


# Chapter 11

## Normative Ethical Paradigms in Public Administrative Policies: Mitigating the Dimensions of Fiscal Aberrations in Service Sectors

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter examines the normative ethical paradigms in public administrative policies, focusing on mitigating fiscal aberrations, vulnerability constructs, and strategic countermeasures within service organisations. It explores the determinants of vulnerability, including opportunity, pressure, and rationalisation, while highlighting the significance of ethical governance in fostering accountability and public trust. The chapter elucidates the development of stratagems for effective fraud prevention and response strategies, emphasising the interplay between ethical considerations and operational practices. Furthermore, it underscores the necessity of collaboration among diverse stakeholders and the adoption of sustainability practices as integral to enhancing service delivery. Through a comprehensive analysis, this chapter offers insights into navigating the complexities of public administration,*

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*ultimately advocating for a holistic approach that integrates ethical frameworks with proactive vulnerability management.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The convergence of normative ethical paradigms with public administrative policies has emerged as a critical lens through which the contemporary exigencies of fiscal governance, accountability and the mitigation of financial malfeasance are being scrutinised. In the service sector, where the interface between public service delivery and financial stewardship is especially delicate, the susceptibility to fiscal aberrations, whether in the form of fraud, embezzlement, or other financial anomalies, poses substantial risks. These risks, often catalysed by varying determinants of vulnerability such as opportunity, pressure and rationalisation, render the architecture of public administrative policies both complex and precarious (Fraser, 2014; Fall et al., 2014; Pescaroli & Alexander, 2016). The governance frameworks underpinning service sectors are required, therefore, to evolve to encompass robust normative ethical foundations. These paradigms offer a philosophical and practical approach to redressing the persistent fiscal challenges that compromise integrity, transparency and public trust (Perlingeiro & Oakes, 2020). As financial anomalies continue to disrupt public administration, the ethical dimensions of policy frameworks assume greater salience, seeking to mitigate the interlocking constructs of vulnerability and fiscal irregularities that threaten the credibility of service provision. One of the cardinal determinants of financial vulnerability within public administrative structures is the triad of opportunity, pressure and rationalisation (Chimonaki et al., 2023). These three components form the cornerstone of what is often referred to as the fraud triangle (Baker et al., 2020). Opportunity refers to the systemic loopholes or weaknesses within administrative controls that render them susceptible to exploitation (Nakitende et al., 2024; Nair, Manohar, & Chaudhry, 2024b). Pressure, on the other hand, often emanates from external or internal factors such as personal financial strain or institutional expectations that compel individuals to engage in unethical behaviour (Bayo & Red-well, 2021). Lastly, rationalisation embodies the psychological justifications or moral disengagement strategies employed by perpetrators to reconcile their unethical actions with their ethical standards or the broader institutional context (Pianezzi et al., 2020).

Opportunity, perhaps the most instrumental of the three, exists when an individual perceives that they can exploit a gap within the control mechanisms of the administrative system. Weaknesses in internal auditing, oversight and transparency afford opportunities for financial misconduct to occur with minimal risk of detection or censure (Manning, 2024; Nair, Manohar, Mittal, & Chaudhry, 2024). In

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