

# **ATTITUDES TOWARD ETHICAL SENSITIVITY: IMPLICATIONS RELATED TO GENDER IDENTITY AND PERSONALITY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Numerous studies have examined the role of age, gender and area of study in shaping ethical sensitivity. Literature review reveals that one important determinant of ethical behavior, personality traits, has received limited attention. In this paper, the authors focus on the relationship between personality traits and ethical sensitivity. The study examines the relationship between perceived gender identity, the three dimensions of the interpersonal-orientation personality scale (CAD), and the ethical sensitivity scale (ESS).*

*Data analysis, based on a sample of 683 observations, shows that self-perceived gender identity is positively related to ethical sensitivity. Compliance is positively related, whereas aggressiveness is negatively related, to ethical sensitivity. The relationship between the detached dimension of CAD and ethical sensitivity is not statistically significant. Consistent with the literature that argued that there is a link between personality traits and workplace behavior, the authors suggest that ethics-orientation programs need to account for differences in personality characteristics implied by the CAD interpersonal orientation scale.*

*Keywords: ethics, ethical sensitivity, gender identity, personality traits*

## **INTRODUCTION**

News reports document questionable behaviors of business executives in all areas of corporate life. Household names such as AIG, Siemens, and WorldCom became synonyms with fraud and deception. The recent financial crisis, the collapse of Wall Street icons, and ethical lapses at the highest executive levels, and the outcry against these developments, suggest that business ethics will continue to get the attention of scholars, the press, and business professionals.

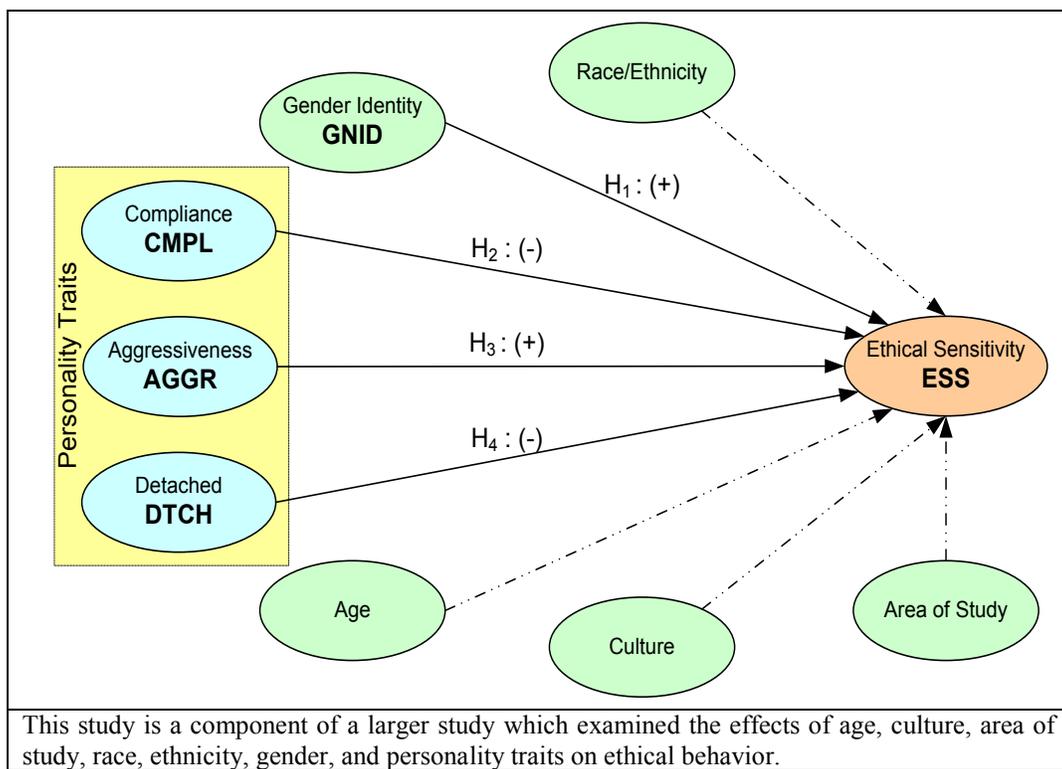
Business Ethics has been defined as “the moral principles and standards that guide behavior in the world of business” (Ferrell & Fraedrich, 1991, p. 5). A number of authors have investigated the topic from different perspectives and have examined the effects of different variables on ethical behavior. The published studies reveal findings that suggest that ethical behavior is influenced by a variety of factors, both organizational and individual. Organizational factors relate to the circumstances in which the decisions must be made. This includes such factors as organizational culture, the presence or absence of codes of ethics, ethical climate, performance pressures, alternative reward systems and expectations (Robertson & Rymon, 2001; Sims & Keon, 1999). Individual factors characterize the individual making the decision (Ford & Richardson, 1994). Individual factors include demographic characteristics such as sex (Akaah, 1989; Hadjicharalambous & Walsh, 2013), age, occupation, education (Merritt, 1991), race (Tsalikis & Nwachukwu, 1988; Whipple, T. & D. Swords, 1992), and psychological

characteristics such as cognitive moral development, Machiavellianism, locus of control and need for cognition (O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the impact of personality characteristics on business ethics through an investigation into the effects of gender and three key personality traits on ethical sensitivity. The personality traits we explore include compliance, aggressiveness, and detachedness. The remainder of this paper is organized into four sections. The next section offers a literature review and provides the background for the hypotheses based on the conceptual framework presented in Figure 1. The methodology, research design, and data analysis follow. The paper concludes with a discussion and suggestions for future research.

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

A review of the empirical ethical decision-making literature (O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005) concluded that the majority of the studies in ethical decision-making did not include any theory development and lacked formal hypotheses. The majority of empirical studies have examined the role of age, gender, academic major, and religion on ethical behavior. Their review, based on 174 articles, found that the role of personality traits in determining ethical behavior received limited attention.



**Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework**

Recently, additional studies reported findings that examine elements of personality and its impact on ethical sensitivity and ethical decision-making. These elements include Machiavellian traits, locus of control, mindfulness, self control and the Big Five personality

traits: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience (Craft, 2012). Following this stream of research, the present study focuses on the relationship between ethical sensitivity and three personality traits: compliance, aggressiveness and detachment (CAD). Another variable considered by the study is the role of gender identity. This section identifies gaps in the literature and provides a framework for the present study, leading to testable hypotheses, first about gender, and second about the interpersonal orientation CAD personality scale.

## **Gender Identity**

The role of gender on ethical behavior has been studied extensively. Review of the literature shows somewhat mixed results. In their meta analysis based on 47 empirical studies, Borkowski and Ugras (1998) found that results about the effects of gender on ethical behavior are inconclusive. A total of 23 studies showed that there are significant differences in ethical behavior between male and female, 16 studies found no differences, while eight studies reported mixed results. Seven of the 14 studies examined by Ford and Richardson (1994) found no relationship between ethical behavior and gender, whereas seven others concluded that females behave more ethically than their male counterparts. In their review, Loe, Ferrell and Mansfield (2000) considered 21 studies, with nine studies reporting that there are no significant differences between male and females and 12 studies concluding that females are more ethical than males.

Another comprehensive review study (O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005) concluded that research on the relationship between gender and ethical sensitivity produced consistent results. As stated by O'Fallon and Butterfield (2005, p 379): "There are often no differences found between males and females, but when differences are found, females are more ethical than males."

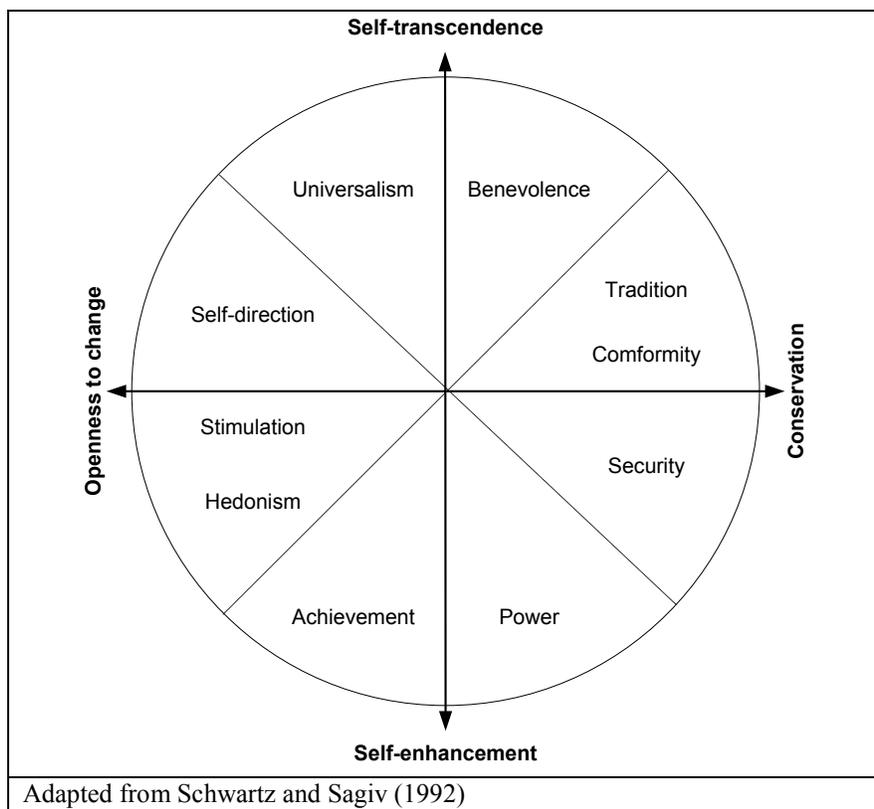
This trend of mixed results found in previous studies on the impact of gender on ethical sensitivity and decision making continued in more recent studies (Craft, 2012). For example, females were found to be more ethical than men (Bampton & Maclagan, 2009; Elango et al., 2010; Krambia-Kapardis & Zopiatis, 2008). This is consistent with Hartman, Fok, and Zee (2009), who found that male and females evaluated ethically related decisions differently. Compared to females, males were more willing to involve in unethical behavior. In other studies, males were found to have more consistent behavior when dealing with ethical decision making (Hopkins et al., 2008). Finally, in other cases no significant relationship was found between gender and ethical sensitivity (Chang & Leung, 2006; Sweeney & Costello, 2009; Zgheib, 2005). The mixed results produced by studies focusing on the relationship between gender and ethical sensitivity can be eliminated by replacing biological gender with gender identity based on gender stereotypes (Stern, Barak & Gould, 1987).

Gender identity has been defined as the self-perception of how one views one's own gender (Stern, Barak & Gould, 1987). A person high in the gender identity scale of femininity would have a self-perception adhering to feminine gender stereotypes, whereas a person high in the gender identity of masculinity would have a self-perception adhering to masculine gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes (e.g., women are warm and nurturing, and men are competitive and independent) are pervasive in our society (Broverman et al., 1972; Spence and Helmreich, 1978). Because the feminine stereotype includes nurturing and a community focus (Fischer & Arnold, 1994; Spence & Helmreich, 1978), it could be inferred that someone high in femininity also tends to be high in ethical sensitivity. On the contrary, it can be inferred that someone high in masculinity usually includes aggression and independence (Broverman et al., 1972).

Therefore, compared to individuals with a self-perceived masculine gender identity, individuals with a self-perceived feminine gender identity will be less willing to engage in unethical behavior. Therefore it is hypothesized that:

*H1: Self-perceived feminine gender identity is positively related to ethical sensitivity.*

The framework proposed by Hunt and Vitell (1986, 1993) is a widely accepted theory for understanding ethical decision-making. The key elements in explaining ethical judgments are individual moral philosophy, individual value systems, and personal characteristics. These characteristics include the 10 values organized across two dimensions: self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence, and openness to change vs. conservation, defined by Schwartz (1992) and Schwartz and Sagiv (1995). Schwartz's (1992) Value Theory (Figure 2) provides a framework for assessing the relationship between interpersonal orientation (CAD) traits and ethical sensitivity. Exhibit 1 presents a brief definition of Schwartz's (1992) values.



**Figure 2: Relations among Ten Motivational Values**

**Interpersonal Orientation: Compliant, Aggressive, Detached**

Individual interpersonal orientations are classified as "compliant," "aggressive," or "detached" (CAD) based on Karen Horney's (1945) neo-Freudian tripartite theory of personality (Cohen, 1967). "Compliant" individuals are defined as those who move towards others (Cohen, 1967). Compliance personality is similar to the agreeableness dimension of the "Big Five" dimensions of personality (McCrae & Costa, 2003). Individuals high in compliance have less

motivation for self-enhancement, and therefore will evaluate questionable practices as unethical. On the other hand, individuals high in self-enhancement, motivated by power and achievement, will be more likely to evaluate questionable practices as ethical. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

*H2: Compliance is positively related to ethical sensitivity.*

<b>Exhibit 1</b>	
<b>SCHWARTZ'S (1992) TEN VALUES</b>	
<b>Value</b>	<b>Description</b>
Universalism	Concern for social justice, the environment and welfare of all people
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people
Tradition	Respect for customs and cultural and religious traditions
Conformity	Restraint of actions likely to upset/harm others, follow societal norms
Security	Safety, and stability of society, family security, national security
Power	Status and prestige, control or dominance over others
Achievement	Personal success, demonstrating competence
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself, enjoying life
Simulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
Self-direction	Independent thought and action, choosing own goals, exploring

"Aggressive" individuals are individuals who move against others, have a strong desire to excel, have a high need for achievement, and seek admiration and prestige (Cohen, 1967). Aggressive individuals motivated for personal gain, status, or self-esteem are less likely to help others during pro-social activities (Reykowski, 1982). Further, individuals who seek status are more likely to be low in social responsibility (Antil, 1984). Contrary to compliant individuals, aggressive individuals score high in self-enhancement. Self-enhancement values like power, achievement, dominance over people and personal success are values that are more likely to be associated with unethical practices, because these values focus primarily on personal interests, with no respect for others. Aggressive individuals are more likely to evaluate ethically questionable practices as appropriate. Therefore it is hypothesized that:

*H3: Aggressiveness is negatively related to ethical sensitivity.*

The third interpersonal orientation focuses on detachedness. "Detached" individuals are those who move away from others and want to put emotional distance between themselves and other people. Since detached individuals are less concerned with others, it is expected that these individuals are less concerned about the opinions of others. Ethical behavior is influenced by the strength of an existing relationship. The strength of the relationship depends on the closeness, reciprocity, emotional intensity and intimacy among people involved in that relationship (Granovetter, 1973). The cost of acting unethically on a weak relationship is minimum. On the other hand, the cost of unethical behavior -- damaging a strong relationship -- is much higher than in the case of a weak one (Brass et al., 1998). Being more detached would also imply being high in alienation. It is reasonable to assume that alienated, detached individuals do not care much about strong relationships and other's opinions, therefore they have a higher chance of acting unethically. In addition, based on the Schwartz (1994) Motivational Value model, "detached" individuals move away from conservation values of tradition and conformity, and towards openness-to-change values like self-direction, stimulation and hedonism. Conservation values are likely to be congruent with ethical disposition, because unethical individuals engage in

breaking rules and violating norms and regulations. Conversely, openness-to-change values are more likely to be compatible with an unethical inclination, since unethical practices make it possible to experience self direction and stimulation (Steenhaut & Van Kenhoven, 2006). This reasoning suggests that when individuals put more emphasis on openness and change, they will be more likely to evaluate ethically questionable practices as appropriate. Consequently, individuals who have a more detached interpersonal orientation would be less likely to exhibit ethical sensitivity. Thus it is hypothesized that:

*H4: Detachment is negatively related to ethical sensitivity.*

## METHODOLOGY

This study is a component of a larger study, which examined the effects of gender, ethnicity/race, area of study, and personality traits on ethical behavior (Figure 1). Participants were asked to evaluate 30 ethically related alternative decision-making scenarios. Data was collected by the first author using a self-administered questionnaire answered by students attending a comprehensive college in the Northeast region of the United States. The cluster sampling technique was utilized to select classes to be included in the sample. In some classes, students were given enough time to complete the surveys during class time. In other cases, students were instructed to complete the questionnaire at their convenience and return it at the following class meeting. In both cases, participation was optional. No credit or other incentive was given to participants for completing the survey.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency*</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency*</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>School</b>			<b>Gender</b>		
Liberal Arts	186	27.8%	Male	306	45.6%
Business	362	54.0%	Female	365	54.4%
Education	122	18.2%	Total	671	100.0%
Total	683	100.0%	<b>Employment</b>		
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			Full time	183	27.4%
African American	168	25.6%	Part time	289	43.2%
Asian	92	14.0%	Not at all	197	29.4%
Caucasian	233	35.6%	Total	669	100.0%
Hispanic	112	17.1%	<b>Family Income</b>		
Other	50	7.6%	Less than \$ 20,000	81	13.1%
Total	655	100.0%	\$ 20,001 - \$ 40,000	133	21.5%
<b>GPA</b>			\$ 40,001 - \$ 60,000	111	18.0%
Below 2.50	25	3.9%	\$ 60,001 - \$ 80,000	104	16.8%
2.51 - 2.99	160	24.8%	\$ 80,001 - \$ 100,000	79	12.8%
3.00 - 3.49	275	42.6%	More than \$ 100,000	110	17.8%
3.50 or above	185	28.7%	<b>Total</b>	618	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	645	100.0%	* Totals are different due to missing data		

Analysis showed no significant differences between those who completed the questionnaire in class and those who completed it outside the class. The overall response rate was 75.4%, yielding a total sample size of 692. Nine questionnaires were excluded from the analysis because of extensive missing data. The final sample size was 683. Table 1 presents the

profile of the sample in terms of ethnicity/race, gender, family income, school attended, GPA, and employment status. The average age of the participants is 23.9 years.

## Measures

### Ethical Sensitivity Scale (ESS)

Ethical Sensitivity (ESS) was measured using the 30 items of ethically related decision-making statements/scenarios developed by Stevens et al. (1993). These scenarios include ethical dilemmas about: (a) using company resources for personal gain, (b) relationships with co-workers, (c) personal job performance, (d) company policies, and (e) giving gift to obtain/provide preferential treatment.

<b>Exhibit 2</b>	
<b>ETHICALLY RELATED DECISION MAKING SCENARIOS/VIGNETTES</b>	
1.	Using Company services for personal use.
2.	Padding an expense account up to 10%.
3.	Padding an expense account in excess of 10%.
4.	Giving gifts/favors in exchange of preferential treatment.
5.	Taking longer than necessary to do a job.
6.	Taking care of personal business on company time.
7.	Divulging confidential company information.
8.	Concealing one's work errors.
9.	Passing blame for work errors to an innocent co-worker.
10.	Claiming credit for someone else's work.
11.	Falsifying time/quality reports.
12.	Calling in sick to take a day off.
13.	Authorizing a subordinate to violate company rules or policies.
14.	Using company materials and supplies for personal use.
15.	Accepting gifts/favors in exchange for preferential treatment.
16.	Taking extra personal time (long lunches, late arrivals).
17.	Not reporting others' violation of company rules and policies.
18.	Not hiring a prospective employee because of his sexual preference.
19.	Dropping medical coverage for people that have high medical bills.
20.	Borrowing \$50 from petty cash until pay day.
21.	Betting on sports events during office hours.
22.	Having job interview with competitors to obtain inside information.
23.	Dating the boss (both are single).
24.	Smoking in no smoking areas.
25.	Making copies of company software for personal use.
26.	Having a receptionist tell a caller that someone is not in when they are.
27.	Inflating job experience in a resume.
28.	Not reporting to authorities company violations of the law.
29.	Setting not real sales goals to get greater sales effort from sales people.
30.	Quoting an optimistic/unrealistic shipping date to a buyer to get a sale.

The base for the ESS scale was originally developed by Ruch and Newstrom (1975). Stevens et al. (1993) added additional items based on judgments of business faculty. As Stevens

and his co-authors noted, the construct validity of the ethical sensitivity scale is based heavily on these judgments. Each item/statement in Exhibit 2 scores 1 = Very Unethical to 5 = Not at all Unethical. Thus the lower the score on the ESS scale, the higher the ethical sensitivity. The internal consistency reliability index for the 30-item ESS scale is  $\alpha = 0.91$  (Table 3).

### **Self-perceived Gender Identity (GNID)**

Self-perceived gender identity was measured using the Sexual Identity Scale (Stern et al. 1987). Each of the four items included in the scale are scored on a range of 1 = Very Masculine to 5 = Very Feminine. The scale was found to be unidimensional (Stern et al., 1987). The reliability coefficient  $\alpha$  is .75 for women, .84 for men and .93 for the total sample. These reliabilities are comparable to the reliabilities calculated by Stern, Barak and Gould (1987), who reported coefficient  $\alpha = .85$  for women,  $\alpha = .87$  for men, and  $\alpha = .96$  for the total sample.

### **Interpersonal Orientation Personality Traits (CAD)**

Interpersonal orientation personality traits of being compliant, aggressive and detached were measured using the CAD scale developed by Cohen (1967). The original 35 items developed by Cohen (1967) were used for the purpose of this study (Appendix 1, Exhibit 3). Each item scores 1 = Extremely Desirable to 5 = Extremely Undesirable. Thus, lower scores mean higher compliance, aggressiveness or detachment. Factor analysis with varimax rotation resulted in a three-factor solution.

The three dimensions -- compliant, aggressive and detached -- were clearly identified. This solution is fully comparable with the solution from the scale developed by Cohen (1967). Summed scores of 7, 10 and 9 items were calculated to formulate an overall index of compliant, aggressive and detached respectively. Nine out the 35 original items were not considered for the analysis based on the factor loadings and internal consistency of each factor. Reliability coefficients are .69, .76, and .61 for the compliant, aggressive and detached scales respectively. While the magnitude of the estimated reliability indices is not very high, it is noted that it is equal to or greater than reliability coefficients reported in previous studies. Ryan and Becherer (1976) reported internal consistency reliability estimates as .72 for compliant, .68 for aggressive, and .51 for detached. Tyagi (1983) reported reliability estimates of .72, .62 and .63, while Noerager (1979) reported coefficient  $\alpha$  estimates of .60, .36 and .43. Table 2 presents the reliabilities in terms of Cronbach's alpha and statistics for the scales used in the study.

<b>Scale Definition</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>alpha <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Median</b>
ESS	30	.91	117.75	15.32	119
GNID	4	.93	11.74	4.40	11
CMPL	9	.63	32.98	4.06	33
AGGR	13	.76	41.65	6.65	41
DTCH	8	.63	23.11	4.79	23

## DATA ANALYSIS

The dependent variable ESS was computed by summing the individual scores of the 30 items describing ethical scenarios. Table 3 presents correlations and descriptive statistics among variables used in testing the hypotheses. Correlations between ESS and each of the four variables used in the hypotheses are significant and in the hypothesized direction.

Given that hypotheses were expressed as relationships between continuous variables, SPSS regression analysis was used for hypothesis testing. The overall model is significant ( $F=36.67$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Coefficient estimates, t-values and corresponding p-values are presented in Table 4.

Hypothesis one (H1) states that self-perceived feminine gender identity is positively related to ethical sensitivity. It is important to note that lower scores in the GNID scale denote masculine characteristics, whereas higher scores denote feminine characteristics. On the other hand, lower scores in the ethical sensitivity scale (ESS) denote higher levels of ethical sensitivity. The correlation between GNID and ESS is negative ( $r= -.125$ ,  $p=.002$ ). That means that individuals with feminine characteristics are more likely to evaluate unethical and questionable practices as unethical, providing support for the hypothesis. Regression results confirm that conclusion. The standardized coefficient ( $b_1 = -.01$ ,  $t=-2.32$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) is significant, therefore hypothesis 1 is supported.

<b>Table 3</b>					
<b>CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS</b>					
	<b>GNID</b>	<b>CMPL</b>	<b>AGGR</b>	<b>DTCH</b>	<b>ESS</b>
<b>N</b>	683	678	666	674	651
<b>median</b>	12	16	30	28	64
<b>mean</b>	12.03	15.97	30.01	27.33	64.83
<b>st.dev.</b>	5.11	4.27	6.67	4.84	20.68
<b>GNID</b>	1				
<b>CMPL</b>	-.125** (.001)	1			
<b>AGGR</b>	.337** (.000)	-.018 (.650)	1		
<b>DTCH</b>	.131** (.001)	-.065 (.095)	.283** (.000)	1	
<b>ESS</b>	-.219** (.000)	.283** (.000)	-.322** (.000)	-.125** (.002)	1

p-values in parenthesis .  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Turning to the relationship between the CAD interpersonal orientation scale and ethical sensitivity, hypothesis two (H2) posits a positive relationship between compliance and ESS. This hypothesis is supported. The standardized coefficient for compliance ( $b_2 = .26$ ,  $t=7.19$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) is significant.

<b>Table 4</b>					
<b>REGRESSION RESULTS</b>					
	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>		
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
<b>Constant</b>	77.62	5.92		13.12	.000
<b>GNID</b>	-0.38	0.15	$b_1=-0.10$	-2.47	.014
<b>CMPL</b>	1.29	0.18	$b_2= 0.26$	7.19	.000
<b>AGGR</b>	-0.86	0.12	$b_3=-0.28$	-7.04	.000
<b>DTCH</b>	-0.11	0.16	$b_4=-0.03$	-0.66	.509

Hypothesis three (H3) depicts a negative relationship between aggressiveness and ESS. As expected, hypothesis 3 is supported. The standardized coefficient ( $b_3 = -.28$ ,  $t=-7.04$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) is significant, denoting that as the aggressiveness increases, the ethical sensitivity decreases.

Finally, hypothesis four (H4) assumes that detachment is negatively related to ethical sensitivity. Although the correlation ( $r=-.125$ ,  $p=.002$ ) between detached and ESS suggests a significant relationship, the regression results reveal that although the relationship is in the hypothesized direction, it is not significant ( $b_4 = -.03$ ,  $t=-.66$ ,  $p=.509$ ).

To shed additional light and explain the failure to support hypothesis 4, we performed an analysis of variance to examine possible interaction effects among the independent variables: gender identity (GNID), aggressiveness (AGGR), compliance (CMPL) and detachment (DTCH). Two groups were formulated using the median of each of the independent variables as the cutting point. Individuals with summed scores below the median were part of the first group, while individuals with summed scores above the median were part of the second group. Table 5 presents the SPSS ANOVA results. The overall model is significant ( $F = 5.71$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). The ANOVA analysis confirmed the regression results. Gender identity, compliance and aggressiveness are significant. Detachment is not significant ( $F=1.01$ ,  $p=.32$ ). In addition, there are two interactions effects (GNID\*CMPL,  $F= 4.91$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ) and (CPML\*AGGR,  $F= 3.12$ ,  $p = 0.08$ ).

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean Square	F value	Sig. p-value
Corrected Model	32760.865	15	2184.06	5.71	0.00
Intercept	2237474.89	1	2237474.89	5845.62	0.00
GNID	3527.67	1	3527.67	9.22	0.00
CMPL	8295.24	1	8295.24	21.67	0.00
AGGR	8265.16	1	8265.16	21.59	0.00
DTCH	385.93	1	385.93	1.01	0.32
GNID*CMPL	139.45	1	139.45	0.36	0.55
GNID*AGGR	1881.03	1	1881.03	4.91	0.03
GNID*DTCH	310.77	1	310.77	0.81	0.37
CMPL*AGGR	1192.14	1	1192.14	3.12	0.08
CMPL*DTCH	548.79	1	548.79	1.43	0.23
AGGR*DTCH	0.06	1	0.06	0.00	0.99
GNID*COM*AGG	14.39	1	14.39	0.04	0.85
GNID*CM*DTCH	11.68	1	11.68	0.03	0.86
GNID*AGGR*DTCH	55.35	1	55.35	0.15	0.70
CMPL*AGGR*DTCH	268.66	1	268.66	0.70	0.40
GNID*CMPL*AGGR*DTCH	3.30	1	3.30	0.01	0.93
Error	226594.34	592	382.76		
Total	2832447.00	608			
Corrected Total	259355.21	607			

## CONCLUSION

This paper contributes to the stream of research that examines individual factors influencing ethical sensitivity and ethical behavior. The relationship between gender identity and

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ethical sensitivity demonstrates significant differences between individuals high in masculine characteristics and individuals high in feminine characteristics. These results are consistent with previous research that found support for the gender socialization approach. The foundation of the gender socialization approach is that gender differences create different values and traits, causing individuals to develop different work-related interest decision and practices (Ameen et al., 1996). Compared to individuals high in feminine characteristics, those high in masculine characteristics seek success and are more likely to break the rules, given their lower levels of ethical sensitivity.

Important factors for differences in ethical judgment are the individual's personal characteristics and personal values (Hunt & Vitell, 1993). As with previous studies that examine elements of personality and its impact on ethical sensitivity and ethical decision-making (Craft, 2012), this study draws on Schwartz's (1992) Value Theory and examines the relationship between ethical sensitivity and three personality traits. We found that compliance is positively related to ethical sensitivity, whereas aggressiveness is negatively related to ethical sensitivity. Contrary to the hypothesis, detachment is not related to ethical sensitivity. While additional research might be necessary to further examine this relationship, it can be speculated that being detached does not necessarily mean being unethical. Generally, the behavior of detached individuals is not driven by external codes and societal norms. However, this does not prohibit detached individuals from developing ethical moral philosophy and internal codes and standards based on their own system of values, and not on society's. As noted by Steenhaut and van Kenhove (2006, p149), Hunt and Vitell (1993) emphasized the unquestionable impact of an individual's value system in the decision process.

Human resources managers, as well as officers responsible for developing ethics programs, should consider these findings. Understanding the influence of unethical attitudes and behavior might help human resources managers (a) to effectively identify what triggers unethical behavior and (b) to develop training programs aiming to increase ethical awareness and ethical sensitivity. Ethics development and ethics orientation programs need to account for differences in both gender identity and personality characteristics implied by the CAD interpersonal orientation scale. This is consistent with Hogan and Holland (2003), who argued that there is a link between personality traits and workplace behavior.

The relationship between gender identity and ethical sensitivity suggests that one way to increase ethical decision making is to increase the number of female decision makers. Decision makers high in feminine characteristics will be less likely to be involved in unethical behavior.

In conclusion, the present study focused on the relationship between ethical sensitivity and personality characteristics. The use of student subjects limits the generalizability of the results. Future research should examine the relationship between gender identity and CAD personality traits, and ethical sensitivity, in populations other than students, and preferably among individuals responsible for making business decisions. Finally, although participation in this study was optional and no credit or other incentive was given to participants for completing the survey, a limitation of the study is that answering questions about the scenarios presented in Exhibit 2 measures intentions rather than actual behavior.

## APPENDIX I

<b>Exhibit 3</b>	
<b>THE CAD SCALE*</b>	
1.	Being free of emotional ties with others is...
2.	Giving comfort to those in need of friends is...
3.	The knowledge that most people would be fond of me at all times would be...
4.	Refusing to give in to others in an argument seems...
5.	Enjoying a good movie by myself is...
6.	Paying attention to what others think of me is...
7.	Owning an item before most of my friends is...
8.	Knowing others are somewhat envious of me is...
9.	Feeling that I like everyone I know would be...
10.	To be able to work hard while others have fun is...
11.	Using pull to get ahead is...
12.	Having enough money or power to impress people is...
13.	Basing my life on duty to others is...
14.	To be able to work under pressure is...
15.	Living alone in a cabin in the woods or mountains would be...
16.	Pushing/Challenging those who insult my honor is...
17.	Giving aid to the poor and under-privileged is...
18.	Standing in the way of people who are too sure of themselves is...
19.	Being free of social obligations is...
20.	Having something good to say about everyone is...
21.	Telling a waiter when you have received inferior food is...
22.	Planning to get along without others is...
23.	Being able to spot and exploit weaknesses in others is...
24.	Having a strong desire to surpass others' achievements seems...
25.	Sharing my personal feelings with others would be...
26.	Having the ability to blame others for their mistakes is...
27.	Avoiding situations where others can influence me is...
28.	Wanting to repay others' thoughtless actions with friendship is...
29.	Having to compete with others for various rewards is...
30.	Having others pay very little attention to me and my life would be...
31.	Defending my rights with force would be...
32.	Putting myself out to be considerate to others' feelings is...
33.	Correcting people who express an ignorant belief is...
34.	Working alone would be...
35.	Being fair to people who do things that I consider wrong seems...
*Each item scores 1 = Extremely Desirable to 5 = Extremely	

## ENDNOTES

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