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**Masters Dissertation in Public Administration**

*Attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour*

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## **ABSTRACT**

While early studies of multigenerational connections with work-related issues have generated two different voices among authors, little has been written on how generational cohorts display their attitudes in the context of the public sector spectrum. This research builds on the current debate of scholars regarding the attitudes of different generational cohorts in the workplace. This study focuses on investigating the viewpoints of public servants from three generations by asking questions to explore their attitudes towards ethical behaviour within a public institution in an emerging country. A total of 207 samples from three different cohorts participated in this study. Based on quantitative analysis, this research suggests that in the public sector domain, generational cohorts are not necessarily connected to the attitudes towards ethical behaviour. This inference leads to several implications and pathways for future research.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In 2015, more than 2,500 public servants working in the Jakarta province were convicted of various disciplinary violations, ranging from work absenteeism to bribery (The Jakarta Post 2015). In 2016, the Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) recorded 482 corruption cases involving around 1,000 suspects of public workers (ICW 2016, p. 17). Likewise, according to the Global Corruption Barometer in 2017, the bribery rate in Indonesia, which is related to the provision of public services reached 32% (TI 2017, pp. 17-8). These figures show that undeniably, the Indonesian public sector continues to face problems because public workers are consistently engaged in unethical behaviours. Furthermore, the number that emerges is believed to be an iceberg phenomenon, only the “tip of the iceberg” is noticeable, which means that the number of cases of unethical behaviours involving public servants might be higher. Fundamentally, public employees are working on behalf of citizens. Hence, it is plausible to say that society demands public servants to perform ethical behaviours in their working activities. Today, a multigenerational workforce fills various positions in the Indonesian public sectors (BPS 2017). According to popular discourse, generational cohorts are believed to have a diverse variety of attributes that are likely to influence their attitudes towards work-related issues in the organisations. It has been claimed that the notion of generational differences is noteworthy since it could impact organisational functioning (e.g., decision-making). Hence, in everyday management, many practitioners, consultants, and professional organisations tailor dedicated human resources (HR) interventions related to this phenomenon (Costanza et al. 2012, p. 376).

A plethora of studies reports various empirical suggestions regarding the connection of generational cohorts with work-related issues. Several studies argue that generational cohorts have a correlation with work-values (see for example Kapoor & Solomon 2011; Twenge et al. 2010). In the context of ethics in the workplace, prior investigation suggests that generational cohorts tend to display “very distinct differences” regarding ethical perspectives in the workplace (ERC 2013, p. 2). Accordingly, in implementation, practitioners and organisations are endorsed to tailor their policies related to human resource management (HRM) (e.g., recruitment, training) based on the theory of

generational cohorts' differences (Costanza et al. 2012, p. 378). For instance, organisations need to create different strategies addressing different generations in building ethical culture (ERC 2013, pp. 30-1). However, various literature contests this theory. Some scholars suggest that generational cohorts could not be necessarily related to work-related issues. Even if generational cohorts reflect differences regarding their attitudes towards values and principles in the workplace, the difference tends to be insignificant. Kowske, Rasch and Wiley (2010, pp. 274-5) assert that there are more similarities than differences between generations at work. Consequently, organisational interventions directing the issues of generational differences might not be advantageous (Costanza et al. 2012, p. 375).

These scholars' discourse illustrates that there is no consensus about the notion of generational cohorts' viewpoints in the workplace. Although applying the concept of multigenerational differences into practical management could benefit the organisation, it might also not be suitable in specific fields of management, especially when developing policies related to HRM. Hence, organisations should be more prudent when deciding policies relating to their workers, which are constructed on the concept of generational cohorts. While the discussions continue, most of the previous studies tend to be organised within non-public sectors in developed countries. Unfortunately, little is known whether generational cohorts' theory correlates to the attitudes in the public sector setting, i.e. in the spectrum of an emerging country. Therefore, this research is dedicated to contributing to the debate of generational cohorts in the workplace. This study focuses on investigating the viewpoints of public servants from three generations by asking questions which indicate their attitude towards ethical behaviour within a public institution.

This research investigates the attitudes of public servants from three different generations (i.e., Baby Boomers, Generations X, and Millennials) in a public agency in Indonesia. A digital-based survey was sent to respondents from 28 November 2019 to 28 January 2020. From 674 public servants who were requested to take the survey, 265 people responded voluntarily. After data cleaning, the total number of samples that could be analysed was 207. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, this study indicates that there are not many differences between the cohorts on most survey items. Moreover, based on several significance tests, this study reports that there are no

significant differences in the attitudes of Indonesian public servants among generational cohorts towards ethical behaviour in the workplace — except, a few but statistically significant differences in several aspects. In this case, three aspects of the acceptability towards nine types of integrity violations in the public sector and two aspects of the likelihood to report any unethical behaviours in the workplace. Therefore, this study suggests that generational cohorts of Indonesia public servants are not necessarily correlated with their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace.

This thesis consists of six chapters. It begins by reviewing the literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of existing knowledge. It begins by exploring various concepts of ethics and different literature regarding generational cohorts and their viewpoints in the workplace, including a pertinent debate about the relevance of generational cohorts to their attitudes at work. Additionally, the section considers how this research is engaged with the current scholarly discussion. Subsequently, this paper provides the methodology of the research, focusing on procedures and strategies to explore new insights and understandings related to this research topic. This chapter explains some techniques in conducting the research, consisting of quantitative approaches, data collection, sampling and population, survey and questionnaire, the linkage between the survey and literature review, as well as some potential limitations of this research.

Chapter IV reports the empirical findings drawn from the data collection. This chapter investigates the results which are developed on the various theoretical concepts of generational cohorts' attitudes towards ethical aspects in the workplace. Also, this section provides significance test results to discover answers regarding the attitudes of generational cohorts of public servants towards ethical behaviour. Chapter V provides the analysis and discussion section, where the main argument of this study is demonstrated. The chapter focuses on an explanation and interpretation of the survey results. The findings are attached with meanings, connected to the literature review, and linked to the current debate of generational cohorts towards ethical perspectives in the workplace.

Finally, in a concluding chapter, this research indicates that although there are some differences in viewpoints towards ethical behaviour, most of the differences tend to be minor. Also, there are more “generational similarities” rather than “generational differences” at the workplace. Hence, this study suggests that generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants are not necessarily correlated with their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace. Based on this inference, some implications in the field of public management are recommended. Lastly, this paper finishes with some limitations of this study and further pathways for future research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Early works in the field of the multigenerational workforce have emphasised the importance of generational cohorts' standpoints towards work-related issues. Some scholars argue that generational cohorts have different attributes which tend to shape different viewpoints towards working behaviour, including the aspect of ethics. Consequently, in organisational management practice, these studies are utilised as an evidence-based consideration when designing policies related to HRM. The evidence suggests that workers of each generation have a different point of view about work-related issues. Hence, organisations are advised to manage this multigenerational phenomenon to ensure it functions optimally. The same relates to the context of promoting ethical behaviour in the workplace. The theory of generational differences also influences organisations in the development of their HR policies in improving ethics. For instance, in building ethical culture, organisations are recommended to tailor different socialisation and communication strategies for each generation (e.g., formal and informal approaches) to ensure that workers participate in several programs of improving their ethical behaviour (ERC 2013, pp. 30-1).

However, other studies have begun to challenge this paradigm. Previous investigations contend that generational cohorts are likely to display many similarities rather than differences in attitudes towards work-related issues. Hence, some scholars argue that generational cohorts are not automatically related to their perspectives towards behaviour at the workplace. This implies that implementing personnel management which is built on the theory of generational cohorts' differences is not necessarily suitable for organisations. For example, the expense in customising specific programs dedicated to a different segment of generations might outweigh the potential advantages (Kowske, Rasch & Wiley 2010, p. 265). Instead of designing interventions aimed at specific generations, it is recommended that leaders and HR managers design strategies that are more flexible for all generations of employees (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer 2014, p. 185). Subsequently, organisations should be more attentive when articulating policies related to their personnel, which are developed on the notion of generational cohorts' differences.

This chapter discusses the existing knowledge regarding generational cohorts and their viewpoints in various work-related issues. Also, it identifies that there is a significant gap in this current knowledge, which is that little research has addressed generational cohorts and their correlation to ethics in the public sector. In providing background information, this chapter begins with an exploration of various concepts of ethics in the public sector and how ethical concepts are contextualised in the public sector in Indonesia. The following section explains the concept of generational cohorts. Further, it discusses the notion of generational cohorts' attitudes towards work-related issues, including the debate regarding the connection of the cohorts and their viewpoints towards working behaviours, as well as ethical aspects in the workplace.

The chapter concludes that while the debate continues, little has been written about the relevance of generational cohorts and their attitudes towards ethical behaviour, specifically in the setting of the public sectors within emerging countries. Therefore, this research intends to fill that gap and to provide additional discourse regarding a multigenerational workforce and its attitudes to work-related issues. This study offers new insights into how generational cohorts' theories are explored regarding ethical values and principles at work, in a public organisation. To mention a few, how different generations understand the importance of ethical values in the workplace, how Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials view corruption, and how they perceive the need to apply ethical principles to their daily work.

## **2.1 What is ethical behaviour in the public sector?**

Over the decades, ample literature discusses the notion of ethics. It refers to a collection of norms, values, and moral principles that build integrity (Kolthoff, Cox & Johnson 2015, p. 197). Ethics is fundamental and could not be separated from day-to-day life; it affects activities and becomes a standard component of all walks of life, from government, academia, business, to non-profit organisations (Bowman & West 2018, p. 4). According to Lewis and Gilman (2012), the definition of ethics is:

From the Greek *ethos*, meaning character or habit; thinking systematically about morals and conduct and how we treat other people; guidelines for action that draw on what is right and important; principles of action that implement or promote moral values (Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 287).

Meanwhile, ethical behaviour is defined by:

The degree to which a behaviour, decision, or performance outcomes conform to an organization's communicated ethical standards and espoused values (Scholl, Mederer & Scholl 2018, p. 4053).

In the public sector domain, scholars assert that ethics is crucial. It is influential in achieving effective government (Thompson 1992 in Menzel 2001, p. 357). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) asserts that elements of ethics, such as integrity is indispensable in the public sector as one of the main ingredients in underpinning public trust and achieving good governance<sup>1</sup> (OECD 2000b, p. 11). From the individual's viewpoints, there are several reasons why ethics is considered vital in the public sector. Ethics is required for officials and public servants since they are part of a democratic process that aims to attain benevolent objectives for society (Lynch & Lynch 2009, p. 23).

Apart from technical expertise, professional public employees must be able to obey and make decisions based on an ethical standard. Bowman and West (2018, p. 5) state that "public servants, accordingly, must not only do technical things right but also do ethically right things". The fundamental reason is that public personnel act and work on behalf of the people for achieving public interests. In meeting public expectations, public sectors could implement several policies in promoting ethics, one of which is by developing ethics infrastructure. In this concept, public institutions could apply several strategies for improving ethical behaviour, such as regulations, socialisations, training and whistleblowing systems (OECD 2000a). Hence, public workers are expected to demonstrate ethical values in carrying out their duties since they have an obligation as "steward<sup>2</sup> of the common good" (Luke & Hart 2001, p. 549).

Consequently, in stewarding the public interests, public servants need to follow core values and principles. According to Lewis and Gilman (2012, pp. 28-30) (figure 2.1), public workers are expected to adhere to five core values and principles when conducting their activities. Firstly, "accountability", which is considered essential in the public sector because it serves as a hallmark of democracy and good governance (Siddiquee 2005, p.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of good governance in public administration is the process of making the best possible decisions while using public resources (Henson 2018, p. 1862).

<sup>2</sup> Public servants hold temporary stewardship in exercising public power and authority; that is "to preserve the value of an asset, community, or interest overtime and safeguard the public's interests" (Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 28).

108). In these principles, public workers should be able to justify their decisions and actions related to their job. For example, they need to provide transparency and be responsible for what is done and how. Secondly, they are obliged to perform “justice and fairness”, which emphasise adherence to rules and regulations. Thirdly, they must “do good”, which prioritises empathy and affirmative help when delivering public services. Fourthly, they ought to “avoid doing harm”, which means that public workers need to be careful when carrying out activities and try not to violate moral principles. Lastly, they are committed to “impartiality”, which focuses on promoting more prominent public interests than individual benefits. Therefore, ethical values and principles could lead to various ethical behaviours, which is a mandatory requirement for public personnel since it could drive public workers to act following norms and values in achieving benefits for society.

**Figure 2.1**  
**Public servant’s core values and actions principles<sup>3</sup>**

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Conversely, literature also explains the concept of being unethical. Jones (1991, p. 367) argues that when someone decides to behave illegally or is morally unacceptable to the public, then the person could be said to be unethical. Further, unethical behaviour could be broadly defined as “individual behaviour that is subject to or judged according to

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<sup>3</sup> Core Values and Actions Principles of public servants (Lewis 2005 in Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 29).

generally accepted moral norms of behaviour” (Treviño, Weaver & Reynolds 2006, p. 952). In the organisational domain, unethical behaviour has several explanations. It is termed as the actions of its members that violate moral norms in society (Kish-Gephart, Harrison & Treviño 2010, p. 2). A classical theory provides a typology<sup>4</sup> of unethical behaviours in an organisational context. In this notion, unethical is labelled as “deviance”, behaviours that violate organisational norms, which threaten members and organisations (Robinson & Bennett 1995), which means that unethical behaviours in an organisation are possibly harmful to both the organisation and its members. Although this concept was constructed more than two decades ago, the typology is still relevant in the modern organisational setting. As a proof, in the 2011 National Business Ethics Survey (NBES), some misconducts in organisations were observed by its members; from the minor to severe unethical behaviours, such as lying, sexual harassment, stealing, and accepting kickbacks (ERC 2013, pp. 32-3).

**Figure 2.2**  
**Typology of deviant workplace behaviours<sup>5</sup>**

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abs/10.5465/256693](https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/256693)**

According to figure 2.2, a variation of unethical behaviours in the workplace setting is determined by two dimensions: “minor versus serious” and “interpersonal versus

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<sup>4</sup> The study suggests that deviant workplace behaviours vary along two dimensions: ‘minor versus serious’ and ‘interpersonal versus organisational’ (Robinson & Bennett 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Typology of deviant workplace behaviours was constructed by Robinson and Bennett (1995, p. 565).

organisational". It could be categorised into four quadrants. The first quadrant is called "property deviance" when employees obtain or damage tangible organisational assets without permission. These behaviours are classified as serious and detrimental to an organisation—for example, sabotaging equipment which could endanger the organisational operation. Next, "production deviance" which is minor actions that harm the organisation since it affects the employee productivity level. For instance, taking excessive breaks could reduce the portion of working time, which could potentially disrupt productivity and affect organisational performance. The third quadrant is labelled as "political deviance". Included in this category are behaviours in social interactions between workers that are relatively minor and result in other individuals experiencing personal loss. One example is showing favouritism among employees which could potentially discriminate against someone else. The last one is "personal aggression" which is considered severe and harmful for individuals, such as sexual harassment. The behaviour is believed to be unacceptable and could be detrimental to employees who are victims.

Further, in the public sector setting, there are three common phenomena of unethical behaviours. The first one is corruption. It is defined as the abuse of office for personal gain and the benefit of others that breaches public trust and results in inappropriate deviations. The next one is misconduct. It is a behaviour that causes critical risks to the safety, health, reputation, and sustainability of the organisation and it is not necessarily related to personal gain. The last is maladministration which is acts of deviation that are due to the inability to manage tasks and finances which are not necessarily intended for personal benefit (Monaghan & Graycar 2016, pp. 89-91). Additionally, the classification of unethical behaviours in the public domain could also be described as integrity violations, consisting of different types of unethical behaviours in public administration. These behaviours have been validated and utilised by several studies in observing the frequency and acceptability of various integrity violations, ranging from corruption to misconduct in private time (Huberts & Lasthuizen 2014, pp. 131-4; Lasthuizen, Huberts & Heres 2011, p. 389). This concept is used for investigations conducted to measure integrity in the public sector entities in the Netherlands, United States of America, Serbia, and Montenegro (Kolthoff, Cox & Johnson 2015; Kolthoff, Erakovich & Lasthuizen 2010). One the studies suggest that the level of acceptability might be related to the frequency

of integrity violations in public offices; “the more acceptable an integrity violation is considered, the less it is observed” (Kolthoff, Cox & Johnson 2015, p. 208).

**Figure 2.3**

**Nine types of integrity violations in the public sector<sup>6</sup>**

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1. corruption: bribing	<b>Reproduced with permission from Taylor &amp; Francis</b>
2. corruption: favoritism	
3. conflict of interest (gifts, jobs, etc.)	
4. fraud and theft of resources	
5. waste and abuse of resources	
6. break rules/misuse power (also for the organization)	
7. misuse and manipulation of information	
8. indecent treatment (intimidation, discrimination)	
9. private time misconduct	

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Authors emphasise that any unethical behaviours result in many losses. If workers are involved in negative deviant behaviours, then organisational integrity becomes problematic (Appelbaum, Iaconi & Matousek 2007, p. 595). In a broader context, unethical behaviours could contribute to decreasing citizens’ confidence in their officials, as well as public institutions (Fattah 2011, p. 65). Likewise, in the public sector, unethical behaviours are also problematic. For instance, among the several categories of unethical behaviours, one of the most widely known is corruption. In the public sector, it could result in the loss of governance capacity, impede public administration operations, and damage the values in society (Graycar & Villa 2011, p. 420). Indeed, corruption brings various disadvantages. Mauro in Kaufmann (1997, p. 119) emphasises that the impacts of corruption tend to distort public expenditures, such as education programs and it will slow down the economic growth. It is corrosive and could lead to a waste of public resources that have an impact on people’s welfare (OECD 2017). Corruption could also arouse adverse effects that cause social distrust, that is when citizens think whether other people are trustworthy (Richey 2010, p. 685). It is dangerous because it has the potential to disrupt public trust in government and weaken democracy (Beerli et al. 2013, p. 59; OECD 2017). Whereas, trust is essential in a governance context since the high-level of trust becomes a decent parameter of society’s satisfaction towards the government (Christensen & LÆG Reid 2005, p. 505).

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<sup>6</sup> Nine types of integrity violation in the public sector (Huberts 2018, p. 23).

## **2.2 Contextualising ethics in the public sector of Indonesia**

Ethical issues in the Indonesian public sector continue to be in the spotlight. Government institutions still need to deal with various unethical behaviours involving their personnel. In Jakarta province, as many as 2,650 public servants in 2015 were involved in cases related to ethics violations in the workplace, ranging from the minor category (e.g., skipping work) to major classifications that ended with dismissal (e.g., bribery) (The Jakarta Post 2015). One severe unethical behaviour relates to corruption, which has been rampant during the New Order Regime (NOR) for 32 years (Prabowo & Cooper 2016, p. 1029). It could be started with petty corruption in the bureaucracy (King 2000, p. 618), such as conducting price mark-ups on stationary procurements and falsifying invoices of official travel for reimbursement (Kristiansen & Ramli 2006, p. 226). Corruption is also commonly started by bribery of street-level bureaucrats and ends with a state capture involving elites and public officials (Merkle 2018, p. 4).

To date, this practice continues. In 2016, the Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) recorded 482 corruption cases, 1,011 suspects resulted in about USD 103 billion of state funds lost (ICW 2016, p. 17). These figures increased in 2017 with 576 corruption cases, 1,298 suspects, and roughly USD 462 billion of state losses (ICW 2017, p. 9). Data from the Transparency International states that the level of bribery in Indonesia related to the delivery of public services reaches 32% (TI 2017, pp. 17-8). In 2018, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) conducted 28 red-handed operations involving 229 individuals, including civil servants, lawmakers, regional councillors, and regional leaders (Kahfi 2018a). Indeed, these phenomena provide credence to the notion that many public servants are involved in unethical behaviours. Suffice to say that the public sector in Indonesia still faces challenges related to unethical behaviours.

In the context of corruption, various factors contribute to shaping this behaviour. In general, unethical actions are determined by factors like social influences, greed, and egocentrism (Belle & Cantarelli 2017, pp. 331-2). Meanwhile, in the Indonesian situation, four aspects are considered to cause corruption in the public sector. Firstly, “negative culture”. According to the theory of organisational behaviour, culture is considered dominant in an organisation when “the values and assumptions (are) shared most consistently and widely by the organisation's members” (McShane 2016, p. 457). In

Indonesia; for more than three decades, corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) are assumed to be normal activities and have become a deep-rooted culture in the bureaucracy and society; most civil servants are involved in daily corruption (Robertson-Snape 1999, pp. 589-90). Today, even in the era of bureaucratic reform<sup>7</sup>, unethical behaviours in the public sector still exist. Corresponding to the KPK's Integrity Assessment Survey, these behaviours occur in the form of bribery, nepotism in employee selection and promotion, misappropriation of procurement budgets, and official travel arrangements manipulation (KPK 2017, p. 40). Hence, it is reasonable to say that corruption has become a dominant culture in the bureaucracy and tend to be inherent in Indonesia's public sector.

Secondly, the factor of "needs" could influence acts of corruption. In Indonesia, civil servants are more likely to be corrupt in their agencies because of the need to return the bribe that was spent in employee selection processes. Prior studies report that there is a "black market" phenomenon in the selection and promotion of civil servants in Indonesia. From 60 participants, all respondents acknowledge that they must spend a large amount of money on becoming civil servants. As a result, these employees tend to implement various strategies to get "speed money" to increase revenue (Kristiansen & Ramli 2006, pp. 220-6). This finding could reflect how corruption becomes a need to return the "capital" that was spent on becoming a civil servant. Furthermore, the theory suggests that when government workers do not get adequate compensation, they will commit corruption based on the urgency of the needs (Mabroor 2005, p. 71). In other words, people could commit corruption if their expenses are higher than their income. In Indonesia, public servants in the Suharto period experiencing an imbalance between compensation received and expenses due to the low level of salary. The president himself at that time claimed that "corruption in our country is not the result of corrupt minds but economic pressures" (Robertson-Snape 1999, p. 590). In this situation, government employees are by perforce conducting corruption based on fulfilling their needs. Thus, corruption in the public sector could also be triggered by employees' needs.

Thirdly, corruption is driven by "greed". Bureaucrats tend to be greedy, which is quite natural, in gathering more wealth if there are power and opportunities to exercise

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<sup>7</sup> Bureaucratic reform is an endeavour to provide excellent service for citizens, accelerate the eradication of KKN as well as achieve good governance in Indonesia bureaucracy (Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform 2010, p. 17).

corruption (Mabroor 2005, p. 71). This concept is consistent with Indonesia's situation. While income is increased continuously over the years through improved remuneration systems in the agenda of bureaucratic reform, public servants corruption remains (Kartasasmita 2013, pp. 453-4). Two examples of incidents in the international spotlight are the case of Gayus Tambunan and Dhana Widyatmika, former mid-level tax officers. Tambunan was found to have more than USD 3 million as the result of embezzlement and money laundering; involving various corporations that have taxation cases (Kimura 2012, p. 187; McLeod 2011, p. 8). Similarly, Widyatmika was found to possess a "fat bank account" with roughly USD 6.5 million, which is believed to be obtained from bribery when handling numerous tax cases. The wealth was suspicious considering his position as a regular civil servant (Prabowo 2012 in Prabowo 2016, p. 305). Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the factor of greed could influence public servants to commit corruption.

The final factor in shaping corruption is the "social environment". An experimental study by Gino, Ayal and Ariely (2009, p. 397) suggests that unethical manners seem to be contagious inside a group; people tend to be unethical once they observe colleagues who are in the same group also engage in unethical activities. The saga of Gayus Tambunan illustrates this premise when he could leave temporarily from detention by bribing many public officers to attend an international tennis competition in Bali. What is more, the prisoner managed to create a fake passport and travelled overseas while in custody (Kimura 2012, p. 187; McLeod 2011, p. 8). These extraordinary events signify that unethical behaviours could be executed quickly in a corrupt environment. Another instance is the case of a local house of representatives in East Java Province. The authorities detained 41 of 45 members of the organisation for being suspected of having committed "congregation corruption" by accepting bribes (Kahfi 2018b). It is believed that most corruption cases could not stand alone; the cases are not the result of one person's actions, but they also involve networks. Accordingly, it is also possible that socio-environmental factors could also influence people to commit corruption in the public sector setting.

### 2.3 The concept of generational cohorts

Ample literature provides the foundational concept of generational cohorts. It refers to the terminology of a different group of people, consisting of similar-aged individuals who share social, cultural, and historical experiences in relatively the same period (Gentile, Campbell & Twenge 2014, p. 36). Similarly, Eyerman and Turner (1998, p. 93) define a generation as “as a cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus, hexis and culture”. The cohorts generally consist of several generations; including “Baby Boomers” or “Boomers” (born after 1945 to nearly 1960s), “Generation X” or “Gen X” (born between 1960s to early 1980s), and “Generation Y” or “Millennials” (born between 1980s to approximately early 2000s) (Burke & Ng 2006, p. 89; Campbell et al. 2015, p. 325; Cennamo & Gardner 2008, p. 892; Costanza et al. 2012, p. 377; ERC 2013, p. 4; Parry & Urwin 2011, p. 80; Twenge 2010, p. 201; Twenge et al. 2010, p. 1118). From this point forward, the cohorts are written as “Baby Boomers”, “Generation X”, and “Millennials”. Each generation shares a different value system based on broad influences from various aspects, including parents, peers, media, economics, and social culture that distinguish one generation from another at different times (Twenge et al. 2010, p. 1120). Some factors that might shape the generations’ point of views are significant global events<sup>8</sup> (ERC 2013, p. 4). As a result, different generations could have different attributes, such as emotions, attitudes, preferences, and personalities (Eyerman & Turner 1998, p. 93).

The same concept of generational cohorts applies to Indonesia. The cohorts underwent a variety of life events. The Baby Boomer situation is estimated to occur in 1950-1961, in which Indonesia had just gained independence from colonisation. In this period the number of babies born was more than approximately 20 million. At that time, most people were still illiterate, impoverished, and had limited access to education (Ricklefs 2008, pp. 273-4). The government of Indonesia made several attempts at improving basic needs, health, and education (Vickers 2005, p. 150). Further, the leadership changed in 1965, from the founding fathers to the NOR, which began a new era of authoritarian rule

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<sup>8</sup> For illustration, Baby Boomers were born after World War II finished and experienced economic improvement. Generation X experienced widespread personal computers. Meanwhile, Millennials grew up in a period of instant access to information, such as the Internet and cellular phones (ERC 2013, p. 4).

under Suharto's military command. Children born in the Generation X era are used to experiencing unlimited military roles, ranging from social, economic, and political aspects. In this era, the economic field began to show improvement with the support of foreign investment and donors (Vickers 2005, pp. 161-6).

Meanwhile, the generation born in the 1980s has shared memories related to modernisation (e.g., multi-storey buildings, toll roads). Around 100,000 new schools were built to strengthen access to education. The first McDonalds outlet opened in 1991, signalling that the effects of globalisation have entered Indonesia (Hannigan 2015, pp. 244-6). After the regime of Suharto being forced down in 1998 by public protests which were triggered by an economic crisis (McLeod 2005, p. 367), this era offered a more democratic order (Hannigan 2015, p. 266). Additionally, in the public domain, civil services attempted to promote improvement with several public reforms (e.g., fair recruitment, combating corruption) (McLeod 2005, p. 379), as well as implementing some of the New Public Management (NPM) principles (Harun, An & Kahar 2013, p. 383). According to the theories above, these diverse life events might shape characteristics, attitudes, and values across generational cohorts in Indonesia.

#### **2.4 Attitudes of generational cohorts towards ethical behaviour**

Various studies have found mixed empirical suggestions on whether generational cohorts are associated with ethical aspects in the workplace. Some scholars emphasise that generational cohorts are correlated with work-related attitudes. One study suggests that different generations in the United States show different attitudes in the workplace. The investigation found that Generation X has more association with extrinsic values (e.g., money), and Millennials have a lack of concern in altruistic values (e.g., helping others) (Twenge et al. 2010). Research in New Zealand suggests that Baby Boomers have more commitment to the organisation; in contrast, the younger generations, especially Millennials, put more concern on status and freedom at work (Cennamo & Gardner 2008, pp. 902-3). Regarding HRM practice, a study suggests that an organisation needs to pay more attention to the differences in each generation in the workplace. Organisations need to build a working environment that could improve employees' productivity, including providing information to employees that their co-workers from different generations could have different characteristics, and they should deal with these differences. In other

words, each generation is believed to have diverse perspectives on work-related issues. This difference could lead to challenges to the organisation. Hence, management needs to adopt different approaches for each generation to address this issue (Kapoor & Solomon 2011).

Regarding ethics in the workplace, prior research also reports that different cohorts display different viewpoints towards ethical aspects. A quantitative study that utilises material from the NBES which collects data from corporations in the United States argues that there are “very distinct differences between the generations when it comes to ethics” (ERC 2013, p. 2). In detail, this study suggests that compared to Generation X and Baby Boomers, Millennials might have a more flexible perception, where they tend to accept several behaviours which might be unacceptable by many people (ERC 2013, p. 2). A study suggests that Millennials are likely to be unethical. Cited from the 2008 World of Work Survey, 58% of the Millennials workforce in the U.S. assess themselves as ethical in the workplace. Only 22% of them perceive that their Millennial colleagues are ethical (Vanmeter et al. 2013, pp. 94-5). Additionally, Millennials tend to be involved in violations, such as keeping copies of confidential documents and reporting fake illnesses (ERC 2009 in Vanmeter et al. 2013, pp. 96-7).

Given the information from prior studies, it suggests that different cohorts are related to different morals and ethics and tend to display different ethical behaviour in the workplace. As a result, when it is applied to the workplace, management is recommended to customise policies related to employees that are developed from the concept of generational differences. For illustration, to promote ethical culture, an organisation needs to tailor different approaches of socialisation and communication for Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials to ensure that employees adhere to several programs in improving ethics. For Baby Boomers, organisations could design messages related to accountability and discipline aspects by optimising formal and hierarchical structures. As for Millennials, the strategy to improve their commitment to ethics is to emphasise a compliance program, which utilises co-workers and direct supervisors as influencers (ERC 2013, pp. 30-1).

However, other perspectives contend that the theory of generational cohorts could not be necessarily connected to work-related issues. A quantitative analysis involving more than 3,000 employees in Australia suggests that personality differences in the workplace tend to be related to age rather than the concept of generational differences. Hence, instead of placing gravity on generational cohorts, it might be helpful if the organisation emphasises HRM towards individual differences (Wong et al. 2008). Prior research in the U.S. reports that instead of displaying different attitudes in the workplace, generations are likely to be similar. In this study, three work attitudes are investigated, namely work satisfaction, wage satisfaction, and turnover intentions. The quantitative result demonstrates that while there are differences in the figures, it tends to be small and could be negligible. Additionally, this research argues that it might be possible to promote generational similarities rather than generational differences (Kowske, Rasch & Wiley 2010, pp. 274-5).

A third study advises that organisations need to be more cautious in enacting HR policies which are built on the theory of the generational differences because generation stereotypes are not always consistent with the behaviours at work (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer 2014, p. 185). Lastly, in a public administration setting, the result of a study in several public agencies within five municipalities in the U.S. suggests that between Baby Boomers and Generation X, there are more similarities than differences. The statistic reports that of the 15 motivational factors related to work, only three of them are considered statistically significant in differences (Jurkiewicz 2000, pp. 63-4). Otherwise stated, generational cohorts are likely to display more similarities rather than differences in attitudes towards work-related issues. Thus, organisations which intend to apply HR interventions constructed on the concept of generational cohorts' differences should be more prudent to avoid potential disadvantages. Furthermore, the literature suggests that organisational strategies addressing the issues of generational differences might not be practical (Costanza et al. 2012, p. 375). For instance, the cost in tailoring different programs which are dedicated to a specific generation might outweigh the potential merits (Kowske, Rasch & Wiley 2010, p. 265). Further study also suggests that organisations could avoid designing specific strategies that target specific generations. Instead, management could promote flexibility to reach all employees (Becton, Walker &

Jones-Farmer 2014, p. 185). Therefore, there are two sides of the debate concerning the connection of generational cohorts and work-related issues.

This two-sided argument indicates that there is no “one-size-fit-to-all” approach in managing a multigenerational workforce in the modern organisation. Indeed, prior evidence suggests that developing HR policies based on the concept of different attributes and attitudes of different generations could benefit the organisation. The same goes for endeavours in improving ethics in the public sector. Public institutions could build different strategies and approaches which are tailored to different generations. For example, in developing ethics infrastructure in improving ethical behaviour in the public sector (OECD 2000a), government institutions could develop different socialisation and training programs in promoting ethics which are designed for different generations. However, in other conditions, the interventions might be ineffective since the multigenerational workforce is likely to display more similarities rather than differences. This implies that tailoring interventions developed on the concept of generational cohorts’ differences might not be beneficial for organisations.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, from the previous empirical suggestions, it is evident that there is a contrasting debate regarding generational cohorts towards work-related issues. While some studies argue that generational cohorts tend to demonstrate different attitudes at work based on different attributes from different generations, other scholars suggest that workplace behaviours are not necessarily related to the concept of generational differences. Hence, it is plausible to say that there is no universal approach in the field of HRM concerning the multigenerational workforce. HR interventions which are developed based on the theory of multigenerational cohorts might bring benefits for the organisation. Conversely, it might also not be compatible in different situations. Furthermore, it appears that the investigations of generational cohorts and work-related attitudes are mostly conducted in developed countries (e.g., the U.S., Australia, New Zealand), which emphasise in linking generational cohorts with the values of work (e.g., loyalty, altruistic). Also, prior studies seem to put more gravity in the non-public sector domain. Unfortunately, little is known on whether generational cohorts associate with ethical behaviour, especially in the spectrum of the public sector. Thus, this research

attempts to fill the gap in two ways; (1) examining the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public workers towards ethical behaviour; and (2) providing a baseline empirical suggestion of generational study for future research, from the perspective of a developing country. This study is a small component to complete a broader puzzle of understanding the complexity of the ethical dimension in the public sector. In accomplishing the endeavour, a methodology is required. The procedures, strategies, and approaches are presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study follows established research procedures and strategies to discover Indonesian public servants' attitudes towards ethical behaviour from the perspective of different cohorts. This chapter addresses the methodology of this research. It begins with the information regarding population and sampling from one government organisation in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. Following this, the section discusses data collection, the questionnaire, and the linkage between the questionnaire and the literature review. In collecting primary data, this study employs an electronic survey consisting of a series of questions which are developed from the literature review, focus on the concept of generational cohorts and ethics in the workplace. The chapter also explains quantitative approaches in generating findings and analysis. This research utilises two approaches. Firstly, it uses relative frequency in creating meaning by comparing survey responses between three generations. Secondly, it applies One-Way ANOVA in testing whether there are differences in the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. Lastly, this section discusses the potential limitations of the project. This study may not represent the national population of public servants since the project only collects data from a single agency in the central government. Additionally, a quantitative study could not explore in-depth information regarding real-life human experiences.

#### **3.1 Population and sampling**

The population of this study is the public servants in an Indonesian public institution (from now on written as "Agency X"). The participants are public servants in the central office of Agency X in Jakarta. The management of this agency was pleased to cooperate by approving this project, as well as providing data on potential respondents. Due to the different references in determining the boundary of birth years between generations; for this study, the classification for generational cohorts uses three categories from the Ethics Resource Center. The grouping is Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964); Generation X (born 1965-1980) and Millennials (born 1981-2000) (ERC 2013). According to the data received from the agency, the total population of Agency X is 674 people, consisting of 88 Baby Boomers, 263 of Generation X and 323 of Millennials. This project uses a census-

type approach to collect data. According to Cantwell (2008, p. 91), census registers and measures one or more characteristics of all elements in the group. This group could be either a national population or a small-scale group whose information could be collected through questionnaires. In this project, the census approach is utilised because there is an ease in recognising potential respondents and distributing electronic questionnaires.

### **3.2 Data collection**

This study employs an e-survey to collect data by utilising an online questionnaire platform, called *Qualtrics*. Flinders University provides the software. The rationale is that gathering the data directly from the source is the safest option to understanding experiences, feelings, or thoughts by “seeing the world through the subject’s eyes” (Pierce 2008, p. 46). A survey is a systematic approach in collecting individual or organisational data. It is one of the most commonly used methods in social science and could be applied in both quantitative and qualitative research (Julien 2008, p. 847). Moreover, a questionnaire ensures that each respondent is asked in the same way and the same questions (Pierce 2008, p. 43). The e-questionnaire is written in *Bahasa Indonesia*, which has been translated into English in the final report. Some questionnaire tests were conducted to identify errors by utilising Indonesian colleagues at Flinders University. They were public servants and a small and friendly group. Additionally, this project met ethics approval from the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee, project number 7912 on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

### **3.3 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was sent to all employees in Agency X to collect as many possible survey responses. E-mail and a WhatsApp group network were used to invite participant candidates. Participants in this project were voluntary – hence, there was no compensation given. The questionnaire contains 15 sets of closed-ended questions related to relevant participant information and questions related to the attitudes towards ethical behaviour by public servants. According to Pierce (2008, p. 141), the pre-designated closed questions have the ability to draw inferences as well as to measure and compare attitudes of the representative samples. This research aims to explore the attitudes of public servants from a different generation; hence, a close-ended questionnaire is appropriate and applicable in this study. The questions are as follows:

**Table 3.1**  
**E-questionnaire:**  
**Attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards ethical behaviour**

No.	Question
1.	Year of birth? (1946-1964/1965-1980/1981-2000)
2.	Gender? (Female/Male)
3.	Highest Level of Education Attainment? (High School/ Bachelor/Master/Doctor)
4.	Number of years of public sector work experience? (<10 years/11-20 years/>21 years)
5.	Work location? (Central office/Province/City or Municipal)
6.	<p>In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours important in your agency? (Please rate your responses on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=very unimportant; 5=very important).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability: Take responsibility for what is done and how; facilitate transparency; listen and responsive, reject incompetence; seek efficiency and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Impartiality: Avoid conflict of interest; seek inclusion; objective; pursue the public interests.</li> <li>• Justice and fairness: Comply with law; seek procedural and substantive justice; seek fair distribution of public benefits.</li> <li>• Do good: Employ empathy, give affirmative help.</li> <li>• Avoiding harming: Provide remedy or relief, use moral imagination.</li> </ul>
7.	<p>In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours important in the public sector? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=very unimportant; 5= very important).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability: Take responsibility for what is done and how; facilitate transparency; listen and responsive, reject incompetence; seek efficiency and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Impartiality: Avoid conflict of interest; seek inclusion; objective; pursue the public interests.</li> <li>• Justice and fairness: Comply with law; seek procedural and substantive justice; seek fair distribution of public benefits.</li> <li>• Do good: Employ empathy, give affirmative help.</li> <li>• Avoiding harming: Provide remedy or relief, use moral imagination.</li> </ul>

No.	Question
8.	How often do you think about ethical behaviours in your day-to-day activities at work? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=never; 5=always).
9.	Do you believe that unethical behaviours lead to difficulties in your agency? (Yes/No)
10.	<p>If you responded “Yes” on question number 9, what problems do you think could arise from unethical behaviours in your agency? Select as many as you like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational integrity becomes problematic.</li> <li>• Obstruction of public administration operations.</li> <li>• Reduced public trust in public employees.</li> <li>• Decreased public trust in government.</li> </ul>
11.	<p>Please rank the following behaviours from most unacceptable to most acceptable. (1=most unacceptable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviours A: Leaving early; taking excessive breaks; intentionally working slowly; wasting resources.</li> <li>• Behaviours B: Sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation.</li> <li>• Behaviours C: Showing favouritism; gossiping about co-workers; blaming co-workers; competing nonbeneficially.</li> <li>• Behaviours D: Sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; endangering co-workers.</li> </ul>
12.	<p>In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours acceptable in public sector? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=very acceptable; 5=very unacceptable).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption: Abuse of office for personal gain and the benefit of others</li> <li>• Misconduct: Cause critical risks to the safety, health, reputation and sustainability of the organisation.</li> <li>• Maladministration: Inability to manage tasks and finances which are not necessarily intended for personal benefit.</li> </ul>
13.	<p>In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours acceptable in public sector? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=very acceptable; 5=very unacceptable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption through bribery.</li> <li>• Corruption through nepotism or favouritism.</li> <li>• Conflict of interest through gifts or side-line activities.</li> <li>• Fraud and theft of resources.</li> <li>• Waste and abuse of organisational resources.</li> <li>• Break rules or misuse power.</li> <li>• Misuse and manipulation of information.</li> <li>• Indecent treatment.</li> <li>• Misconduct in private time.</li> </ul>

No.	Question
14.	<p>Regarding the corruption as a behaviour in the workplace; in your personal opinion, are these factors influencing corruption in the public institution? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=less influencing; 5=very influencing).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative culture: Corruption is caused by practices and habits inherent in the bureaucracy.</li> <li>• Need: Corruption is caused to meet needs due to the spending that greater than income.</li> <li>• Greed: Corruption is caused by natural human desire combined with opportunities and power to accumulate wealth.</li> <li>• Social environment: Corruption is caused by the influence of colleagues, social and environment that supports the acts of corruption.</li> </ul>
15.	<p>If you observed the following behaviours occurring in your agency, how likely would you be to report it? (Please rate your response on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1=definitely would not report it; 5=definitely would report it).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving early; taking excessive breaks; intentionally working slowly; wasting resources.</li> <li>• Sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation.</li> <li>• Showing favouritism; gossiping about co-workers; blaming co-workers; competing nonbeneficially.</li> <li>• Sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; endangering co-workers.</li> </ul>

### 3.4 The linkage between questionnaire and literature

The questionnaire is based on the theories and prior research findings which are explained in the literature review. The concept and empirical evidence are utilised as a framework in developing questions which are intended to examine the attitudes of different generations towards ethical behaviour. Question 1 (year of birth) is essential as a starting point to verify participants based on groupings of the different generations, as well as to exclude respondents who do not belong to the categories. Questions 2 (gender), 3 (education), and 4 (length of work service) are chosen to provide participants' general description. Questions 5 (work location) is utilised as a filter to anticipate participants who do not belong in the sample as central office employees.

Questions 6, 7, and 8 are generated on the theory that public workers serve as the temporary stewards of public interests. These questions are intended to obtain data concerning participants' attitudes towards the importance of ethical principles in the public sector. The results provide information regarding how generations place

importance on the core values and actions of ethical standards (e.g., accountability, impartiality) in their profession as public servants (Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 29; Luke & Hart 2001, p. 549). Questions 9 and 10 are developed from the concept that unethical behaviours could cause a variety of difficulties. These issues aim to acquire data relating to participants' awareness of the effects of unethical behaviours in the public sector. The results provide data concerning how each generation understands the potential impact caused by any unethical behaviours, especially in the public domain. For example, reducing integrity in the organisation, disrupting government operational processes, and distracting public spending (Appelbaum, Iaconi & Matousek 2007, p. 595; Beerli et al. 2013, p. 59; Fattah 2011, p. 65; Graycar & Villa 2011, p. 420; Mauro in Kaufmann 1997, p. 119; OECD 2017; Richey 2010, p. 685).

Questions 11, 12, and 13 provide information related to the acceptability of unethical behaviours within the organisation. These questions are expected to collect data regarding participants' attitudes towards the acceptability of various unethical behaviours in the public sector. The results indicate how different generations perceive these behaviours in the notion of three different theories: (1) typology of deviant behaviours in the workplace (Robinson & Bennett 1995); (2) three forms of unethical behaviours in the public organisation (Monaghan & Graycar 2016, pp. 89-91); and (3) nine types of integrity violations in the public sector (Huberts & Lasthuizen 2014, pp. 131-4; Kolthoff, Cox & Johnson 2015; Kolthoff, Erakovich & Lasthuizen 2010; Lasthuizen, Huberts & Heres 2011, p. 389).

Additionally, question 14 is developed from the theories, existing studies, and actual events in Indonesia's public sector regarding the factors that influence corruption. This question is required to gather information about participants' attitudes towards their perception of the reasons that trigger corruption in the public sector. The results supply data regarding how different generations recognise the aspects that shape corruption in public institutions, namely: negative culture, need, greed, and social environment (Gino, Ayal & Ariely 2009, p. 397; Mabroor 2005, p. 71; Robertson-Snape 1999, pp. 589-90). Lastly, question 15 is assembled from previous studies which report that a generation could ignore unethical behaviours within the organisation. These questions are planned to acquire information in examining how different generations are likely to report any unethical behaviours. The results provide information about whether different

generations have similar or different standpoints about preferences for reporting deviant activities inside the organisation (ERC 2013, p. 2; Robinson & Bennett 1995; Vanmeter et al. 2013, pp. 94-5).

### **3.5 Analysis approach**

This research employs a quantitative method to discover the different perspectives of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials; how each generation thinks, believes, and perceives ethical and unethical aspects in the background of public organisations. This study uses a relative frequency approach to compare the responses of three generations regarding ten aspects of their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace. According to Lavrakas (2008, pp. 712-4), relative frequency is appropriate in generating meaning from survey research. Furthermore, significance tests are utilised to examine the hypothesis: “there are no differences in attitudes between generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour in the public sector” ( $H_0: \mu_{\text{babyboomers}} = \mu_{\text{generationx}} = \mu_{\text{millennials}}$ ). The significance tests use One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This technique provides statistical reports to indicate whether there are differences in attitudes towards ethical behaviour among three generations. Boone Jr and Boone (2012) confirm that the ANOVA approach could be used to analyse data drawn from the Likert scale. Additionally, the confidence level of this study is 95 per cent. It means that when the p-value is lower than 0.05, then the attitudes of three generational cohorts towards ethical behaviour are not all equal, and this result is statistically significant.

### **3.6 Limitations**

The methodology employed in this research might impose two limitations. Firstly, this study involves participants from a central office agency. Meanwhile, Indonesia has numerous public organisations, ranging from central to provincial agencies. Hence, the sample might not be able to represent the national level of public servants. Secondly, this study could not determine thorough information about the reasons, motives, or why the respondent chooses answers on the questionnaire. It could not uncover the values which underlie individuals from different generational cohorts. Hence, further studies which engage more participants from diverse central and provincial public institutions in Indonesia, supplemented with more in-depth qualitative approaches might be necessary

to address these limitations. For instance, by using the in-depth interview to generate more insight about human's experience; "how they think, act, and feel" as an individual or communal (Brinkmann 2014, p. 277).

### **3.7 Conclusion**

To conclude, this research focuses on exploring the attitudes of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials towards ethical behaviour in the public sector. This study utilises quantitative approaches in resulting empirical evidence. It starts with determining a sample from a population of public servants in one agency in the central office of Jakarta. Afterwards, an online survey is utilised to collect primary data. The questions on the survey are built from the literature review. The results are then analysed through quantitative approaches to discover participants' points of view towards ethical behaviour. Firstly, the relative frequency approach is used to generate meanings and comparisons of responses from participants. Secondly, this study employs ANOVA analysis for the significance tests. The data is examined statistically to determine whether generational cohorts have significantly different attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the public sector. Two limitations of this methodology are the sample which might not reflect a national population of public servants and the constraint to explore in-depth values which underlie individuals in each generation regarding their perceptions of ethical issues in public organisations. However, future studies which involve broader participants and in-depth investigations could alleviate these caveats. Additionally, this research is a critical first step in an area where little research has been done. The results and findings built from this research methodology are delivered in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

This chapter provides reports on the results and findings generated from the survey. The section begins with information about the survey and the participants. The survey utilised a digital platform, which ran approximately for 60 days, collecting 207 samples of public servants in Agency X. This chapter elaborates the findings from the survey results regarding the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. Based on the approach of relative frequency, the findings report several differences in the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. However, the differences tend to be minor. Moreover, most of the ANOVA tests indicate that there are no significant differences in the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. This excludes three aspects of acceptability towards nine types of integrity violations and two aspects of likelihood to report unethical behaviours. Finally, this chapter concludes with three suggestions. Firstly, there are not many striking differences between generational cohorts. At least seven of ten aspects indicate that all cohorts tend to display minor differences of attitudes towards ethical behaviour. For example, the findings report minor differences between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials in the aspects of acceptability towards the importance of ethical behaviours. Also, all cohorts tend to show small differences in the perception of the importance of ethical behaviours in day-to-day work activities.

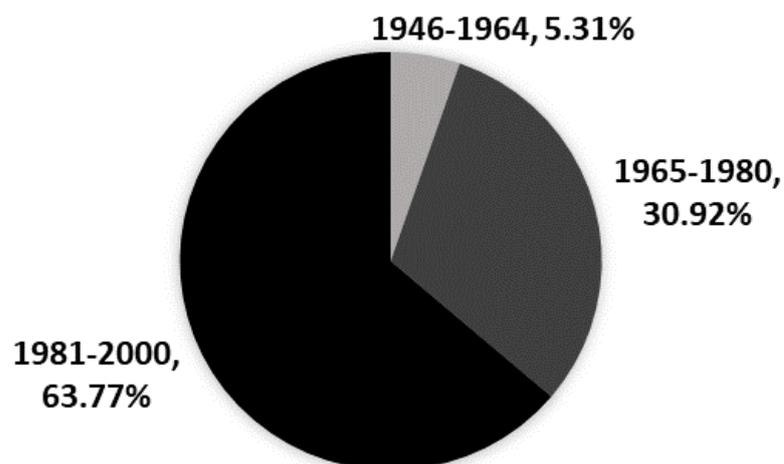
Secondly, the findings suggest that there are more similarities rather than differences between the two younger generations. Generation X and Millennials are likely to have similar attitudes towards at least seven aspects of ethical behaviours in the workplace. For instance, the younger generations indicate no difference in the acceptability towards most unacceptable deviant behaviours in the public sector, as well as no differences in the likelihood to report unethical behaviours in the workplace. Third, in the context of the significance tests, although a small portion of the test results is statistically significant in the aspects of acceptability towards nine types of integrity violations and likelihood to report unethical behaviours, most of the ANOVA results fail to reject the null hypothesis at 95% confidence level. In other words, the statistical test could not provide enough

evidence to reject whether there are no differences in attitudes between generational cohorts of public servants towards ethical behaviour.

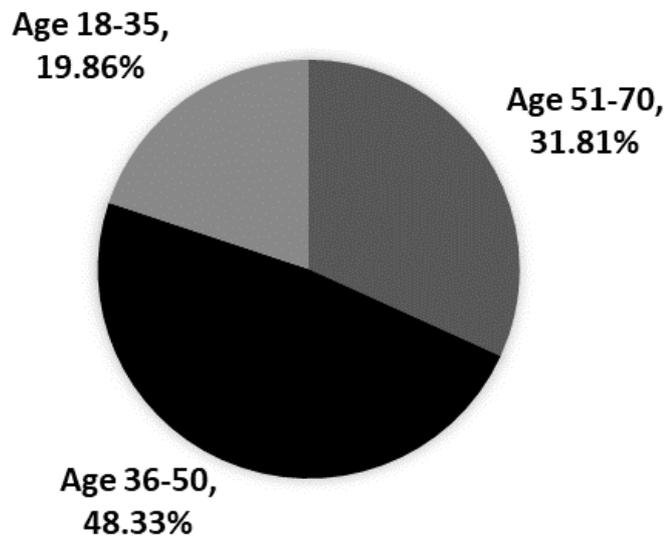
#### 4.1 Survey participants

The survey ran from 28 November 2019 to 28 January 2020. The response rate was 39.32%. Of the 674 civil servants in Agency X who were invited to take the survey, 265 people responded. As many as 56 participants were unable to finish the e-questionnaire. From 209 responses, two of them were identified as employees from provincial offices. Hence, the final responses that were analysed in this study were collected from 207 samples, consisting of 11 Baby Boomers, 64 Generation X, and 132 Millennials. Figure 4.1 shows that most participants are recognised as Millennials, consisting of 63.77% of the total sample. Meanwhile, 30.92% of Generation X and 5.31% of Baby Boomers participated in this survey. These numbers have a slight difference standard with data on civil servants at the national level, where Generation X has the most significant percentage. According to the Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia (figure 4.2), public servants in Indonesia could be divided into three age cohorts: age 51-70 (31.81%); age 36-50 (48.33%); and age 18-35 (19.86%) (BPS 2017).

**Figure 4.1**  
**The year of birth of the participants**

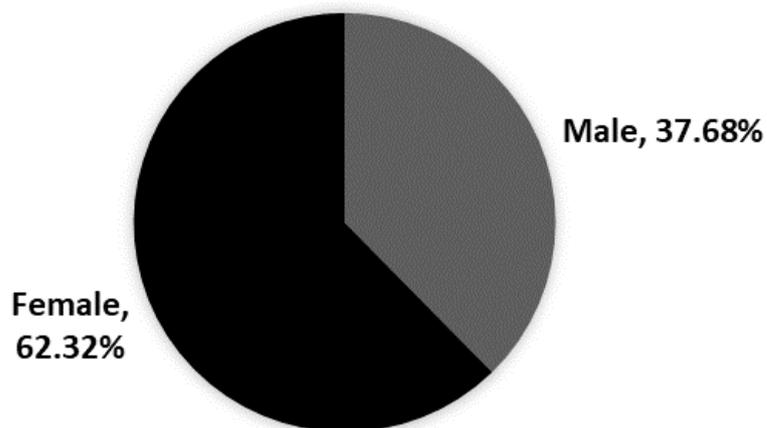


**Figure 4.2**  
**Configuration of civil servants (nationally) according to age cohorts (BPS)**

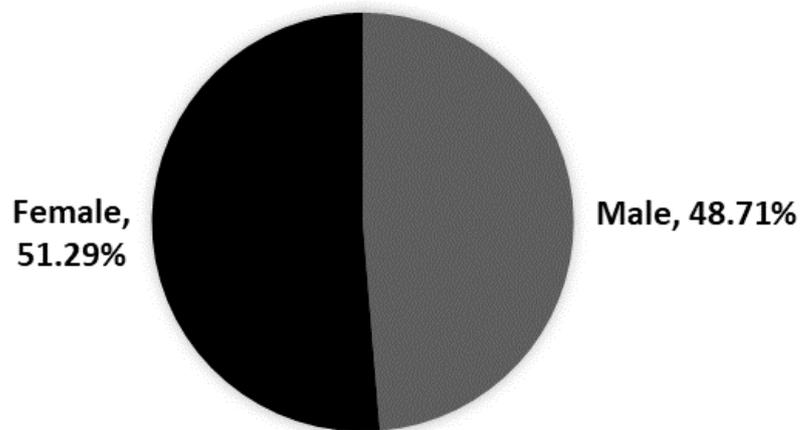


Further, according to figure 4.3, more than half of the respondents are female (62.32%), and the rest are male (37.68%). These percentages have a small difference when compared to the national data. In figure 4.4, the margin of the two genders differs slightly. Cited from the official data of Indonesia's national staffing agency, public workers in Indonesia consist of 48.71% male and 51.29% female (BKN 2020).

**Figure 4.3**  
**The gender of the participants**

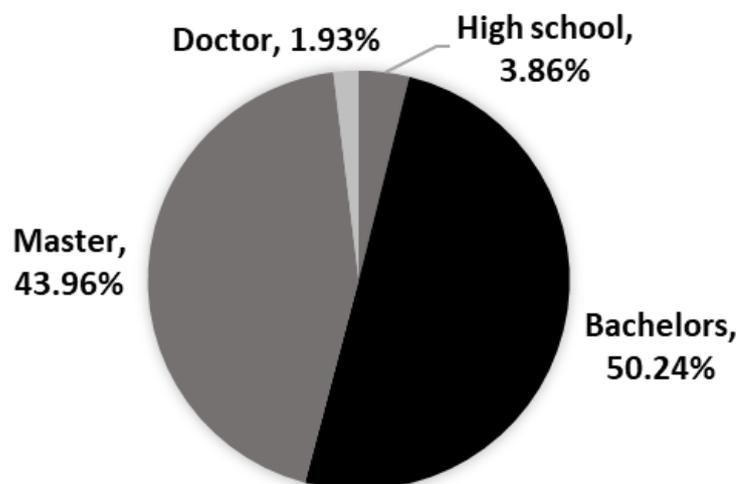


**Figure 4.4**  
**Configuration of civil servants (nationally) according to gender (BKN)**



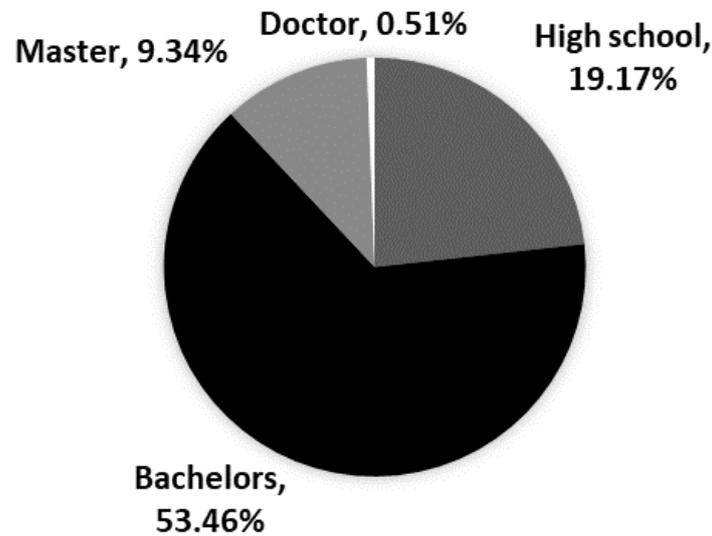
Additionally, figure 4.5 shows that in the context of achieving the highest level of education, 3.86% of respondents are identified as high school graduates, 50.24% as Bachelors, 43.96% as Masters, and the rest of the participants are identified as a Doctoral graduate (1.93%). Meanwhile, in the national context, public servants in Indonesia are categorised as 19.17% as high school graduate, 53.46% as Bachelors, 9.34% as Master, and Doctor are as much as 0.51%. According to figure 4.6, a striking difference with the national configuration could be seen in the proportion of Master graduates.

**Figure 4.5**  
**The highest level of educational attainment of the participants**



**Figure 4.6**

**Configuration of civil servants (nationally)  
according to the highest level of education attainment (BKN)**



**4.2 The attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the importance of ethical behaviours**

In exploring the importance of the values and ethical principles among the three generations, participants were asked about the importance of various ethical behaviours in their agency and public organisations in general. They were also asked about the importance of applying ethical principles in their daily tasks. Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 show that all generations are likely to have similarities rather than differences regarding core values and actions of ethical standards in the workplace. Additionally, the survey found an interesting result when it comes to the perception of the importance of ethical behaviours in day-to-day working activities. The survey results indicate that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials tend to display similar attitudes towards the importance of ethical behaviours within their organisation.

In table 4.1, most of those surveyed answered “very important” on five<sup>9</sup> aspects of ethical behaviours in the public sector. Further, all respondents selected accountability as an essential behaviour in Agency X. The survey reports that 81.82% of Baby Boomers, 82.81% of Generation X, and 79.55% of Millennials are likely to perceive accountability<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Five aspects of ethical behavior that must be followed by government employees are: accountability, impartiality, justice and fairness, do good, and avoid harming (Lewis 2005 in Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 29).

<sup>10</sup> Accountability is related to taking responsibility for what is done and how; facilitate transparency; listen and responsive, reject incompetence; as well as seek efficiency and effectiveness (Lewis 2005 in Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 29).

as the most crucial behaviour in their institution. When participants were asked about the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector in general, Baby Boomers are likely to show different attitudes. In table 4.2, there is a tendency that most of the oldest generation (81.82%) perceive impartiality as the most crucial aspect in the public sector. Meanwhile, two of the younger generations are likely to display no difference. The table reports that 78.13% of Generation X and 77.27% Millennials tend to think that accountability is the most crucial ethical behaviour in the public sector.

While most of the respondents seem to agree that ethical behaviour is vital in the public sector, the vast majority of those who responded are probably not too worried about ethical principles when they carry out their daily activities and tasks at work. When the participants were questioned how often they think about ethical behaviours in their daily work activities, the overall response to this question was surprising. Table 4.3 illustrates that different generations are likely to show a similar pattern. The table shows that only about half the participants from each generation report that they are likely to apply ethical principles at all times. It also describes that 54.55% of Baby Boomers and 46.18% of Generation X are likely to believe that they always apply ethical principles in their daily work activities. Interestingly, only 37.88% of Millennials indicate that they should consider ethical behaviours in their daily work all the time. In other words, more than 60% of this youngest generation is likely to think that implementing ethics in day-to-day activities is not a priority.

**Table 4.1**  
**Acceptability of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards the importance of ethical behaviours in Agency X (1=very unimportant; 5= very important)**

Ethical behaviours	Acceptability (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Accountability	-	-	-	18.18	81.82	-	-	1.56	15.63	82.81	-	-	3.03	17.42	79.55
Impartiality	-	-	-	36.36	63.64	-	-	3.13	26.56	70.31	-	-	3.79	34.09	62.12
Justice and fairness	-	-	-	18.18	81.82	-	-	0.00	20.31	79.69	-	-	2.27	30.30	67.42
Do good	-	-	-	45.45	54.55	-	-	1.56	29.69	68.75	-	-	5.30	33.33	61.36
Avoiding harming	-	-	-	36.36	63.64	-	-	1.56	28.13	70.31	0.76	-	2.27	30.30	66.67

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11; Generation X=64; Millennials=132

**Table 4.2**  
**Acceptability of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector (1=very unimportant; 5= very important)**

Ethical behaviours	Acceptability (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Accountability	-	-	-	27.27	72.73	-	-	3.13	18.75	78.13	-	-	1.52	21.21	77.27
Impartiality	-	-	-	18.18	81.82	-	-	1.56	26.56	71.88	-	-	3.79	27.27	68.94
Justice and fairness	-	-	-	27.27	72.73	-	-	0.00	28.13	71.88	-	-	3.03	28.79	68.18
Do good	-	-	-	36.36	63.64	-	-	1.56	29.69	68.75	-	-	3.79	31.06	65.15
Avoiding harming	-	-	-	36.36	63.64	-	-	1.56	29.69	68.75	-	-	3.03	29.55	67.42

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11; Generation X=64; Millennials=132

**Table 4.3**  
**Perception of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards the importance of ethical behaviours in day-to-day work activities**  
**(1=never, 5=always)**

Cohorts	Perception (%)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Baby Boomers	-	-	-	45.45	54.55
Generation X	-	-	-	53.13	46.88
Millennials	0.76	-	6.82	54.55	37.88

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11; Generation X=64; Millennials=132

#### **4.3 The attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the awareness of the effect of unethical behaviours in the public sector**

In understanding the awareness towards the impacts of unethical behaviours, survey contributors were asked about their perceptions regarding the effects of unethical behaviours in their agencies and the public sector in general. Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show that there are no striking differences in attitudes among the participants towards the awareness of the effects of unethical behaviours in the public sector. Three cohorts tend to agree that unethical behaviours have the potential to cause predicaments for the public sector. Table 4.4 shows that 100% of Baby Boomers and Generation X tend to be confident that unethical behaviours could result in difficulties in the public sector; additionally, 99.24% of Millennials are of a similar opinion. Also, these figures confirm that there are more similarities of attitude towards awareness of unethical behaviours in the workplace. Furthermore, when they were told to describe what types of problems might arise caused by unethical behaviours, the survey indicates that Baby Boomers and Millennials display no difference in their attitudes. They are likely to perceive that any unethical behaviours could result in more significant problems related to integrity and trust in the public sector. According to table 4.5, most of the Baby Boomers (28.57%) and Millennials (26.81%) claimed that unethical behaviours could cause organisational integrity to become problematic. Additionally, 22.86 % of Baby Boomers and 25.12 % of Millennials answered that unethical behaviours could reduce public trust related to public employees.

Meanwhile, the middle generation is likely to display minor differences. Half of the Generation X participants tended to place more concern on public trust. This cohort emphasised the decrease of trust caused by unethical behaviours in the public sector. This generation seems to consider those behaviours are correlated with decreasing public trust, both in terms of public workers and in government. In table 4.5, each category is

accounted for 25.00% of the total Generation X responses. Interestingly, a small percentage of the total participants tended to feel that unethical behaviours could cause a significant impact on difficulties related to public spending. When the participants were asked to choose various consequences that could be caused by unethical behaviours; the same table shows that only 14.29% of Baby Boomers, 10.29% of Generation X, and 8.21% of Millennials commented that unethical behaviours could bring “disruption of public expenditures”. In other words, all generations are likely to think that unethical behaviours do not interfere too much with public spending.

**Table 4.4**  
**Perception of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the difficulties caused by unethical behaviours in the public sector**

Cohorts	Perception (%)	
	Yes	No
Baby Boomers	100	-
Generation X	100	-
Millennials	99.24	0.76

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11; Generation X=64; Millennials=132

**Table 4.5**  
**Awareness of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the effects of unethical behaviours in the public sector**

Effects of unethical behaviours	Awareness (%)		
	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Millennials
Organisational integrity becomes problematic	28.57	24.51	26.81
Obstruction of public administration operations	17.14	15.20	15.46
Disruption of public expenditures	14.29	10.29	8.21
Reduced public trust in public employees	22.86	25.00	25.12
Decreased public trust in government	17.14	25.00	24.40

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

**4.4 The attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the acceptability of unethical behaviours in the public sector**

In observing the generational cohorts’ attitudes towards the acceptability of various unethical behaviours, the participants were asked about their thoughts regarding deviant behaviours in the workplace, three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector, and nine types of integrity violations. The results suggest that the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the acceptability of unethical behaviours are mixed. In the context of deviant behaviours in the workplace, the survey indicates that

the three generations tend to have similarities. According to table 4.6, when participants were directed to give ratings on the most unacceptable deviant behaviours; more than half of the young generation indicated that they could not tolerate personal aggression<sup>11</sup> in their workplaces. 51.56% of Generation X and 62.88% of Millennials identified behaviours related to aggression as the most unacceptable behaviours in the workplace. Similarly, almost half of Baby Boomers acknowledged that personal aggression and property deviance<sup>12</sup> are the most unacceptable behaviours in the workplace; the figures reach 45.45% in each category.

Under the concept of three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector, the survey reports that there are no differences among the participants. All cohorts are likely to perceive that corruption is the most unacceptable behaviour in the public sector, followed by misconduct and maladministration. Table 4.7 illustrates that 100% of Baby Boomers, 85.94% of Generation X, and 88.64% of Millennials tend to perceive that corruption is the most unacceptable behaviour in the public sector. Based on the concept of nine types of integrity violations in the public sector, table 4.8 reports that there are minor differences as well as some similarities of attitudes regarding the acceptability of unethical behaviours among generational cohorts. Overall, all participants from three generations decided that three of nine types of integrity violations, namely “corruption through bribery”; “fraud and theft of resources”; and “indecent treatment”, are types of integrity violations that are very unacceptable in the public sector. In detail, Baby Boomers replied that “corruption through bribery”; “fraud and theft of resources”; and “indecent treatment” are equally the most unacceptable behaviours; each category reaches 90.91%. Moreover, 95.31% of Generation X has a similar pattern with Baby Boomers, who commented that “fraud and theft of resources” are very unacceptable in the workplace. Meanwhile, Millennials and Baby Boomers have similarities in the aspect of “indecent treatment”, 90.91% of the youngest generation recognised indecent activities as very unacceptable behaviours among nine types of integrity violations.

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<sup>11</sup> Personal aggression is related to sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; and endangering co-workers (Robinson & Bennett 1995).

<sup>12</sup> Property deviance is related to sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation (Robinson & Bennett 1995).

**Table 4.6**  
**Acceptability of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards deviant behaviours in the workplace**  
**(Rank 1=most unacceptable)**

Unethical behaviours	Acceptability (%)											
	Baby Boomers'				Generation X				Millennials			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<b>Production deviance:</b> leaving early; taking excessive breaks; intentionally working slowly; wasting resources.	9.09	18.18	45.45	27.27	12.50	6.25	25.00	56.25	5.30	4.55	29.55	60.61
<b>Property deviance:</b> sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation.	45.45	36.36	18.18	0.00	31.25	51.56	15.63	1.56	29.55	62.12	7.58	0.76
<b>Political deviance:</b> showing favouritism; gossiping about co-workers; blaming co-workers; competing nonbeneficially.	0.00	18.18	36.36	45.45	4.69	14.06	51.56	29.69	2.27	5.30	60.61	31.82
<b>Personal aggression:</b> sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; endangering co-workers.	45.45	27.27	0.00	27.27	51.56	28.13	7.81	12.50	62.88	28.03	2.27	6.82

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

**Table 4.7**  
**Acceptability of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector (1=very acceptable, 5=very unacceptable)**

Unethical behaviours	Acceptability (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Corruption	-	-	-	-	100.00	-	1.56	1.56	10.94	85.94	0.76	0.76	0.76	9.09	88.64
Misconduct	-	-	-	27.27	72.73	1.56	0.00	4.69	25.00	68.75	1.52	0.00	3.79	37.88	56.82
Maladministration	-	-	27.27	27.27	45.45	-	1.56	26.56	28.13	43.75	1.52	2.27	15.15	31.06	50.00

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

**Table 4.8**  
**Acceptability of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards nine types of integrity violations in the public sector (1=very acceptable, 5=very unacceptable)**

Unethical behaviours	Acceptability (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Corruption through bribery	-	-	-	9.09	90.91	-	-	-	10.94	89.06	0.76	1.52	3.79	8.33	85.61
Corruption through nepotism or favouritism	-	-	-	18.18	81.82	-	-	1.56	31.25	67.19	0.76	0.76	6.06	30.30	62.12
Conflict of interest through gifts or side-line activities	-	-	27.27	27.27	45.45	-	-	10.94	40.63	48.44	1.52	4.55	12.12	37.88	43.94
Fraud and theft of resources	-	-	-	9.09	90.91	1.56	-	-	3.13	95.31	0.76	1.52	0.76	11.36	85.61
Waste and abuse of organisational resources	-	-	9.09	27.27	63.64	-	-	3.13	35.94	60.94	0.76	3.03	11.36	37.12	47.73
Break rules or misuse power	-	-	-	27.27	72.73	-	-	-	15.63	84.38	1.52	0.76	1.52	27.27	68.94
Misuse and manipulation of information	-	-	-	18.18	81.82	-	-	-	23.44	76.56	0.00	0.76	5.30	29.55	64.39
Indecent treatment	-	-	-	9.09	90.91	-	-	-	9.38	90.63	0.76	0.76	1.52	6.06	90.91
Misconduct in private time	-	-	-	45.45	54.55	-	-	3.13	42.19	54.69	1.52	3.03	14.39	35.61	45.45

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

#### **4.5 The attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the perception of the factors that shape corruption in the public sector**

In studying the perception of three generations' reasons that influence corruption, all participants were told to choose four factors that influence corruption in public institutions. The survey indicates that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials might have different understandings about aspects that influence corruption in public institutions. However, the differences are likely to be insignificant. In general, all cohorts tend to have a similar point of view that both "negative culture" and "greed" are the two factors which have a substantial influence in triggering corruption in the public sector. In detail, minor differences are found. In table 4.9, more than half of the oldest generation (54.55%) answered that "negative culture" exerts a significant influence on corruption. Concurrently, nearly half of this generation (45.45%) also tends to believe that "greed" influences corruption. There are no differences in attitudes between Generation X and Millennials towards the factors that shape corruption. In the same table, 67.19% of Generation X and 66.67% of Millennials selected "greed" as a factor that significantly impacts corruption in the public sector. Additionally, there is a tendency for most of the two generations to perceive that the culture inside an organisation could trigger corruption in the public sector. The table shows that 64.06% of Generation X and 58.33% of Millennials selected the option of "negative culture" as the factor that significantly impacts corruption in the public sector.

#### **4.6 The attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the likelihood to report unethical behaviours**

In understanding the probability of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials towards their intentions to report unethical behaviours in their agency, participants were asked to rate their likelihood in reporting any unethical behaviours that they see in their workplace. The survey shows that there is a similar pattern between the generations towards the likelihood to report unethical behaviours. All cohorts tend to have the likelihood of reporting the behaviours related to personal aggression when they observe it at their workplace. Interestingly, one of the most remarkable results to appear from the survey is that about half of the participants indicated that they would not report any unethical behaviours when they see it at work. Table 4.10 shows that about half of Generation X participants (51.69%) and Millennials (58.90%) answered "definitely

would report” behaviours that corresponded to sexual harassment; verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; and endangering co-workers. Meanwhile, 32.14% of Baby Boomers are likely to reporting personal aggression. The table also indicates that the likelihood of Baby Boomers reporting any unethical behaviours in the workplace is relatively minor. The percentage level of this oldest generation who answered “definitely would report” on four types of deviant behaviours was under 33%. In other words, Baby Boomers are likely to be uninterested in reporting unethical behaviours if they happen in the workplace.

#### **4.7 Significance tests on the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour**

Several ANOVA tests provide statistical information specifying whether there are any attitudinal differences among Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials towards ethical behaviour in the public sector. In general, a null hypothesis for this study is “there are no differences in attitudes between generational cohorts towards ethical behaviour in the public sector” ( $H_0: \mu_{\text{babyboomers}} = \mu_{\text{generationx}} = \mu_{\text{millennials}}$ ). The confidence level of this study is 95 per cent.

**Table 4.9**  
**Perception of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants**  
**towards the factors that trigger corruption in the public sector (1=less influencing; 5=very influencing)**

Types of factors	Perception (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Negative culture	-	9.09	18.18	18.18	54.55	-	-	10.94	25.00	64.06	-	3.79	4.55	33.33	58.33
Need	-	9.09	27.27	45.45	18.18	4.69	3.13	14.06	37.50	40.63	-	8.33	15.15	32.58	43.94
Greed	9.09	-	-	45.45	45.45	3.13	1.56	1.56	26.56	67.19	-	2.27	3.03	28.03	66.67
Social environment	-	9.09	27.27	45.45	18.18	3.13	7.81	9.38	37.50	42.19	-	5.30	16.67	38.64	39.39

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

**Table 4.10**  
**Likelihood of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants to report unethical behaviours in Agency X**  
**(1=definitely would not report; 5=definitely would report)**

Unethical behaviours	Likelihood to report (%)														
	Baby Boomers					Generation X					Millennials				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Production deviance:</b> leaving early; taking excessive breaks; intentionally working slowly; wasting resources.	-	33.33	37.50	20.00	21.43	60.00	43.75	48.39	21.43	6.74	42.31	43.40	42.45	21.77	4.29
<b>Property deviance:</b> sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation.	-	-	25.00	20.00	28.57	-	6.25	11.29	33.33	31.46	15.38	9.43	16.55	33.33	31.29
<b>Political deviance:</b> showing favouritism; gossiping about co-workers; blaming co-workers; competing nonbeneficially.	-	66.67	25.00	40.00	17.86	20.00	37.50	40.32	27.38	10.11	38.46	41.51	35.25	28.57	5.52
<b>Personal aggression:</b> sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; endangering co-workers.	-	-	12.50	20.00	32.14	20.00	12.50	0.00	17.86	51.69	3.85	5.66	5.76	16.33	58.90

Total sample: Baby Boomers=11, Generation X=64, Millennials=132

#### 4.7.1 Significance tests on the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the importance of ethical behaviours

Two ANOVA tests were employed to investigate whether there are any statistical differences in attitudes between the three generations towards the importance of several ethical behaviours in the public sector. Collected responses from question 6<sup>13</sup> were tested. Table 4.11 shows that for all categories of the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector are higher than the p-value (0.05). Hence, this result fails to reject the null hypothesis, which means that this study does not have sufficient statistical evidence to reject whether there are no differences in attitudes between generational cohorts towards the importance of ethical behaviours in Agency X.

**Table 4.11**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts' attitudes**  
**towards the importance of ethical behaviours in Agency X**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Accountability	Between Groups	.111	2	.056	.252	.778
	Within Groups	45.106	204	.221		
	Total	45.217	206			
Impartiality	Between Groups	.344	2	.172	.559	.573
	Within Groups	62.738	204	.308		
	Total	63.082	206			
Justice Fairness	Between Groups	1.059	2	.529	2.251	.108
	Within Groups	47.965	204	.235		
	Total	49.024	206			
Do Good	Between Groups	.561	2	.281	.876	.418
	Within Groups	65.352	204	.320		
	Total	65.913	206			
Avoid Harming	Between Groups	.190	2	.095	.287	.750
	Within Groups	67.356	204	.330		
	Total	67.546	206			

Moreover, in finding the answer of whether there are any attitudinal differences among the three generations towards the importance of several ethical behaviours in the public sector, participants' answers from question 7<sup>14</sup> were examined. The result in table 4.12 describes that all values of the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector are higher than the p-value. Accordingly, this result fails to reject the null hypothesis. It means that the significance test could not adequately prove whether there are no

<sup>13</sup> Question 6 "In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours important in your agency?" (option: accountability; impartiality; justice and fairness; do good; avoiding harming).

<sup>14</sup> Question 7 "In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours important in public sector?" (option: accountability; impartiality; justice and fairness; do good; avoiding harming).

attitudinal differences towards the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector, among Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials.

**Table 4.12**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts' attitudes**  
**towards the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Accountability	Between Groups	.011	2	.005	.023	.977
	Within Groups	46.424	204	.228		
	Total	46.435	206			
Impartiality	Between Groups	.349	2	.174	.624	.537
	Within Groups	56.965	204	.279		
	Total	57.314	206			
Justice Fairness	Between Groups	.225	2	.112	.432	.650
	Within Groups	53.089	204	.260		
	Total	53.314	206			
Do Good	Between Groups	.146	2	.073	.249	.780
	Within Groups	59.950	204	.294		
	Total	60.097	206			
Avoid Harming	Between Groups	.037	2	.018	.065	.937
	Within Groups	56.920	204	.279		
	Total	56.957	206			

#### **4.7.2 Significance tests on the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the acceptability of unethical behaviours**

Two significance tests were utilised in examining whether there are any differences in attitudes between Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials towards the acceptability of various unethical behaviours in the public sector. Data gathered from question number 12<sup>15</sup> was tested to find out whether there were any attitudinal differences towards the acceptability of three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector among three generations. The significance test on table 4.13 suggests that the p-value of all types of unethical behaviours in the public sector is larger than 0.05. Hence, this result fails to reject the null hypothesis. Consequently, this test does not have enough statistical information to determine whether there are no differences between the generational cohorts' attitudes towards the acceptability of three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector.

<sup>15</sup> Question 12 "In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours acceptable in public sector?" (option: Corruption; Misconduct; Maladministration).

**Table 4.13**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts' attitudes**  
**towards the acceptability of three forms of unethical behaviours**  
**in the public sector**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corruption	Between Groups	.330	2	.165	.608	.546
	Within Groups	55.409	204	.272		
	Total	55.739	206			
Misconduct	Between Groups	.957	2	.478	.951	.388
	Within Groups	102.589	204	.503		
	Total	103.546	206			
Maladministration	Between Groups	.604	2	.302	.379	.685
	Within Groups	162.613	204	.797		
	Total	163.217	206			

Respondents' responses from question 13<sup>16</sup> were analysed to evaluate whether there are any differences in generational cohorts' attitudes towards the acceptability of nine types of integrity violations in the public sector. The statistics (table 4.14) indicate that there are six categories of integrity violations which are higher than the p-value (0.05). Therefore, the results fail to reject the null hypothesis, which means that the differences in attitudes of the three generations towards the acceptability of integrity violations in the public sector could not be statistically determined. Except, the p-value of the other three types of integrity violations was lower than 0.05. Accordingly, this study rejects the null hypothesis at 95% confidence level in a few areas. In other words, the attitudes of three-generations towards "waste and abuse of resources"; "break rules and misuse power"; as well as "misconduct in private time" are not all equal, and the test is statistically significant.

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<sup>16</sup> Question 13 "In your personal opinion, are the following behaviours acceptable in public sector?" (option: Corruption through bribery; Corruption through nepotism or favouritism; Conflict of interest through gifts or side-line activities; Fraud and theft of resources; Waste and abuse of organisational resources; Break rules or misuse power; Misuse and manipulation of information; Indecent treatment; Misconduct in private time).

**Table 4.14**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts' attitudes**  
**towards the acceptability of integrity violations in the public sector**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corruption Through Bribery	Between Groups	.789	2	.395	1.241	.291
	Within Groups	64.863	204	.318		
	Total	65.652	206			
Corruption Through Nepotism	Between Groups	1.429	2	.715	1.715	.183
	Within Groups	85.006	204	.417		
	Total	86.435	206			
Conflict of Interest	Between Groups	1.650	2	.825	1.135	.323
	Within Groups	148.273	204	.727		
	Total	149.923	206			
Fraud and Theft of Resources	Between Groups	.592	2	.296	.917	.401
	Within Groups	65.824	204	.323		
	Total	66.415	206			
Waste and Abuse of Resources	Between Groups	4.117	2	2.058	3.590	*.029
	Within Groups	116.965	204	.573		
	Total	121.082	206			
Break Rules and Misuse Power	Between Groups	2.298	2	1.149	3.087	*.048
	Within Groups	75.915	204	.372		
	Total	78.213	206			
Misuse and Manipulation of Information	Between Groups	1.893	2	.946	2.954	.054
	Within Groups	65.363	204	.320		
	Total	67.256	206			
Indecent Treatment	Between Groups	.123	2	.061	.280	.756
	Within Groups	44.612	204	.219		
	Total	44.734	206			
Misconduct in Private Time	Between Groups	4.768	2	2.384	3.735	*.026
	Within Groups	130.189	204	.638		
	Total	134.957	206			

\* =  $p < 0.05$

### 4.7.3 Significance test on the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the perception of factors that shape corruption in the public sector

Survey responses from question 14<sup>17</sup> were tested to identify whether there were any attitudinal differences between the generational cohorts towards the perception of factors that shape corruption in the public sector. In table 4.15, the result reports that the significance test of all factors is higher than the p-value (0.05). Therefore, this test fails to reject the null hypothesis. In this case, this test could not provide adequate statistical data

<sup>17</sup> Question 14 "Regarding the corruption as a behaviour in the workplace; in your personal opinion, are these factors influencing corruption in the public institution?" (option: negative culture/need/greed/social environment).

to identify that there are no differences between generational cohorts towards the perceptions of factors that influence corruption in the public sector.

**Table 4.15**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts' attitudes**  
**towards the perception of factors that trigger corruption in the public sector**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Negative Culture	Between Groups	1.161	2	.581	1.018	.363
	Within Groups	116.384	204	.571		
	Total	117.546	206			
Need	Between Groups	1.611	2	.806	.830	.437
	Within Groups	197.992	204	.971		
	Total	199.604	206			
Greed	Between Groups	1.734	2	.867	1.481	.230
	Within Groups	119.483	204	.586		
	Total	121.217	206			
Social Environment	Between Groups	1.583	2	.791	.903	.407
	Within Groups	178.852	204	.877		
	Total	180.435	206			

#### **4.7.4 Significance test on the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards the likelihood to report unethical behaviours in the workplace**

In evaluating whether there are any generational cohorts' differences in attitudes towards the likelihood to report any unethical behaviours in Agency X, participants' responses from question 15<sup>18</sup> were examined. Table 4.16 reports that there are two categories which result in the p-value above 0.05; hence, the results fail to reject the null hypothesis. In this situation, the statistic does not have ample proof to determine whether there are no differences in attitudes towards the likelihood to report two categories of unethical behaviours in Agency X, including "property deviance" and "personal aggression". In contrast, the other two types of these behaviours are reported to have p-values under 0.05; accordingly, this study rejects the null hypothesis at 95% confidence level. In this context, it could be determined that the attitudes of three generations

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<sup>18</sup> Question 15 "If you observed the following behaviours occurring in your agency, how likely would you be to report it?" (option: Leaving early; taking excessive breaks; intentionally working slowly; wasting resources/Sabotaging equipment; accepting kickbacks; lying about hours worked; stealing from the organisation/Showing favouritism; gossiping about co-workers; blaming co-workers; competing nonbeneficially/Sexual harassment; doing verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; endangering co-workers).

towards the likelihood to report “production deviance” and “political deviance” are not all equal, and the test is statistically significant.

**Table 4.16**  
**ANOVA result on generational cohorts’ attitudes**  
**towards the likelihood to report unethical behaviours in the workplace**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Production Deviance	Between Groups	13.266	2	6.633	6.890	*.001
	Within Groups	196.386	204	.963		
	Total	209.652	206			
Property Deviance	Between Groups	4.544	2	2.272	2.729	.068
	Within Groups	169.814	204	.832		
	Total	174.357	206			
Political Deviance	Between Groups	10.585	2	5.293	5.281	*.006
	Within Groups	204.439	204	1.002		
	Total	215.024	206			
Personal Aggression	Between Groups	.168	2	.084	.142	.868
	Within Groups	121.136	204	.594		
	Total	121.304	206			

\* =  $p < 0.05$

#### 4.8 Conclusion

To conclude, in finding the answers to the research question, this study employed an online questionnaire to collect primary data from 674 public servants in Agency X, which ran for approximately 60 days. At the end of the survey period, there were 207 samples to analyse, consisting of 11 Baby Boomers, 64 Generation X, and 132 Millennials. Overall, the survey results indicate that not many significant differences were found in the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. At least seven of ten aspects of ethical attitudes investigated, indicate minor differences. Furthermore, the survey suggests that two of the younger generations are likely to have similar attitudes rather than differences. From ten aspects of ethical behaviour investigated, at least seven of them report no differences in attitudes. Moreover, some interesting results do emerge from the data. While all cohorts are likely to perceive ethical behaviours as essential in the public sector, nearly half of those surveyed acknowledged that they did not need to think about ethics when doing daily work. Also, there is a tendency that personal aggression becomes the number one concern among three generations. Lastly, almost half of the participants are likely to have a low level of likelihood of reporting any unethical behaviours in their workplace.

**Table 4.17**  
**Summary of the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour in the public sector**

<b>Types of attitudes</b>	<b>Baby Boomers (1)</b>	<b>Generation X (2)</b>	<b>Millennials (3)</b>	<b>Differences</b>	<b>Significance Test</b>
Acceptability towards the importance of ethical behaviours in Agency X	Accountability (81.82%), Justice and fairness (81.82%)	Accountability (82.81%)	Accountability (79.55%)	Minor differences, No differences on 2 and 3	Fails to reject the null hypothesis
Acceptability towards the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector	Impartiality (81.82%)	Accountability (78.13%)	Accountability (77.27%)	Minor differences, No differences on 2 and 3	Fails to reject the null hypothesis
Perception towards the importance of ethical behaviours in day-to-day work activities	"Always" (54.55%)	"Always" (46.88%)	"Always" (37.88%)	Minor differences	-
Perception that unethical behaviours could cause difficulties in the public sector	"Yes" (100%)	"Yes" (100%)	"Yes" (99.24%)	No differences	-
Awareness towards the effects of unethical behaviours in the public sector	Organisational integrity becomes problematic (28.57%), Reduced public trust in public employees (22.86%)	Reduced public trust in public employees (25.00%), Decreased public trust in government (25.00%)	Organisational integrity becomes problematic (26.81%), Reduced public trust in public employees (25.12%)	Minor differences, No differences on 1 and 3	-
Acceptability towards "most unacceptable" of deviant behaviours in the workplace	Property deviance (45.45%), Personal aggression (45.45%)	Personal aggression (51.56%)	Personal aggression (62.88%)	Minor differences, No differences on 2 and 3	-
Acceptability towards "most unacceptable" of three forms of unethical behaviours in public sector	Corruption (100%)	Corruption (85.94%)	Corruption (88.64%)	No differences	Fails to reject the null hypothesis
Acceptability towards "most unacceptable" of nine types of integrity violations in the public sector	Corruption through bribery (90.91%), Fraud and theft of resources (90.91%), Indecent treatment (90.91%)	Fraud and theft of resources (95.31%)	Indecent treatment (90.91%)	Minor differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 of 9 aspects fails to reject the null hypothesis.</li> <li>• Rejects the null hypothesis at "waste and abuse of resources"; "break rules and misuse power"; "misconduct in private time".</li> </ul>
Perception towards the factors that trigger corruption in the public sector	Negative culture (54.55%), Greed (45.45%)	Negative culture (64.06%), Greed (67.19%)	Negative culture (58.33%), Greed (66.67%)	Minor differences, No differences on 2 and 3	Fails to reject the null hypothesis
Likelihood to report unethical behaviours in Agency X	Report personal aggression (32.14%) Would not report political deviance (66.67%)	Report personal aggression (51.69%) Would not report production deviance (60.00%)	Report personal aggression (58.90%) Would not report production deviance (42.31%)	Minor differences, No differences on 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 of 4 aspects fails to reject the null hypothesis.</li> <li>• Rejects the null hypothesis: "production deviance", "political deviance"</li> </ul>

Furthermore, several ANOVA tests were utilised to explore whether there were statistically significant differences in attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the public sector, among the three generations. Most of the statistical findings suggest that this study fails to reject the null hypothesis, which is “there are no differences in attitudes between generational cohorts towards ethical behaviour in the public sector” since most of the significance tests are higher than the p-value (0.05). Except, small but statistically significant results suggest that this study rejects the null hypothesis at 95% confidence level; in small aspects of attitudes towards the acceptability of three types of integrity violations in the public sector related to the acceptability towards “waste and abuse of resources”; “break rules and misuse power”; and “misconduct in private time”.

Moreover, in the concept of the likelihood to report any unethical behaviours in the workplace, the significance test suggests that this study rejects the null hypothesis at 95% confidence level. It means that the attitudes towards the likelihood to report two aspects of unethical behaviours in Agency X, which are: “production deviance” and “political deviance” among three generations are not all equal. Nevertheless, it would be fair to conclude that findings that were examined from participants’ responses indicate that there are not many significant differences between the cohorts on most survey items. Instead, there are merely a few minor but statistically significant differences in several points. These findings need to be discussed and looked at in-depth to generate more understanding related to the attitudes of three generations towards ethical behaviour. This analysis is presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

This study aims to contribute new insights into the ongoing debate concerning the correlation between generational cohorts and their attitudes at the workplace. Ample popular literature argues that generational cohorts display some striking attitudinal differences towards various work-related issues. However, several researchers suggest that the theory of generational cohorts could not be certainly associated with attitudes in the workplace. Moreover, a most scholarly discussion is in regard to the private and business environment in developed countries; however, little is written concerning generational cohorts displaying different attitudes in the setting of the public sector in the spectrum of an emerging country. Hence, this research is dedicated to investigating how workers from different generational cohorts display their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the public sector in Indonesia. The findings of this research have shown that there are few significant differences among the three generations of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. Therefore, this study suggests that the generational cohorts of Indonesia public servants are not necessarily connected with their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace.

Most of the evidence of this study has shown that while there are differences in the attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour, the differences tend to be minor. From the ten aspects of ethical attitudes examined in this study, at least seven of them indicate minor differences. Moreover, four of six aspects of the ANOVA tests reported: “fail to reject the null hypothesis”. It means that the significance tests could not provide sufficient evidence to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in attitudes of generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. Additionally, only a few aspects reported statistically significant differences between the three generations. Hence, this research concurs with previous studies which suggest that generational cohorts could not be certainly associated with their attitudes in the workplace (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer 2014, p. 185).

Moreover, regarding Generation X and Millennials, this study indicates they are likely to be similar rather than different. The survey has demonstrated that from at least seven out of ten dimensions investigated; the data reports that Generation X and Millennials tend to display no difference in attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace., particularly in the acceptability towards the importance of ethical behaviours and in the perception towards factors that trigger corruption. Consequently, these results correlate favourably with Kowske, Rasch and Wiley (2010, pp. 174-5), who promote the concept of more generational similarities rather than differences at work. Thus, most of the findings have shown that the concept of generational cohorts could not automatically correlate to attitudes about ethical behaviour in the workplace of the public sector in Indonesia.

In contrast, this study suggests opposing viewpoints regarding the differences between generational cohorts in the workplace behaviours. The survey results do not support earlier works in this area, which assert that different generations in a workplace have striking differences of perspectives towards work-related values and principles (Cennamo & Gardner 2008; Kapoor & Solomon 2011; Twenge et al. 2010). Likewise, regarding ethical aspects, the findings from this study contradict the claim of the Ethics Resource Center which suggest that different generational cohorts tend to exhibit distinct differences in attitudes towards ethical aspects in the workplace (ERC 2013). Therefore, this research challenges the concept that generational cohorts with their different attributes tend to display different perspectives in the workplace.

In particular, the findings have shown that generational cohorts are likely to display more similarities than differences when it comes to ethical behaviour in the public sector domain. Firstly, there is a similarity of perspective among all generations towards the importance of several ethical behaviours in the workplace. The data has indicated that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials are likely to believe that ethical behaviours are crucial in the public sector, especially behaviours related to accountability. Roughly 80% of the public servants in Agency X in each generation tend to place importance on accountability as the most important aspect of ethical behaviours in their agency. Additionally, the survey has reported that there are no differences between the younger generations towards the significance of ethical behaviours in the public sector in general. Nearly 80% of Generation X and Millennials are likely to believe that accountability is the most central ethical behaviours in the public sector. The figure

corroborates the concept that accountability is crucial and serves as the hallmark in the public sector spectrum in promoting good governance (Siddiquee 2005, p. 108). This result is also consistent with the framework of temporary stewards when public workers primarily work on behalf of the people. In this concept, the workers need to adhere to ethical values and principles in safeguarding public interests (Lewis & Gilman 2012, p. 29). Suffice to say that Indonesian public servants from three generations in Agency X are likely to have a similar perception that ethical behaviours, particularly accountability, is an essential element in their workplace as well as in the public sector in general.

However, while there is similar sensitivity among all generations towards the importance of ethical behaviours in the public sector, the findings have presented surprising results. Less than 50% of the two younger generations in Agency X are likely to perceive that ethical principles should always be applied in daily activities in the workplace. Likewise, approximately 55% of Baby Boomers believe they should always implement ethical behaviours in their daily work activities. Thus, nearly half of the public servants in Agency X perceive that ethical values and principles are not to be applied compulsory in daily working activities all the time. Furthermore, regarding Millennials, the result is surprising. Below 40% of them think they would be likely to apply ethical principles in daily jobs continually, which means that most of the youngest generation is likely to believe that ethical standards are not required to be applied at all times in their daily duties. This fact corresponds to a comparable survey carried out in the U.S. in 2008, which discovered that almost half of the Millennial workforce recognised themselves as unethical in the workplace (World of Work Survey 2008 in Vanmeter et al. 2013, pp. 94-5). Accordingly, there are some possibilities that public servants, especially Millennials in the setting of the Indonesia public sector, tend to be indifferent to applying ethical values during day-to-day activities in the workplace. While all cohorts are likely to perceive that ethical behaviours are essential in the public sector; in practice, many of them tend to assume that the behaviours are not their priority responsibility. Hence, many of them are likely to perceive that ethical principles do not necessarily need to be applied in daily activities at the workplace.

Furthermore, most of the public servants in Agency X are likely to display similarities in understanding some of the difficulties which could arise from unethical behaviours in the workplace. The survey results have demonstrated that almost 100% of the cohort in

Agency X tend to believe that unethical behaviours could bring problems for the public sector. Interestingly, in line with the previous explanation regarding applying ethical principles in daily activities, the resulting facts raise a critical highlight. Although all cohorts seem to believe that unethical behaviour could create problems in their workplace, many of them think that these problems are not their business. Hence, there is a tendency to feel that there is no urgent need to apply ethical principles at all times during work. Moreover, regarding the difficulties that could arise from unethical behaviours in the public sector, the findings have shown that half of Generation X tend to believe that the behaviours bring problems related to the decreasing trust in public servants and the government. Meanwhile, around half of Baby Boomers and Millennials are likely to be more concerned with problems related to organisational integrity and public trust towards public workers. A pattern has been found, which suggests that all generations tend to have similarities in aspects of declining public trust due to these behaviours. This figure is consistent with several authors who emphasise that unethical behaviours (e.g., corruption) have the possibility of decreasing the degree of social trust in public workers and the government (Beeri et al. 2013, p. 59; Fattah 2011, p. 65; OECD 2017; Richey 2010, p. 685).

Nevertheless, even though all generations seem to be confident that unethical behaviours could bring impediments to public sector activities, the findings show another interesting fact. More than approximately 85% of the three generations are likely to perceive that unethical behaviours in the public sector have nothing to do with “disruption of public expenditures”. This propensity is surprising because a great deal of information has been widely exposed by Indonesian media related to the behaviours (e.g., corruption cases), and this has caused losses related to aspects of state finances. For instance, in 2016, approximately USD 103 billion of state funds were lost due to the corruption involving public workers. The figure skyrocketed to USD 462 billion in 2017 (ICW 2016, p. 17; 2017, p. 9). Consequently, this viewpoint could indicate that public servants among the three generations in Agency X are likely to have a low level of awareness towards the effects of unethical behaviours in the public sector when it relates to public spending. Instead, many of them seem to understand that unethical behaviours are most likely related to the reduction in public trust towards public servants. According to the theory, the public trust could be linked with a functional democracy and citizen satisfaction (Beeri et al. 2013, p.

59; Christensen & LÆGreid 2005, p. 505; OECD 2017). Hence, there is a possibility that these generations tend to put more emphasis on values related to citizenship rather than financial losses.

Regarding the acceptability towards various types of unethical behaviours, the findings have further provided more credence to the concept that generational cohorts do not necessarily correlate with their attitudes in the workplace. All cohorts tend to view personal aggression as the most unacceptable behaviour in their agency. Around half of the total participants of Baby Boomers and Generation X tend to perceive behaviours related to sexual harassment; verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; and endangering co-workers (Robinson & Bennett 1995, p. 565), as highly unacceptable. This value supports the idea of Jurkiewicz (2000, pp. 63-4), who suggests that there are more similarities rather than differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X in the setting of public administration. Likewise, more than 60% of Millennials also perceive that personal aggression is the most unacceptable behaviour. According to Robinson and Bennett (1995, p. 565), this category is identified in the “personal-serious” quadrant. These findings explain that all cohorts tend to be greatly intolerant of the unethical behaviours associated with personal hostility which could bring harmful effects for them in the workplace. Suffice to say that all cohorts in the agency were more concerned with individual safety and comfort in their workplace.

Further, in the concept of nine types of integrity violations in the public sector, the survey result demonstrated that the differences of attitudes among the three generations are likely to be minor. More than 90% of the Baby Boomers and Generation X have a similar perception that behaviours related to “fraud and theft of resources” are highly unacceptable in their workplace. Lasthuizen, Huberts and Heres (2011, p. 389) argue that the behaviours are related to improperly obtained personal gain derived from the organisation, colleagues, and citizens. Moreover, according to the theory, “the more acceptable an integrity violation is considered, the less it is observed” (Kolthoff, Cox & Johnson 2015, p. 208). In other words, fraud and theft resources might not have become a prominent behaviour in Agency X. Likewise, there is a similarity between the oldest generation and the youngest generation in this framework. Around 90% of the Baby Boomers and Millennials view that behaviours related to “indecent treatment” are mostly undesirable in the workplace. The theory states that these violations include bullying,

discrimination, intimidation, and sexual harassment (Lasthuizen, Huberts & Heres 2011, p. 389). This value is also consistent with the previous explanation, which suggests that public servants in Agency X are likely to be highly disagreeable with personal aggression in the workplace.

Moreover, from the perspective of three forms of unethical behaviours in the public sector, the survey has shown that there are no differences of attitudes among the three generations. The data has shown that the behaviour most disliked by all cohorts is corruption, compared to misconduct and maladministration. The data has indicated that more than 85% of the sample from each cohort view that corruption in the public sector is highly unacceptable. According to the literature, corruption could be defined as the abuse of office for personal gain, which could result in many difficulties (Monaghan & Graycar 2016, pp. 89-91). This means that many public workers among three generations tend to have a high level of unacceptability towards corruption in the public sector. This fact could correspond to the theory from Kolthoff, Cox and Johnson (2015, p. 208), which asserts that the more unethical behaviour is considered unacceptable, the more violations are observed. Otherwise stated, corruption might not be a salient unethical behaviour in Agency X. This phenomenon also provides an understanding that for most of the cohorts, corruption in the public sector might be considered as one of the behaviours that are easily noticed. In other words, many public workers among the three generations might put more consciousness on corruption as one of the most unacceptable behaviours in the public sector. Thus, from the three concepts of the acceptability of unethical behaviours in the workplace, the findings have further strengthened the concept that generational cohorts tend to display more similar attitudes rather than differences toward ethical behaviour in the workplace.

However, there might be a paradox in perspective between acceptability and awareness of the effects of unethical behaviours. The findings have shown that most of the cohorts are likely to believe that corruption is the most unacceptable behaviour in the public sector. Surprisingly, the result suggests that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials do not seem too aware of the direct difficulties that could arise from this type of unethical behaviour. It could be drawn from the previous elaboration; the findings have shown that many of the cohorts in Agency X are likely to view that unethical behaviours in the public sector would not significantly influence the “disruption of public spending”. Whereas,

corruption could result in many shortcomings related to the public's welfare. The number of state losses could affect public spending, where the money that should be used for the benefits of citizens (e.g., social programs, infrastructure development), might be lost due to corruption (Mauro in Kaufmann 1997, p. 119; OECD 2017). Thus, it seems that there might be a disparity between the degree of generational cohorts' acceptability and their understanding of the effects of corruption on public expenditure.

Furthermore, the survey results have confirmed that public servants among the three generations in Agency X are likely to display similar attitudes towards the perception of the factors that trigger corruption in the public sector. All generations consider "negative culture" and "greed" as factors that mostly shape corruption in the public sector. The data has suggested that more than 50% of participants from each generation are likely to view "negative culture" as significant in influencing corruption. This finding corresponds to the theory that corruption in Indonesia might be assumed to be a regular activity in the bureaucracy. For a long-time, many civil servants were exposed to corruption. Hence, for more than 30 years, corruption has become a deep-rooted culture in the bureaucracy and society (King 2000, p. 618; Merkle 2018, p. 4; Prabowo & Cooper 2016, p. 1029; Robertson-Snape 1999, pp. 589-90). Given that today there are still numerous corruption cases involving public servants, then many of the cross-generation workers in Agency X might have an adequate level of consciousness of corrupt behaviour as a "culture" that deserves more attention.

Nearly half of the Baby Boomer respondents and more than 65% of public servants from two of the younger generations perceive that "greed" plays a critical role in influencing corruption. According to literature, public workers with power and opportunity would naturally to be greedy; they tend to accumulate additional wealth through irregular means (Mabroor 2005, p. 71). This reality might reflect that the three generations seem to believe that corruption would only be committed by people who have enough influence in their institutions. Generally, this power goes to individuals who hold managerial positions in the hierarchical system, especially people who control decision making, or those who retain authority in managing public budgets. In contrast, corruption could also be done by regular employees by conducting petty corruption. For example, small scale corruption could be found in price mark-ups on daily purchasing or falsifying invoices (King 2000, p. 618; Kristiansen & Ramli 2006, p. 226). Hence, there is a possibility that all

cohorts are not yet aware that greed does not only affect some powerful public servants but also it could influence regular employees from all generations.

In the context of the likelihood to report unethical behaviours in the workplace, the findings have signalled that all three generations tend to have a similar tendency in reporting personal aggression in their workplace. Approximately one-third of Baby Boomers and more than half of the younger generation respond that they would be likely to report unethical behaviours related to sexual harassment; verbal abuse; stealing from co-workers; and endangering co-workers (Robinson & Bennett 1995, p. 565). This figure is consistent with the findings mentioned earlier, which suggest all cohorts seem to view personal aggression as highly unacceptable in Agency X. Nevertheless, one critical concern that could be drawn from this finding is that the likelihood of Baby Boomers reporting any unethical behaviours is relatively low. The data has shown that roughly only 30% of this cohort would be likely to report if they observe any unethical behaviours in the workplace. Two significances could be drawn from these results. Firstly, it is plausible to say that the issue of personal aggression in the workplace should get extra consideration – and secondly, a more significant portion of Baby Boomers tend to be uninterested in reporting unethical behaviours when they observe it in the workplace.

Finally, from the perspective of the theory of generations, literature has argued that each generation is likely to display different attributes (e.g., attitudes, preferences). These differences are caused by the broad influence of diverse factors, such as economics, social culture, and historical events in a different era (ERC 2013, p. 4; Eyerman & Turner 1998, p. 93; Twenge et al. 2010, p. 1120). Nevertheless, in perspective towards ethics in the workplace, most of the findings have shown that these factors might not seemly affect the viewpoints of the three generations on ethical behaviour in the public sector. It has been argued that in Indonesia, public servants from the era of Baby Boomers grew up in a period of hardships (Ricklefs 2008, pp. 273-4; Vickers 2005, p. 150). Also, they were accustomed to the prevailing situation of corruption as a routine activity in the bureaucracy (Prabowo & Cooper 2016, p. 1029; Robertson-Snape 1999, pp. 589-90). Generation X experienced the authoritarian-military regime (Vickers 2005, pp. 161-6) and they were likely to begin their careers along with the initiation of reforms in combating corruption (McLeod 2005, p. 379).

Millennials lived through modernisation and democratisation (Hannigan 2015, pp. 244-6, 66). They may have begun working when bureaucratic reform was widely implemented to promote good governance in the public sector (Grand Design of Bureaucratic Reform 2010, p. 17). However, there is a tendency that the different circumstances when each generation grows up, as well as the different organisational culture when they begin their profession as public servants, do not seem to influence their views on ethical behaviour in the public sector. Hence, this research has demonstrated that the theory of generational differences is unlikely to be compatible in the context of ethical perspectives in the public sector. Therefore, this study suggests that the broad theory of generations might not correlate with perspectives on ethical aspects in public sector settings.

In conclusion, this study aims to investigate whether the popular notion of generational cohorts correlates with the attitudes of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour in the workplace. The findings have demonstrated that there are not many significant differences among three generations of Indonesian public servants towards ethical behaviour. Hence, this research concurs with existing studies, which suggests that generational cohorts are not always consistent with the behaviours at work (Becton, Walker & Jones-Farmer 2014, p. 185). Moreover, this study provides more credence to the prior research, which proposes that generational cohorts' attitudes in the workplace are likely to be similar rather than different (Kowske, Rasch & Wiley 2010, pp. 174-5). On the contrary, this study contradicts previous studies which suggest that generational cohorts with their distinct attributes tend to display a striking difference in the workplace (Kapoor & Solomon 2011; Twenge et al. 2010). Most importantly, in the ethics framework, this research challenges the claim of the study which concluded that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials tend to exhibit distinct differences towards ethical attitudes in the workplace (ERC 2013, p. 2).

The findings of this study have shown that while seven of ten of the ethical aspects report some differences among the three generations, the differences are likely to be statistically insignificant. From at least seven of ten investigated aspects of ethical attitudes, the data reports that Generation X and Millennials tend to display no differences in attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace. Consequently, this research provides more confidence in the previous studies, which suggest that generational cohorts could not be

certainly associated with their attitudes in the workplace. Also, this study has added knowledge regarding the attitudes of public servants towards ethical behaviour in the emerging countries spectrum, which is an area that has not been extensively studied.

Furthermore, this study provides several new insights. Firstly, according to the data from the Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia, public sectors in Indonesia currently reflect a multigenerational workforce (BPS 2017). Some evidence suggests that today, many of this workforce is involved in cases of unethical behaviours related to their profession as public servants, ranging from trivial to detrimental scales (See for example ICW 2016, p. 17; The Jakarta Post 2015; TI 2017, pp. 17-8). Undeniably, public sectors in Indonesia are required to improve the ethical aspects of their workforce, since public servants serve as the stewards of public interests and work on behalf of and under public expectations (Luke & Hart 2001, p. 549). As a result, it is fair to suggest that in implementing the HR interventions to promote ethics in the Indonesian public sector, organisations should not necessarily tailor different approaches for each generation. The rationale is because this study has demonstrated that the three generations tend to display similarities in attitudes towards ethical behaviour. Instead, since this research has shown that a multigenerational workforce is likely to face relatively similar issues towards ethical behaviour in their workplace – organisations could take a more general approach in improving ethics in the public sector.

Secondly, this study has also identified several areas that need more critical attention. These issues are related to personal aggression in the workplace and the level of likelihood to report any unethical behaviours. Also, public servants in agency X tend to be unconcerned in applying unethical principles in their daily working activities. Thirdly, although it has been argued that different generations tend to have different attributes affected by diverse factors (e.g., life events), it seems that these considerations do not influence participants' views on ethical aspects. Hence, there is a possibility that the theory of generations does not correlate with attitudes on ethical behaviour in public sector settings. Thus, apart from challenging incumbency theory that generational cohorts tend to display different attitudes in the workplace, this study also suggests several implications and recommendations, which are presented in the next chapter, along with the limitations and conclusions of the overall study.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

In contemporary discussions related to HRM, each generation is believed to have a variety of different attributes that are claimed to influence their values, views, and activities in the workplace, which in turn could impact the functioning of the organisation. Accordingly, in management practice, this concept also influences HR policies in organisations. Many practitioners and professionals design various approaches to managing their workforce based on the concept of generational differences. This phenomenon also affects the conversation of scholars. Currently, there is a two-sided debate about the differences in generational cohorts and their relationship to work-related issues. On the one hand, scholars suggest that generational cohorts are associated with their attitudes and principles at work. For example, different generations are suggested to display distinct principles of ethics in the workplace. Hence, in building a culture of ethics, organisations need to take a different approach tailored for each generation. Conversely, other scholars argue that the relationship between generational differences and work-related attitudes is inconsistent. Prior empirical evidence shows that there are more similarities than differences among generations. Therefore, there is a possibility that developing HRM based on generational differences would not be beneficial.

Currently, the public sector in Indonesia is filled with workers of different generations. It could not be denied that there are still many workers involved in various unethical behaviours, ranging from trivial issues such as absenteeism to detrimental matters, such as corruption. As a result, government institutions are required to develop HR policies regarding improving the ethical aspects of their workers. According to the scholars' debate concerning the multigenerational workforce, this situation could be overcome in two ways. Initially, government organisations could design policies on improving ethics based on different approaches of generational cohorts. However, this may not be compatible with the conditions of the Indonesian public sector. Hence, public organisations need to be more prudent when tailoring HR policies developed around the theory of generational cohorts' differences. Interestingly, most literature discusses the concept of generational differences and work-related issues in terms of non-public

organisations in developed countries. Unfortunately, there is little research generated from the perspective of the public sector in the context of emerging countries.

This research aims to understand the relationship between generational cohorts and their attitudes towards ethical behaviour from the perspective of the public sector. In reaching this objective, a total of 207 data samples representing three generations were collected online from a government agency in Jakarta, Indonesia. The survey explored the attitude of public servants among Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials towards ten aspects of ethical behaviour in the workplace. This study also added some new insights to the debate of generational cohorts' differences towards work-related attitudes. Firstly, it provides a baseline empirical suggestion concerning how the multigenerational workforce perceives ethical behaviour in their workplace. This evidence is significant, given there are few studies that address this topic around government organisations in developing countries. Secondly, based on quantitative analysis, this study concludes that generational cohorts of Indonesian public servants are not necessarily connected to their attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the workplace. Although there are some differences of viewpoints towards ethical behaviour, most of the differences tend to be minor and statistically insignificant. Moreover, the survey results indicate that there are more "generational similarities" rather than "generational differences" at the workplace. Thus, this research challenges the theory, which suggests that there are striking differences between generational cohorts towards ethical perspectives in the workplace.

Thirdly, and interestingly, while all cohorts are likely to consider that ethical behaviour is crucial and tend to perceive that unethical behaviours could bring difficulties in their workplace, many of them tend to believe that ethical principles are not an urgency to be implemented all the time. In other words, most public servants in Agency X are likely to think that ethical values are not their business nor a priority responsibility, and they may not always be concerned with their ethical actions when carrying out their tasks. Hence, it is plausible to say that Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials may believe it is impractical to incorporate ethical values and principles into daily working activities all the time. Whereas public servants serve as the stewards of public interests, they work on behalf citizens and under public expectations. One of the fundamental

outlooks is that public workers are required to work and display their activities by following ethical standards.

Fourthly, the survey indicates that all generations tend to place gravity on personal aggression as the most unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. This means that the factor of safety and comfort at the workplace is the top priority for public workers when performing their duties. This fact is reinforced by the findings which suggest that the three generations are likely to have more intention in reporting personal aggression (e.g., sexual harassment, verbal abuse) when they observe it at the workplace. Surprisingly, the findings have also shown that the possibility of reporting unethical behaviours are relatively low. Only about half of the participants from Generation X and Millennials acknowledge that they would likely report any unethical behaviours. What is more, only one-third of Baby Boomers are likely to report any unethical behaviours in the workplace. Lastly, while many works of literature assert that different cohorts are influenced by different factors in a different era (e.g., culture, life events), which could shape different attributes among each generation (e.g., attitudes, preferences), this study has demonstrated that the broad theory of generations might not be compatible in the domain of the perspective towards ethical behaviour in the public sector settings. The findings have shown that there are more similarities rather than differences among different generations in this area. Hence, different eras when generations grew up or different culture of government organisation when the generations began their careers, might not affect their perspectives towards ethics in the workplace.

In the context of the survey's reliability, the responses were reliable since participants indicated honest responses towards sensitive questions concerning ethical behaviour in the workplace. For example, many participants responded that they would not apply ethical principles in their daily activities all the time, nor they have intentions in reporting any unethical behaviours when they observe them at their agency. This fact demonstrates that in some questionnaire items, the participants did not answer normatively. In a certain sense, if they answered normatively, they might want to answer scale 5 ("always") when asked about the application of ethics in their daily work. Also, there is a possibility they would answer the highest scale (5= "would definitely report") when asked about the likelihood of reporting any unethical behaviours happened at their agency. Instead, many of them were likely to answer honestly according to what they

feel and think. Hence the survey responses tend to be valid and reliable. Additionally, the survey was voluntary. The samples were assigned randomly when potential respondents were invited electronically, and they had full control to participate or not. Hence, it is fair to claim that the sample's responses are reliable and could be generalised into a broader population.

Furthermore, some implications could be drawn from this study. Firstly, regarding the practical management context, the public sector in Indonesia may need to generate more strategies in improving public servants' understanding associated with the importance of applying ethical principles in the workplace, especially when they are linked to the importance of ethics in daily work activities. Developing ethical compliance programs could be considered to address this issue. For instance, organisations could increase the intensity of socialisations and sets of training concerning the importance of ethics in carrying out day-to-day activities. Secondly, the institution should put more emphasis on managing any unethical behaviours related to personal aggression, for example, by implementing dedicated policy instruments to anticipate the behaviours in the workplace. A practical approach is to enact a specific code of conduct related to sexual harassment and verbal abuse in the workplace.

Lastly, it might be critical for the public sector to encourage workers to articulate when they observe any unethical behaviours in the workplace. This effort is essential to promote more prevention mechanisms in the workplace. The more unethical behaviours are reported, the less likely a person is to be unethical because he or she could face a higher risk of punishment. One feasible recommendation is that a public organisation needs to provide secure internal reporting systems to facilitate "whistle-blowers" in reporting unethical behaviours. For example, the management could provide an online whistle-blowing platform with an anonymous feature. Hence, workers would have assurance when they report any unethical behaviours that occur at work without facing risks (e.g., identity leakage, retaliation), which might affect their future careers. Nevertheless, one thing to note is that, since this study has suggested that there are more similarities than differences among the three cohorts, the government needs to be prudent if they intend to tailor HR policies to enhance ethical aspects which are built on the concept of generational cohorts' differences. Otherwise, the strategies for improving ethics in the workplace might not be optimal.

Even though this study could develop practical implications, this research has two caveats. Firstly, this project is only a snapshot reflecting public servants at central agencies – hence, the results might not be representative of the national population. In Indonesian public sector, there are many differences and characteristics inherent in various institutions, such as, regulation differences related to ethics between central and regional institutions, which might influence their attitudes in the context of this study. Secondly, since the close-ended survey is likely to generate limited information, this research might not be able to explore in-depth values underlie individuals regarding their viewpoints of ethical aspects in public organisations. However, this research is still important because very few studies have been conducted to date on generational differences in attitudes towards ethical behaviour in the public sector in the spectrum of developing countries. Additionally, it is also essential to engage in further research corresponding to this topic by involving more participants from diverse institutions in representing national perspectives. Another avenue for future studies is improving the research methods with an emphasis on a qualitative approach since this method could collect profound information. For example, utilising in-depth interviews in generating more insights about participants' experiences related to their attitudes towards ethical dimensions in the workplace. Thus, there would be more empirical evidence available that could be utilised to strengthen more understanding about ethics in bureaucracy and be used as a basis for strategies to improve ethics in the public sector.

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