

# Why Do Only Some People Blow the Whistle? A Multi-Theoretical Perspective

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## Abstract

De George's Theory of Whistle-blowing explains an individual's whistle-blowing behaviour using the concept of moral justification. However, it does not adequately explain why only some people blow the whistle. This theoretical paper proposes a framework combining the theories of Principled Organizational Dissent, Resource Dependency, and Moral Conation to address the theoretical gaps in De George's Theory of Whistle-blowing. Accordingly, the paper postulates that moral justification will mediate the relationships between personal principles, personal cost of reporting, personal responsibility for reporting, evidence of wrongdoing and whistle-blowing intention. Further, based on the Theory of Moral Conation, this paper suggests that the moral conation capacities of moral ownership, moral efficacy, and moral courage will moderate the relationship between moral justification and whistle-blowing intention. The main theoretical contribution of the paper is that it addresses three theoretical gaps inherent in De George's Theory of Whistle-blowing. The proposed framework's managerial implications include establishing a supportive culture for implementing human resource management systems which promote individual whistle-blowing behaviour. In addition, this study opens up avenues for future research to use morality as a key concept in studies related to whistle-blowing.

**Keywords:** Whistle-blowing intention, Personal cost of reporting, Personal responsibility for reporting, Evidence of wrongdoing, Moral justification, Moral conation capacities

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