide the discussion would include as shown in table 4.

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ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL⁶

To practice and learn how to deal with ethical issues and dilemmas that public administrators are confronted with on a daily basis, Cooper recommends using the ethical decision-making model for systematic reflection. This model can be used by individuals or groups to analyze and resolve such problems within the context of the public organization. Even in less complex cases, applying this model could result in more self-awareness, clarity and conscious choices about their course of action and its basis. Consequently, by using an ethical decision-making model, the skill for thinking in a more principled fashion can be improved. (cite from [Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013, pp. 126-127](#)) The five steps of the model are presented in figure 2.

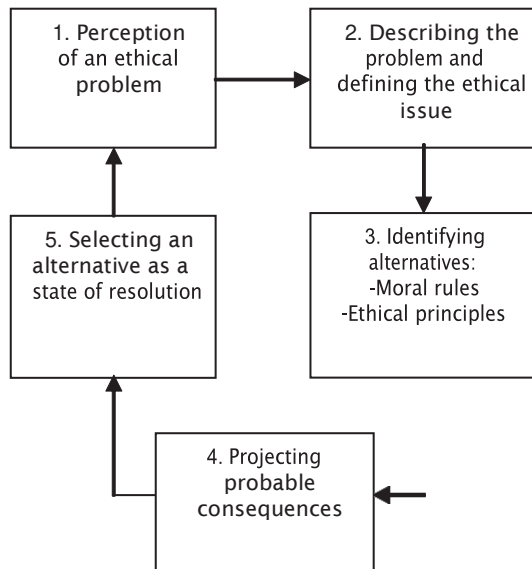


FIGURE 2: ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL

The descriptions of the five steps are demonstrated in table 5.

TABLE 5: THE FIVE STEPS OF ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING MODEL

STEP	DESCRIPTION
1. Perception of an ethical problem	The first step is perception of an ethical problem. In daily situations we do not always recognize the ethical dimensions and implications of the problems we face. Nevertheless, in many professional decision-making situations ethics does play a role and public officials are encountered with conflicts between values that are equally important.
2. Describing the problem and defining the ethical issue	The second step is to objectively describe the facts of the situation: Who are the actors and stakeholders that are involved, what are their viewpoints, the events and issues, and what are the ethical risks and challenges? What do we know and what information is still missing?
3. Identifying alternatives	The third step is to identify all alternative courses of action: What are the options? What are the consequences and implications of each option, what are the pros and cons? What about your own values and norms, and those of the wider audience? So, what are the creative solutions for the problem?
4. Projecting probable consequences	The fourth step is projecting the positive and negative anticipated consequences of alternatives. Use your moral imagination to construct a scenario with actors, interaction and implications for each alternative. Connect rational aspects and affective aspects of the ethical decision-making.
5. Selecting an alternative as a state of resolution	The last step is selecting an alternative. You can subsequently make a decision and choose the 'best' course of action.

Source: based on "An Ethical Decision-making Model: The Five Steps" by Cooper (cite from Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen (2013, pp. 127-128)

ETHICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL⁷

[Svara \(2015, p. 131\)](#) argued that it is possible to improve the quality of ethical problem solving by using some kind of systematic approach. Better quality would mean considering a broader range of issues and making greater use of universal values in ethical decision making. He proposed the problem-solving model sets forth a series of questions that potentially enable public administrators operating ethical dilemmas they encounter. The model is divided into three stages: description, analysis, and decision, as exhibited in figure 3.

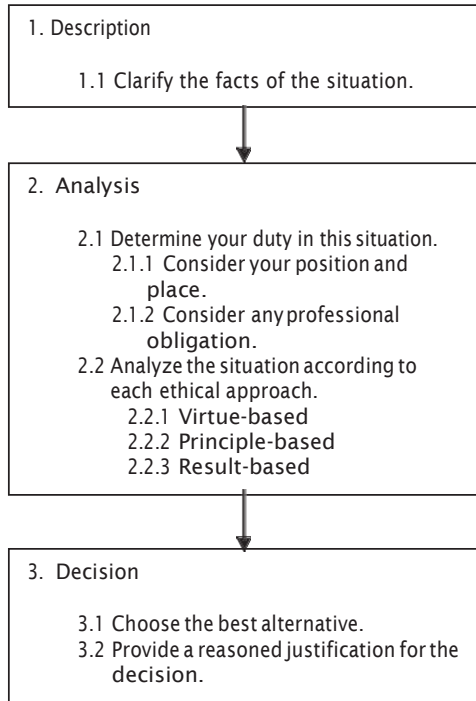


FIGURE 3: ETHICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL
Source: based on the "Stages and Steps in Problem-solving Model" by Svava (2015, p. 135)

The descriptions of the stages and steps are displayed in table 6.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL ⁸

To describe how people acquire attitudes about ethics and morality, Lawrence Kohlberg proposes a moral development model to help understand how the capacity for ethical reasoning develops and explains the motives for action at different stages of development. Although Kohlberg is concerned with morality broadly, but we can assume that the level of moral reasoning will be transferred to the way that individuals make ethical judgments about their role and behavior in an organization or profession. (Svava, 2015, p. 23)

TABLE 6: STAGES AND STEPS IN PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

STAGE	STEP
1. Description	1.1 Clarify the facts of the situation. It is important to get as much information as possible and to not interpret the information at this stage.
	1.2 Assess the interests of all parties who have stakes in the outcome of the situation and how they are potentially affected (stakeholder analysis).
2. Analysis	2.1 Determine your duty in this situation considering the obligations and responsibilities of your position and your professional role.
	2.1.1 Consider your position and place in the organizational structure and what you are expected to do by the organization.
	2.1.2 Consider any professional obligations that are distinct from what the organization expects (specific standards for your profession and general obligations, including advancing the public interest and promoting the democratic process).
	2.2 Analyze the situation according to each ethical approach. Analysis is guided by using each of the three ethical approaches guided by these questions.
	2.2.1 Virtue based: What would a good person do in this situation?
	2.2.2 Principle based: What principles apply to the situation and what action would follow from these principles?
	2.2.3 Results based: What are the best consequences that could be achieved in this situation, and what actions would be taken to achieve them?
2.3 List options. From the answers to the questions in step 2.2, a set of options can be developed.	
3. Decision	3.1 Choose the best alternative. Choosing among conflicting options is difficult, but at least one can feel confident that the choice did not ignore an important alternative. Furthermore, specifying multiple options increases the likelihood of making an ethical choice.
	3.2 Provide a reasoned justification for the decision. It will be easier to explain the basis for the decision if duty and all three ethical approaches have been considered.
	3.3 Monitor and evaluate results. Make adjustments if necessary.

Source: based on the "Stages and Steps in Problem-solving Model" by Svava (2015, pp. 134-136)

Kohlberg established three levels and six stages of moral development that children go through in the maturation process as they are influenced by a variety of socializing force. The levels are (1) pre-conventional levels, where the child is starting to respond to rules but has values that are self-centered; (2) conventional levels, where the older child and adult internalizes the values of doing the right thing in order to meet the expectations of others or to comply with prevailing standards; and (3) post-conventional levels, where moral values are grounded in universal principles. (Svava, 2015, p. 23) The levels and stages of the moral development model are presented in table 7.

TABLE 7: MORAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

LEVEL	STAGE	SOCIAL ORIENTATION	MOTIVE
Pre-conventional	1	Punishment and obedience	Stimulus/response
	2	Instrumental relativist	Self-serving good behavior
Conventional	3	"Good boy; nice girl"	Meeting the expectations of others with whom one interacts
	4	Society maintaining /law and order	Meeting standards imposed by society through law and convention
Post-conventional	5	Social contract	Seeking to promote rights of all as agreed to by society
	6	Universal ethical principle	Seeking to act in ethically principled way

Source: based on the "Ethical Development" by Kohlberg (cite from Svava, 2015, pp. 23-25)

Kohlberg suggests that the stages always occur in this order, and that people always incorporate the values of one stage before moving to the next. Most adults have moved to stage 4, but most do not move beyond that stage. Stage 4 reflects reasoning that emphasizes what is legal and supports social institutions. Sophisticated moral or ethical reasoning reflects post-conventional thinking, but it appears that this level of reasoning is somewhat uncommon. (Svava, 2015, p. 24)

Kohlberg's moral development model is useful for identifying why people behave the way they do at each of the differing levels of morality. Each stage is associated with a different motive for following rules or taking moral action, as described below: (Svava, 2015, pp. 25-28)

At stage 1, a person does whatever he or she can get away with and avoid getting caught and punished. It would represent a base level of moral reasoning and is likely to be rare, although instances of such behavior certainly occur in government organization.

Stage 2 reflects a narrow cost-benefit calculation: "I will follow the rules because I benefit more from doing so than from

breaking the rule.” There is no respect for the value of the rules themselves. Ethical standards are low and likely to stress what one should not do.

At stage 3, we do the right thing because it is expected by those with whom we interact. We do not want to disappoint them or let them down, and we do not want to incur their displeasure. It is highly personalized approach to deciding what is right and wrong, and the standards are influenced by our perceptions of the expectations of others and a feeling of loyalty to them.

At stage 4, persons accept the legitimacy of laws and other rules of behavior, including codes of ethics. They feel obligated to action in terms of these laws, policies, and rules based on the narrow or reactive sense of duty. Persons at this stage may not understand the reasons for the rules or feel a sense of commitment to the principles or purposes on which they are based, but they feel an obligation to follow the rules. They feel a sense of guilt when they do not.

Stage 5 and stage 6 reflect a deeper understanding and broader commitment than stage 4. At this level, there would be much more likelihood of critically examining the reasons for acting and seeking to alter unfair laws, policies, and rules than at the lower levels.

CONCLUSION

Integrity and compliance can be perceived as a soft and a hard approach, respectively. An integrity approach use internal controls and a compliance approach uses external controls in order to operate as an ethical organization. The integrity approach is assumed to be more effective.

This paper has focused on the integrity approach to organizational ethics, therefore describing its orientation and components. Moreover, it clarified the way of implementing this approach within an organization. Ethics education and training programs, which are embedded in an integrity approach, are cognitive pro-

grams in ethical decision-making. Ethical models studying in this paper; Ethics Triangle Model, Ethical Decision-making Model, Ethical Problem-solving Model, and Moral Development Model; can be used to help individuals and groups of individuals in organizations to analyze ethical dilemmas they are faced with in daily practice. These models, consequently, are considered as effective means for enhancing decision-making of public officials.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This article is a part of research title "Ethics in Public Administration: Theoretical Foundation and Strengthening Approaches" supported research funding by College of Politics and Governance, Mahasarakham University, fiscal year 2016.
- 2 Assoc.Prof.Dr., Lecturer at College of Politics and Governance, Mahasarakham University.
- 3 Information concerned with this topic see: Bowman and West, 2015; Koven, 2015; Svava, 2015; Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013; Lewis and Gilman, 2012; Menzel, 2007; Richter and Burke, eds., 2007; Gorofalo and Geuras, 2006; and Hejka-Ekins, 2001.
- 4 Information concerned with this topic see: Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013; Lewis and Gilman, 2012; Martinez, 2009; Menzel, 2007; Gorofalo and Geuras, 2006; Cooper, 2001; Hejka-Ekins, 2001; Mayer and Harmon, 2001; Rohr, 2001; and Yoder and Denhardt, 2001.
- 5 Information concerned with this topic see: Bowman and West, 2015; Svava, 2015; Richter and Burke, eds., 2007; and Gorofalo and Geuras, 2006.
- 6 Information concerned with this topic see: Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013; and Wittmer, 2001.
- 7 Information concerned with this topic see: Svava, 2015.
- 8 Information concerned with this topic see: Bowman and West, 2015; Svava, 2015; Lawton, Rayner, and Lasthuizen, 2013; Lewis and Gilman, 2012; Luke and Hart, 2001; and Stewart, Sprinthall, and Shafer, 2001.

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