

ESPOUSED-ENACTED VALUE INCONGRUENCE, ITS ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN SRI LANKA

Yashoda Bandara^a, Kumudinei Dissanayake^b, Arosha S. Adhikaram^b

^aRajarata University of Sri Lanka

^bUniversity of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Apart from the popular discussions from an economic point of view, public value conflicts have been analysed in a human and normative perspective, revealing the substantial effect of such value conflicts in causing public failures. Even though functioning with an often-criticized public service generally diagnosed with value related problems, hardly any studies have been carried out in Sri Lankan context to clarify them. Thus, the aim of this paper is to explore how espoused and enacted values interplay in the Sri Lankan Public Administration and what unique contextual antecedents are underlying the relevant circumstances. In order to reach the aim, the study employed a case study in a qualitative approach, based on an interpretivist standpoint. Accordingly, data were gathered from an apex body of Sri Lankan public administration through key regulatory documents, and in-depth interviews with executive public officers holding top-level positions, where themes were derived in analysis by coding and categorizing the data. Public interest, service boundedness, good governance, and humanity & morality were emerged as the key espoused values of the organization where enacted values were found to be deviated to a certain extent, manifesting personal interests, submission and dependence, distrust, and, passivity and indifference in its actual operations. Antecedents underlying these gaps were apparent at individual, organizational, system, and societal levels, drawing managerial implications for development of appropriate strategies in order to align the public administration with the country's context while upholding its espoused values.

Keywords: *Espoused values; Enacted values; Value congruence; Public administration; Public value conflict*
