

On Ethics and Competitiveness: Understanding Business Graduate Students' Perceptions

Gwen E. Jones, Fairleigh Dickinson University
Linda Cannilla, Fairleigh Dickinson University
Joan Slepian, Fairleigh Dickinson University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At no greater time in the history of our world market economy has ethics played such an important role in our competitive advantage. In this study, graduate business students rated 20 unethical workplace behaviors in terms of moral wrongfulness. Understanding the perceptions of the students - who will become our future business leaders - will positively impact how we tailor our educational objectives and how we manage and work with individual differences in organizations. Ratings were compared across gender and across domestic versus international students (primarily from India). Both comparisons were statistically significant and follow-up analyses identified individual items that were rated differently across the groups. Implications from these findings for future research, education, and management of organizations are discussed.

Keywords: Unethical workplace behaviors, Business student perceptions, Gender differences, Cultural differences