

**TURNING A BLIND EYE TO ETHICS FOR SELF-INTEREST:  
CONCEPTUALIZATION, SCALE DEVELOPMENT AND CROSS-CULTURAL  
VALIDATION OF  
ETHICAL BLINDFOLDING AT WORK**

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VALIDATION OF  
ETHICAL BLINDFOLDING AT WORK**

*By*

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*Submitted*

in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

to the



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, DELHI**

**JANUARY 2026**

*This Thesis is Dedicated to My Parents*

*Dr. Renu Shahrawat*

*&*

*Shri. Y. S. Shahrawat*

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Turning a Blind Eye to Ethics for Self-Interest: Conceptualization, Scale Development and Cross-Cultural Validation of Ethical Blindfolding at Work**”, being submitted by **Mrs. Aishwarya** to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**, is a record of bonafide research work carried out by her. She has worked under my supervision and has fulfilled the requirements for the submission of this thesis, which has attained the standard required for Ph.D. degree of the Institute. The results presented in this thesis have not been submitted elsewhere for award of any degree or diploma.

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Date:

Aishwarya

## **ABSTRACT**

Organizations unknowingly suffer from employees' ignorant behaviors of overlooking workplace unethicity to serve their self-interests. Despite their potential to cause grave harm, existing research lacks a valid instrument to measure such passive unethical behaviors. Addressing this gap, we offer a systematically conceptualized and rigorously developed scale of ethical blindfolding at work. Across four studies, we develop a reliable, valid and economical measure of Ethical Blindfolding at work. We begin by generating the items using a hybrid approach (Study 1a), extensively study their content validity (Study 1b) and then finalize the items after accounting for item desirability (Study 1c). In Study 2 and 3 we explore and confirm the factor structure of the ethical blindfolding scale. We also showcase its distinctiveness from related constructs by demonstrating good convergent, discriminant and incremental validities. In Study 4, we showcase the cross-cultural nomological validity and measurement invariance of the ethical blindfolding scale across American and Indian contexts. Results show the importance of fear of retaliation in predicting ethical blindfolding by activating one's self-serving cognitions. Employees facing job insecurity are also more likely to turn a blind eye to ethics to protect their interests. The findings carry important implications for theory, research and practice.

## सार

व्यावसायिक संगठन अनजाने में कर्मचारियों के उन अज्ञानतापूर्ण व्यवहारों से पीड़ित होते हैं, जिनमें वे अपने स्वार्थ की पूर्ति के लिए कार्यस्थल पर होने वाली अनैतिकता की अनदेखी करते हैं। गंभीर नुकसान पहुँचाने की क्षमता के बावजूद, मौजूदा शोध में ऐसे निष्क्रिय अनैतिक व्यवहारों को मापने के लिए किसी वैध उपकरण का अभाव है। इस कमी को दूर करते हुए, हम कार्यस्थल पर नैतिकता का अंधापन (Ethical Blindfolding) का एक व्यवस्थित रूप से अवधारित और कठोरता से विकसित पैमाना प्रस्तुत करते हैं। चार अध्ययनों के माध्यम से, हम कार्यस्थल पर नैतिकता का अंधापन का एक विश्वसनीय, वैध और क्वांटिफायबल माप विकसित करते हैं। हम आइटम्स का निर्माण एक हाइब्रिड दृष्टिकोण से करते हैं (अध्ययन 1a), उनकी सामग्री वैधता का व्यापक परीक्षण करते हैं (अध्ययन 1b), और फिर आइटम की वांछनीयता को ध्यान में रखते हुए उन्हें अंतिम रूप देते हैं (अध्ययन 1c)। अध्ययन 2 और 3 में हम नैतिकता का अंधापन पैमाने की कारक संरचना का अन्वेषण और पुष्टि करते हैं। साथ ही, अच्छे अभिसारी, विभेदी और वृद्धिशील वैधताओं का प्रदर्शन करके संबंधित संरचनाओं से इसकी विशिष्टता को प्रदर्शित करते हैं। अध्ययन 4 में, हम अमेरिकी और भारतीय संदर्भों में नैतिकता का अंधापन पैमाने की अंतर-सांस्कृतिक नामोल्लंजिकल वैधता और मापन अपरिवर्तनीयता को प्रदर्शित करते हैं। परिणाम दर्शाते हैं कि प्रतिशोध के भय की भूमिका नैतिकता का अंधापन की भविष्यवाणी में महत्वपूर्ण है, क्योंकि यह व्यक्ति की स्वार्थ-साधक संज्ञान प्रक्रियाओं को सक्रिय करती है। नौकरी की असुरक्षा का सामना कर रहे कर्मचारी भी अपने हितों की रक्षा के लिए नैतिकता की अनदेखी करने की अधिक संभावना रखते हैं। ये निष्कर्ष सिद्धांत, अनुसंधान और व्यवहार के लिए महत्वपूर्ण निहितार्थ प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>EB</b>	:	Ethical Blindfolding at work
<b>QS</b>	:	Quiescent Silence
<b>Opp S</b>	:	Opportunistic Silence
<b>DI</b>	:	Deliberate Ignorance
<b>WCB</b>	:	Workplace Cheating Behaviors
<b>WUB</b>	:	Workplace Unethical Behaviors
<b>OCB</b>	:	Organizational Citizenship Behaviors
<b>FOR</b>	:	Fear of Retaliation
<b>SSC</b>	:	Self-Serving Cognitions
<b>(P)JI</b>	:	Perceived Job Insecurity
<b>PFI</b>	:	Preference for Inaction
<b>H_SD</b>	:	Social Desirability scale
<b>EFA</b>	:	Exploratory Factor Analysis
<b>CFA</b>	:	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
<b>AVE</b>	:	Average Variance Extracted
<b>CR</b>	:	Composite Reliability
<b>SD</b>	:	Standard Deviation
<b>HTMT</b>	:	Hetero-Trait Mono-Trait ratio
<b>IBM-AMOS</b>	:	International Business Machines Corporation - Analysis of Moment Structures
<b>IBM-SPSS</b>	:	International Business Machines Corporation - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>SEM</b>	:	Structural Equation Modeling

<b>KMO-MSA</b>	:	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy
<b>PAF</b>	:	Principal Axis Factoring
<b>PCA</b>	:	Principal Components Analysis
<b>CFI</b>	:	Comparative Fit Index
<b>IFI</b>	:	Incremental Fit Index
<b>TLI</b>	:	Tucker-Lewis Index
<b>SRMR</b>	:	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
<b>RMSEA</b>	:	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
<b>CMB/ CMV</b>	:	Common-Method Bias/ Common Method Variance
<b>SDR</b>	:	Socially Desirable Responding
<b>MBA</b>	:	Masters in Business Administration
<b>USA</b>	:	United States of America