

# Gender Influences on the Ethical Intentions of Employees: A Study Based on the Sri Lankan Public Sector

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## Abstract

Even though unethical behaviour within the public sector has received a greater attention in recent years, limited work has been conducted related to gender influences on ethical intention. Hence, this paper applies the gender identity theory to Rest's ethical decision-making model to examine ethical intention of employees. This is a cross-sectional study, and it covers a sample of four hundred public sector officials in national level organizations. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The study uncovers the context-based influence of biological gender on ethical intention. Expressive traits, as the psychological aspects of gender, significantly influence the ethical intention. Further, expressive individuals are more egoistic in forming the ethical intention in their workplace. These findings will be useful to understand why employees behave unethically, and how biological and psychological aspects of gender make them pursue ethicality in the work environment.

**Keywords:** Gender; Ethical intention; Ethical judgment; Gender identity theory; Public sector ethics

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