THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT

Examining the Link between Ethical Leadership and Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: The Mediating Role of Ethical Climate & The Moderating Role of Moral Courage

Dr. Jeremiah Mitchell
Researcher, Department of Business Administration,
Trident International University, California, US

Abstract:
This study explored how ethical leadership impacts unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), with an ethical climate serving as a mediator and moral courage as a moderator. It underscores the crucial role of ethical leadership in sustaining organizational health and success. By employing a quantitative approach, the research assessed the influence of ethical leadership on UPB and examined how moral courage and ethical climate moderate and mediate this relationship. This research design investigates a path as to why some employees learn to repress UPB or are inspired by their direct leader to do the right thing while others do not. A total of 250 full-time workers from various organizations within the United States responded to the questionnaire survey. The data was analyzed using SmartPLS 3 for the SEM-PLS modeling and analysis and SPSS 28 for descriptive statistics. The results indicate a significant positive relationship between ethical leadership and ethical climate, with ethical climate mediating the link between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). Unexpectedly, ethical leadership demonstrated a negative and insignificant relationship with UPB, and moral courage did not significantly moderate the relationship between ethical climate and UPB. These findings suggest that leaders should implement policies and procedures rooted in strong ethical principles to promote ethical behavior and reduce UPB.

Keywords: *Ethical leadership, ethical climate, unethical pro-organizational behavior, moral courage*

1. Introduction

Unethical behavior is not confined to specific times or places and can occur across diverse locations and sectors, irrespective of an organization's structure (Ivcevic, Menges & Miller, 2020). Unethical business practices continue to increase, with reports of such behaviors becoming frequent. There seems to be an upswing in unethical behavior in the workplace, be it the lack of a strong foundation in ethics, greed, the need to increase the bottom line for stakeholders, or employees who will do anything to help their company succeed. America seems to be in an abyss of moral decay, creating a dysfunctional, chaotic juggernaut that is worsening daily. This dysfunction of unethical behavior has become an increasingly prominent problem, Crossen (1993), with some of the biggest corporate scandals dominating the news between 2010 and 2019 (Comen & Frohlich, 2020). These scandals were the 2015 FICA bribes (Internationale de Football Association), Theranos Health 2015 lab test fraud, Volkswagen emissions scandal 2015, Purdue Pharma scandal for their role in the United States opioid crisis, Wells Fargo account fraud scandal in 2016 to 2020, and the College admission scandal of 2019 (Comen & Frohlich, 2020). These are just a few companies that have destroyed their customers' trust due to employees and leadership's illegal and unethical business practices.

Understandably, most companies are in business to make money, yet unethical or illegal behavior reports abound (Alleyne & Elson, 2013). Whatever the reason, there will continue to be an uphill battle against unethical temptations in the workplace. Many businesses, not just corporate America, have behaved unethically, though on a smaller scale. Regardless of the sector, degree of the transgression, or job level, the potentially negative consequences for the victims and the company are the same. Such adverse actions have led to financial losses for stakeholders, poor reputations, decreased efficiency, high employee turnover, decreased sales, and decreased customer loyalty. It is unfortunate because it is believed that good, sound ethics equate to good business. People respect companies that do the right thing. When positive actions are taken, positive results are achieved, such as increased efficiency, strong reputations, increased market share, and increased customer loyalty.

Kalshoven et al. (2016) propose that ethical leadership might paradoxically encourage employees to commit unethical behaviors seen as advantageous to the organization, a phenomenon known as unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). This topic has become increasingly relevant in leadership research. Zhang and Xiao (2020) highlight the growing interest in understanding how various leadership styles, particularly ethical leadership, influence UPB, though this relationship remains insufficiently explored. This study addresses this gap by examining how ethical leadership impacts UPB, with ethical climate serving as a mediator and moral courage as a moderator. The study seeks to answer pivotal questions: How does ethical leadership affect UPB? What influence does it have on shaping the ethical climate?

How does the ethical climate mediate this relationship? And how does moral courage moderate the link between ethical climate and UPB? Rather than condemning corporate practices, this study seeks to illustrate how ethical leadership, when coupled with UPB, may reflect a broader loss of core values, underscoring the consequences of such ethical misalignment.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Orientation and Conceptual Framework

Social exchange theory posits that relationships develop through resource exchanges, guided by Gouldner's (1960) norm of reciprocity. This norm suggests that individuals are likely to reciprocate positive behavior toward organizations with which they have strong affiliations (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960; Umphress et al., 2010). Research shows variability in how individuals endorse reciprocity in exchange relationships (Clark & Mills, 1979; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Positive reciprocity beliefs foster a strong obligation to reciprocate received benefits (Eisenberger et al., 2004; Umphress et al., 2010). Consequently, individuals might repay the organization through various behaviors, including unethical ones (Blau, 1964; Zhang & Xiao, 2020). Conversely, those with weaker reciprocity beliefs may feel minimal obligation to reciprocate, even when benefiting (Umphress et al., 2010).

Research suggests that ethical leaders might unintentionally encourage employees to engage in unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), where actions intended to benefit the organization violate social norms or laws (Umphress et al., 2010). Unlike related concepts such as constructive deviance or pro-social rule-breaking, UPB is specifically grounded in social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976; Tsiavia, 2016). Scholars exploring UPB's antecedents frequently rely on social exchange and social identity theories to explain these behaviors. Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory suggests that individuals form their collective identity based on their membership in a social group, which can drive engagement in UPB for organizational benefit. Organizational identification happens when individuals align closely with their organization, viewing its successes and failures as their own (Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Umphress et al., 2010). This strong identification may drive them to engage in unethical or illegal actions, either directly or indirectly, endorsed by the organization (Dukerich et al., 1998; Umphress et al., 2010).

2.2. UPB

Umphress and Bingham (2011) introduced the concept of unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) to explain why employees might engage in unethical actions such as lying or fraud. UPB involves actions intended to benefit the organization or its members but which breach fundamental societal norms, laws, or ethical standards (p. 622). In order to get a better understanding of its influencing factors and mechanisms, studies on this specific type of unethical behavior have been conducted in the United States by Burnett (2017), German organizations by Effelsberg et al. (2013), China by Wang & Li (2019), and organizations representing the four ASEAN countries of Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia by Zhang & Yao (2019).

In those studies of UPB, examples of mediating variables were positive reciprocity beliefs and moral development (Umphress et al., 2010; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Examples of moderating variables were moral identity and moral disengagement (Wu et al., 2016; Zhao & Zhou, 2017). Variables such as high-performance expectation, Chen & Liang (2017) and high-performance pressure, Li et al. (2018) felt by individuals have been proven to provoke employees to engage in UPB. Other antecedent variables included ego orientation, job security, ostracism, performance expectations, and performance pressure.

On the organizational level, the influence of the organization to support the employee's moral judgment, organizational emotional commitment, ethical climate, organizational culture, and organizational identity was studied to determine their impact and effect on UPB. This study extends the work of Cheng et al. (2019) and Zhang et al. (2019) by examining why employees engage in unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), specifically analyzing how ethical leadership influences UPB and how moral courage moderates this relationship. It also evaluates how organizational measures can mitigate UPB when moral courage aligns with employees' moral judgments (Hannah et al., 2011). This focus encourages organizations to consider the moral integrity of their direct leaders and the level of employee moral courage, as UPB can no longer be overlooked. Additionally, the study introduces moral courage as a moderator to assess whether it influences UPB based on an individual's ability to act.

Based on the social exchange theory, ethical leadership may inadvertently encourage unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) by fostering a sense of reciprocity among employees (Miao et al., 2013; Kalshoven et al., 2016). This study extends this theory by incorporating social identity theory to examine how employees' identification with their leaders affects their likelihood of engaging in UPB through the ethical climate. Miao et al. (2013) demonstrated that strong leader-follower identification increases the likelihood of UPB, underscoring the role of this identification in the relationship. Given the prevalence of unethical behaviors in the business world, there is an urgent need for a transformative approach to corporate practices. Corporations and ethical leaders need to assess whether they unintentionally foster UPB among employees, acknowledging that social identity and social exchange theories are crucial for understanding the relationship between ethical leadership and UPB (Kalshoven et al., 2016).

2.3. Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior and Ethical Leadership

Despite the role that ethical leadership plays in regulating the ethical conduct of employees and reducing unethical workplace behaviors in some, there still seems to be a growing number of ethical scandals in virtually every industry. The reasons and circumstances under which individuals engage in unethical behaviors remain unclear. Previous

research has mainly focused on how ethical leadership influences unethical behaviors detrimental to organizational interests (Peterson, 2002; Ruiz-Palomino & Martinez-Canas, 2011). However, the impact of ethical leadership on regulating unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) remains underexplored (Miao et al., 2013). Additionally, research on social-level factors influencing UPB, such as social exchange, social learning, and social identity theories, is scarce. Theoretical discussions on UPB largely focus on two perspectives: social learning and social exchange (Wang & Li, 2019). Social exchange theory posits that ethical leadership can increase unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) by promoting reciprocal behaviors among employees (Kalshoven et al., 2016; Miao et al., 2013; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Conversely, social learning theory suggests that ethical leadership decreases UPB by serving as a model of ethical behavior (Miao et al., 2013). Additionally, social identity theory indicates that individuals are more inclined to engage in behaviors aligned with group norms as their identification with the group strengthens (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Kalshoven et al., 2016).

UPB can be explained using social exchange theory in which the employee believes that engaging in UPB is a means to reciprocate past positive treatments from leadership (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Ethical leaders guide and share power while consistently treating others fairly and demonstrating concern for followers' welfare, thereby fostering a social exchange characterized by enhanced interpersonal treatment (Kalshoven et al., 2011; Kalshoven et al., 2015). By exploring the impact of social exchange theory and organizational identity on UPB, Umphress and Bingham (2011) found that social exchange and organizational identity have a positive impact on UPB. Research by Zhang & Xiao (2020) confirmed that in a positive social exchange relationship, employees would most likely engage in unethical behaviors to repay favors given to them by the organization.

Further research, according to Bryant & Merritt (2019), has shown that organizational identification was positively associated with UPB and moderated by employees' beliefs to reciprocate. The researchers contend that the interaction of transformational leadership, organizational identification, and moral identity reported greater willingness by the participant to engage in an organization-focused UPB when identifying with the organization, thus lowering the employee's moral identity.

Miao et al. (2013) identified a curvilinear relationship between ethical leadership and UPB, where UPB increases from low to moderate levels of ethical leadership but decreases when ethical leadership reaches high levels. While these findings elucidate the direct leader's impact on UPB, they do not fully explain why some employees engage in UPB while others resist it. This highlights a gap in understanding the factors influencing individual responses to ethical leadership. It is thought that if the direct leaders act more ethically, then the degree to which their employees engage in UPB lessens, especially since these behaviors could damage the reputation of the organization and are socially damaging.

Kalshoven et al. (2011) and Mayer et al. (2012) found a negative relationship between ethical leadership and UPB, particularly regarding workplace deviance. Conversely, Kalshoven et al. (2013) observed a positive association between ethical leadership and ethical pro-organizational helping behaviors. In 2016, Kalshoven and colleagues explored the connection between ethical leadership and UPB through social exchange and social identity theories, suggesting that ethical leadership might inadvertently encourage UPB by fostering reciprocal and identification behaviors that benefit the organization.

2.4. Relationship between Ethical Leadership and Ethical Climate

Most research examining ethical climate has identified leadership as an essential component in developing and maintaining ethical climates. Ethical leadership exemplifies appropriate behavior through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, encouraging such conduct via two-way communication, decision-making, and the use of rewards and punishments (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). It influences employees by embodying moral qualities such as fairness, concern for others, and integrity while also managing transactional aspects through rewards and punishments (Trevino, Hartman & Brown, 2000). This dual approach communicates ethical behaviors effectively to employees.

Social learning theory (SLT) posits that leaders shape the ethical climate by modeling desired behaviors and implementing reward and punishment systems (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015; Mayer et al., 2010; Shin et al., 2015), enabling employees to learn appropriate behaviors through observation. The ethical climate, therefore, is defined by the organization’s rules and codes of conduct regarding ethical behavior and the corresponding rewards and support provided. This climate reflects the organization’s policies and is linked to the ethical outcomes of employee behavior (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Raftar-Ozery, 2016).

Before 2006, research on leadership as a precursor to ethical climates was limited (Martin & Cullen, 2006). Recent research has increasingly examined how specific leadership styles, particularly ethical leadership, impact the ethical climate within organizations (Mayer et al., 2009; Lu & Lin, 2014; Peng, Zhang, & Tian, 2017). Studies by Lu & Lin (2014) and Demirtas & Akdogan (2015) found that ethical leadership notably enhanced employees' perceptions of the organization's ethical climate. Shin et al. (2015) further demonstrated that ethical leadership from top management contributes to a favorable ethical climate. Additionally, other leadership styles, including benevolent leadership (Ghosh, 2015) and paternalistic leadership (Mentari & Santoso, 2020), have also been shown to positively and significantly affect the organizational ethical climate.

Hansen et al. (2016) conducted a longitudinal study examining corporate social responsibility (CSR) as the independent variable, ethical leadership as the mediator, and ethical climate as the dependent variable. Their research found that employees who view their organization as socially responsible tend to perceive top management as more ethical, leading to a more ethical organizational climate. Their study explored how ethical leaders impact employees' perceptions of ethical climate by examining CSR activity as a factor employees use to assess the leader’s ethics and the overall ethical climate.

The research underscores the essential role of leaders in establishing and upholding ethical standards and creating an ethical climate that inspires followers (Peng et al., 2017; Schminke et al., 2005). Peng, Zhang, and Tian (2017) further explored the connections between ethical leadership, ethical climate, and moral efficacy, finding a positive link between ethical leadership and ethical climate. They highlighted that leaders should model ethical behaviors, genuinely care for employees, and clearly communicate desired behaviors to reinforce the organization's ethical climate.

2.5. The Relationship between Ethical Leadership and UPB with Ethical Climate as the Mediator

Research increasingly explores how ethical climate mediates the impact of ethical leadership on employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), examining its role in this relationship. Ethical leaders play a crucial role in shaping ethical conduct, with ethical climate potentially enhancing this influence (Halbusi et al., 2020; Lu & Lin, 2014). Halbusi et al. (2020) employed social exchange and social learning theories to investigate how ethical leadership influences ethical behavior via ethical climate, emphasizing the moderating role of person-organization fit in this dynamic.

Ethical climate, like ethical leadership, impacts unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). Miao et al. (2013) found a curvilinear relationship between ethical leadership and UPB using a three-wave survey. Burnett (2017) further explored the intricate link between ethical climate and employees' likelihood to engage in UPB. Burnett's study, which examined how different ethical climates interact to influence employee intentions toward UPB, pioneered the advancement of UPB and organizational climate theory. It highlighted the role of moral potency in influencing UPB. Since individuals often engage in UPB for organizational benefit, it is not typically linked with the same predictors as other unethical workplace behaviors.

Ethical sensitivity has been identified as a key factor influencing individuals to avoid unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). This sensitivity is affected by environmental factors, such as the organization's ethical climate, and internal factors like moral potency. Organizations need to understand that the interplay between ethical leadership, ethical climate, and UPB can vary with different leadership styles and ethical climates. Moreover, personal ethical values and moral character also play a role in an individual's propensity to engage in UPB.

2.6. Moderating Role of Moral Courage

Moral courage is the personal strength that enables individuals to act correctly despite pressure to conform to the majority. It is important for managers to see moral courage as the norm or as routine and not the exception to the rule. Moral courage is considered a key virtue representing the adherence to principles that define right actions (Davis & Frederick, 1984; Sekerka et al., 2009). Ethics scholars have long acknowledged the importance of fostering moral strength in the workplace, recognizing that merely updating policies, programs, and penalties is insufficient to eliminate unethical behaviors (Sekerka et al., 2009; Verschoor, 2003). It is posited that if both leaders and employees integrate moral courage into their daily decisions and actions, workplace unethical behavior may decrease (Sekerka et al., 2009). Moral courage empowers individuals to resist unethical pressures and uphold integrity (Koerner, 2014; Sekerka et al., 2009).

Despite theoretical claims on moral courage promoting ethical behavior, research linking its moderating effect to unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) remains limited. Moral courage is introduced as a moderator to explain how its strength may influence an individual's likelihood to either increase or decrease UPB. This interaction is relevant to social identity theory, which posits that social and personal identities jointly influence behavior, yet their interaction is insufficiently studied (Wang & Li, 2019). Wang and Li (2019) explored how moral leadership influences unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) through moral courage as a moderator. Their results showed that moral leadership affects UPB indirectly via employee identification with supervisors. Specifically, employees are more likely to engage in UPB when their supervisors have promotional authority, highlighting the role of leader-follower identification.

Moral courage moderates how supervisor identification and personal responsibility affect the relationship between moral leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). Wang and Li (2019) expanded research on UPB and social identity theory by examining how moral leadership impacts UPB through employees' identification with their supervisors. Their study revealed that moral leadership often promotes UPB as employee identification with their supervisors grows. High moral courage mitigates the relationship between moral leadership and UPB when employees strongly identify with their supervisors. However, it intensifies this link when employees assume personal responsibility for their actions, highlighting the complex interplay between these factors.

Ganu tested to what extent employees exercise courage and what factors hinder their moral actions, noting that both leaders and followers encounter issues and pressures that require both ethical leadership and moral courage (Ganu, 2015). The results showed that while employees felt they possessed a high moral identity (compassion, fairness, honesty, caring), they scored lower on moral efficacy (lacking the confidence to defend principles of moral identity) (Ganu, 2015). The study also found that while individuals may talk about moral courage when faced with an ethical challenge, the temptation to do wrong rises, known as that moment of discovery, when one will either live up to their personal beliefs or offer up lip service (Badaracco, 1997). The Ganu (2015) study provided insight into why employees and direct leaders do not exemplify moral courage, with fear being the number one reason.

2.7. Hypotheses

This study provided a theoretical framework linking ethical leadership (independent variable) to unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) (dependent variable) via ethical climate as a mediator, utilizing social exchange, social identity, and social learning theories. Additionally, it introduced moral courage as a moderating factor to better explore the ethical leadership-UPB relationship. The research aimed to clarify how moral courage (individual level), ethical climate

(organizational level), and ethical leadership (leadership level) interact and influence UPB by integrating factors at these various levels of analysis.

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: Ethical leadership is positively related to unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB).
- H2: Ethical leadership positively impacts the ethical climate.
- H3: Ethical climate mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and UPB.
- H4: Moral courage moderates the connection between ethical climate and UPB.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

A predictive correlational research design was used to explore the relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), and to assess how ethical climate and moral courage influence UPB. This non-experimental, cross-sectional study employed quantitative methods and inferential statistical analysis.

3.2. Measures and Instrumentation

All items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) without reverse scoring. Ethical leadership, the independent variable, was measured using Brown et al.'s (2005) 10-item Ethical Leadership Scale, which has a high reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91 (Strang, 2008). Examples of these items are "My supervisor disciplines employees who violate ethical standards" and "My supervisor discusses business ethics or values with employees." Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), the dependent variable, was assessed using a 6-item scale from Umphress et al. (2010), showing good reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 (Burnett, 2017). Sample items include "I would conceal information from the public that could harm my organization" and "I would misrepresent the truth to enhance my organization's image."

Ethical climate, the mediating variable, was evaluated using 15 of the 26 items from Victor and Cullen's (1987, 1988) 5-Category Ethical Climate Questionnaire (ECQ). The dimensions of the ECQ showed the following reliability: "Caring" (Cronbach's alpha = 0.80), "Law and Code" (0.79), "Rules" (0.79), "Instrumental" (0.71), and "Independence" (0.60) (Victor & Cullen, 1988). Example items include "What is best for everyone in the company is a major consideration here" and "In this company, it is expected that you will always do what is right for the customer and public."

Moral courage, the moderating variable, was measured using a 4-item scale developed by Hannah et al. (2010), noted for its high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.85) and construct validity (Hannah et al., 2011; Schaubroeck et al., 2012). Example items include, “I confront my peers if they commit an unethical act” and “I oppose the group’s decisions when they violate my ethical standards.”

The survey concluded with questions on demographic characteristics, including age, gender, educational background, organizational tenure, position, and type of organization. Organizational tenure was used as a control variable because it is believed that, over time, older employees have not only developed an attachment to the organization but have also developed positive attitudes and behaviors (Schmidt & Posner, 1983, pp. as cited in Steffens et al., 2014). For organizational tenure, the respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have spent in the organization by checking one from less than one year, 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years, and 10 years or more.

3.3. Data Collection

Data was collected from a random sample of managers, supervisors, and employees currently employed full-time in various US organizations (i.e., government, educational, consumer goods corporations, retail sales, insurance, and medical) with no less than two hundred employees. To collect the data, previously developed and used survey questionnaires with the same constructs as this study using a 7-point Likert scale for all constructs was employed. The demographic questionnaire collected personal information on age, gender, educational background, work experience, organizational tenure, position, and type of organization. The sample was recruited utilizing Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Through the Informed Consent with COVID-19 provisions, participants were presented with the purpose, procedure, anonymity, and confidentiality of this study. Participation in this study was voluntary. All participants were to have access to a computer with a high-speed internet connection. The sample size was adequate to analyze the relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior, as well as to evaluate the roles of ethical climate as a mediator and moral courage as a moderator.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The data analysis was undertaken by estimating SEM-PLS with SmartPLS 3 to simultaneously analyze the measurement and structural models. SPSS was used to analyze descriptive statistics.

4.1. Sample Population Descriptive

Two hundred fifty valid questionnaires (100% response rate) were submitted. Of these, 50.4% were male, while 49.6% were female. Most participants were between the ages of 30-39 (40.4%) followed by ages 50-59 (22.4%) 40-49 (17.6%), 20-29 (12%), 60 or older (7.2%) and 18-20 (.4%). Based on the highest level of education completed, most have a bachelor's degree (47.2%), followed by a master's degree or higher (19.2%), some college but no degree (15.2%), associate degree (11.2%), a high school diploma or equivalent (7.2%). In terms of organizational type, most worked in

service - insurance, finance, banking (39.6%), followed by manufacturing (15.2%), educational (14%), retail (13.6%), medical – health services (12%), and government (5.6%). Most participants' positions within their organization are associate or team member (39.2%), followed by team leader, supervisor, coordinator (24.8%), manager (20.4%), assistant manager (9.2%), director (3.2%), and senior management (3.2%). Most participants have 10 or more years of tenure (34%), followed by 7-10 years of tenure (21.6%), 4-6 years 21.6%, 1-3 years (18.4%), and less than a year (4.4%). Thus, the sample was heterogeneous based on the various demographic factors.

4.2. Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed by following the criteria of Hair et al. (2017) and Henseler et al. (2015) by analyzing Cronbach's Alpha, convergent validity, and discriminant validity values. The Cronbach's Alpha (α) for Ethical Climate initially was 0.886. After removing items below thresholds, it increased to 0.922, enhancing the scale's reliability. This adjustment improved the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for Ethical Climate to 0.647, resolving prior issues. Indicator loadings for all constructs varied between 0.70 and 0.91 (see Table 1). Table 2 shows that both Cronbach's Alpha (α) and composite reliability values exceeded the 0.70 threshold, while the AVE for all reflective constructs surpassed the 0.50 cutoff, validating the reliability of the scales employed.

Variable	Item	Factor Loading	Scale Reliability	Variable	Item	Factor Loading	Scale Reliability
UPB	1	0.914	0.935	Ethical	19	0.798	0.922
	2	0.900		Climate	20	0.799	
	3	0.846			21	0.836	
	4	0.849			22	0.871	
	5	0.859			23	0.790	
	6	0.837			24	0.795	
					25	0.767	
					26	0.774	
Ethical	7	0.766	0.944				
Leadership	8	0.792		Moral	32	0.876	0.893
	10	0.705		Courage	33	0.863	
	11	0.903			34	0.848	
					35	0.862	
	12	0.867					
	13	0.782					
	14	0.906					
	15	0.889					
	16	0.860					

Table 1: Measured Variable Factor Loading and Scale Reliability

	Cronbach's	Composite Reliability	AVE
Ethical Climate	0.922	0.936	0.647
Ethical leadership	0.944	0.953	0.694
Moral Courage	0.893	0.921	0.744
UPB	0.935	0.948	0.753

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

4.3. Discriminate Validity

The HTMT results were included in the discriminant validity assessment within the "Quality Criteria" section. All construct values met Henseler's (2015) stringent criterion of being below 0.85, thus confirming discriminant validity.

4.4. Descriptive Statistic

To evaluate for normality, the skewness and kurtosis values for each construct were analyzed using SPSS version 28. UPB, the dependent variable, has a skewness of 0.793 and a kurtosis of -0.401. Ethical Leadership, the independent variable, has a skewness of -1.382 and a kurtosis of 2.22. Ethical Climate, the mediator has a skewness of -1.29 and a kurtosis of 2.186. Moral Courage, the moderator, has a skewness of -0.557 and a kurtosis of -0.346. According to Hair et al. (2017), the distribution is slightly skewed and exhibits minor kurtosis issues, as indicated by kurtosis and skewness values for ethical leadership and ethical climate exceeding +1 and falling below -1, respectively (see Table 3).

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mean Std Error	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
UPB	250	1.00	7.00	2.69	0.100	1.585	0.793	-0.401
EL	250	1.00	7.00	5.51	0.076	1.215	-1.382	2.22
EC	250	1.73	7.00	5.18	0.058	0.927	-1.29	2.186
MC	250	1.00	7.00	4.731	0.101	1.598	-0.557	-0.346

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Constructs

4.4.1. Bivariate Analysis

SmartPLS 3 was employed for bivariate regression analysis to assess the relationship between each independent and dependent variable. The analysis showed a non-significant relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), with a path coefficient of -0.101, indicating a weak and statistically insignificant negative effect. With a p-value of 0.136, which exceeds the 0.05 threshold, the result is not significant. This negative and insignificant path coefficient aligns with findings from Kalshoven et al. (2016). The study failed to confirm that ethical leadership affects UPB, contrary to expectations from social learning and social exchange theories. Therefore, H1 is not supported, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Statistical analysis results for H2 indicate significant results. Using the results from the Total Effects table, the path coefficient of 0.775 (close to 1) indicates a significantly strong relationship. R^2 at .60 indicates a moderate relationship. The p-value 0.000 (< 0.01) indicates high significance. Our findings, consistent with Mayer et al. (2010), Peng et al. (2017), and Aloustani et al. (2020) show a significant positive relationship between ethical leadership and ethical climate, supporting Hypothesis 2 (see Table 4).

Hypothesis	Sig.	Path Coefficient	R^2	Finding
H1 Ethical leadership is positively related to unethical pro-organizational behavior.	*0.136	-0.101	.87	Not supported
H2 Ethical leadership is positively related to ethical climate.	***0.00	.775	.60	Supported

* p > 0.05, ** p < 0.05, *** p <0.001, n/a non-significant

Table 4: Bivariate Analysis

4.4.2. Multivariate Relationship

Hypothesis 3 (H3) posits that ethical climate mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). Mediation was assessed through the indirect effects of ethical leadership on UPB, with path coefficients and total indirect effect tables. Ethical climate served as the mediator. Bootstrapping analysis revealed a significant indirect effect, with a coefficient β = -0.285 and a p-value of 0.000. The indirect effect 95% Boot CI Bias Corrected: LL = -0.430 and UL = -0.144 do not straddle a 0 in between, indicating there is mediation. The magnitude of the indirect effect in determining the amount of mediation through our mediating variable ethical climate was examined to determine full or partial mediation. Ethical leadership to UPB unmediated was found insignificant (p-value 0.136). Ethical leadership to UPB mediated was significant (p-value 0.000). The ethical climate of UPB was significant (p-value 0.000). If the entire effect is indirect, then there is full mediation. Since the mediated relationship between Ethical Leadership and UPB is significant once Ethical Climate is introduced (p-value 0.000), there is a full mediation effect. Hence, H3 is supported, and the study hypothesis can be accepted. (See Table 5)

No.	Relationship	Sig. p-value	B	Finding
H3	EL->EC->UPB	0.000	-0.285	Supported Full Mediation
	EC ->UPB	0.000	-0.368	
	EL -> UPB Unmediated	0.136	-0.101	
	EL-> UPB Mediated	0.000	-0.285	

*Note: *** p < 0.001*

Table 5: Multivariate Analyses Hypothesis 3 Testing on Mediation

4.4.3. Multivariate Relationship

Hypothesis 4 (H4) proposes that moral courage moderates the relationship between ethical climate and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). The model was assessed using SmartPLS 3 with bootstrapping to analyze path coefficients and total effects, addressing both mediation and moderation aspects. This moderated mediation model examined how moral courage (as a moderator) affects the relationship between ethical climate (as a mediator) and UPB (dependent variable). Results showed that moral courage did not significantly moderate this relationship, rendering the model statistically insignificant, as detailed in table 6. Specifically, the effect of ethical climate on UPB through moral courage was unsupported (β = -0.060, p = 0.355, BC bootstrap 95% CI [-0.184, 0.068]). The R-squared increased from 0.82 to 0.087 due to moderated interaction, with a negligible R^2 change of 0.005 (< 0.02). These findings indicate that moral courage neither enhances nor diminishes the relationship between ethical climate and UPB.

No.	Relationship	B	R^2	p-value	Confidence Interval (BC) LL	UL	Findings
4	Moderating Effect > UPB	-0.060	0.087*	0.355	-0.184	0.068	Not Supported

Note: * p > .05, R^2 change 0.005

Table 6: Multivariate Analyses Hypothesis 4 Testing on Moderated Mediation

4.4.4. Control Variable

This study assessed tenure to check the correlation with UPB. The findings indicate a significant negative effect between organizational tenure and UPB (β = -0.179, p = 0.003), suggesting that longer tenure is associated with a decreased likelihood of engaging in UPB.

Relationship	β	Confidence Interval (BC) LL	UL	P value	Findings
Tenure > UPB	-0.179	-0.292	-0.055	0.003	Significant Negative effect

Table 7: Control Variable

4.5. Model Fit

Calculations of R^2, SRMR (standardized root mean square residual), and Q^2 (predictive relevance of endogenous constructs) completed the structural-model analysis.

For the exact fit criteria (i.e. d_ULS and d_G), the confidence interval upper bound at the 99% point was evaluated. In the estimated model, the d_ULS at the 99% upper bound point (4.714) was greater than the original sample (1.535), and the d_G 99% upper bound (0.770) was greater than the original sample (0.644). Therefore, the model was considered to have an acceptable fit based on the SRMR value of 0.064 (< 0.08) and exact fit criteria.

In terms of the explanatory power of the model, the R^2 value for the dependent variable UPB of 0.082 indicated a substantial explanatory value. The R^2 value for the mediator ethical climate of 0.060 indicated a substantial value. SmartPLS 3 blindfolding procedure, which is attached only to the endogenous (reflective) variables Hair J. et al. (2017), was used to determine Q^2. The Q^2 value, using the Stone-Geisser technique, for which the predictive value should be greater than zero ($Q^2 > 0$), indicates that values are well reconstructed and that the model has predictive relevance. For this model, the Q^2 of UPB of 0.058, though very weak, is greater than zero. The Q^2 of ethical climate (0.378) was substantial.

5. Discussion

Previous research has explored various constructs and antecedents of unethical behavior to understand its underlying causes in the workplace. The rise in unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) underscores the importance of investigating its influencing factors (Umphress et al., 2010). This study utilizes social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; 1986) to develop and evaluate an interactive model. This model examines how ethical leadership affects UPB, with an ethical climate serving as a mediator and moral courage as a moderator. While extensive research has explored unethical behavior in general (Mayer et al., 2010), this study narrows its focus to unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), offering a more detailed examination of this specific phenomenon.

Surprisingly, no direct positive relationship emerged between ethical leadership and UPB, nor did moral courage significantly moderate the effect of ethical climate on UPB. However, ethical leadership was positively associated with ethical climate, which in turn mediated its impact on UPB. Additionally, organizational tenure significantly negatively affected UPB.

6. Limitations of the Study

The study had several limitations. First, it is unsure as to the participants' level of awareness of our dependent variable (UPB) and their degree of reciprocal beliefs. Secondly, the scarce information found on UPB does not allow for how UPB may truly affect organizations. Also, this research was limited to the United States. Thus, the results reflect only those within the United States and not those globally. Lastly, the timing of this research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, during a time when the world was put on lockdown. While it is assumed that normal research conditions may one day resume, our research and analysis shifted to remote data collection entirely online. It cannot be assumed that the respondents answered the survey questionnaires the same or differently because of the pandemic's impact on companies, customers, and workers. Hundreds of thousands of businesses closed, with employees and consumers looking more to businesses with sound ethical practices and to those businesses they could trust. Profiteering and other unethical behaviors were greatly frowned upon during that time. The integrity, trust, strong moral purpose, equality, respect, and a sense of community will carry considerable weight in rebuilding the psychological, societal, and economic that have been scarred by COVID-19. Therefore, it is likely that the results of this study may have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of COVID-19 may have played on the participants' responses.

7. Practical Implications

It is critical for the leader to get a better understanding of what UPB is and what UPB is not because of the long-run devastating effects on the organization, its stakeholders, and society. Another practical implication is the importance of creating and maintaining an ethical climate. Research indicates that leaders play a crucial role in establishing and upholding ethical standards and shaping the ethical climate that influences followers (Peng et al., 2017; Schminke et al., 2005). Since ethical climate influences unethical behavior, ethical leaders should work with their organizations to create policies and practices that foster a positive ethical climate. Such an environment should recognize ethical employees and guide responses to unethical issues, thereby reducing UPB. Organizations may benefit from implementing training programs for leaders and employees aimed at increasing awareness and preventing unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB).

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study reveals a positive association between ethical leadership and ethical climate, suggesting that ethical leaders can utilize ethical climate to help employees recognize UPB as unethical and potentially unlawful. However, no direct link between ethical leadership and UPB was identified, and the moderated mediation effect lacked empirical support. This research adds to the limited literature on UPB, providing both theoretical and empirical insights into how organizations can enhance a positive ethical climate through ethical leadership to reduce UPB. Future research should employ larger sample sizes to distinguish between ethical and unethical organizations and explore how moral courage moderates the relationship between ethical climate and UPB in both types of organizations.

9. References

i. Alleyne, B. J., & Elson, R. (2013). *The impact of federal regulations on identifying, preventing, and eliminating corporate fraud*. *Journal of Legal, Ethical, and Regulatory Issues, 16*(1), 91–105.
ii. Aloustani, S., Atashzadeh-Shoorideh, F., Zagheri-Tafreshi, M., Nasiri, M., Barkhoradari-Sharifabad, M., & Skerrett, V. (2020). *Association between ethical leadership, ethical climate and organizational citizenship behavior from nurses' perspective: A descriptive correlational study*. *BMC Nursing, 19*(15), 2–8.

iii. Badaracco, J. (1997). *Defining moments: When managers must choose between right and right*. Watertown, MA: Harvard Business Press Books.
iv. Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
v. Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: Wiley & Sons.
vi. Brown, M. E., Trevino, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). *Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing*. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 97*(2), 117–134.
vii. Bryant, W., & Merritt, S. (2019). *Unethical pro-organizational behavior and positive leader-example relationships*. *Journal of Business Ethics*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04211-x
viii. Burnett, E. A. (2017). *Bad behavior with good intentions: The role of organizational climate in unethical pro-organizational behavior* (All Theses No. 2608). Retrieved from: https://tigerprints.clemson.edu/all-theses/2608
ix. Chen, M., & Liang, J. (2017). *High-performance expectation and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Social cognitive perspective*. *Acta Psychologica Sinica, 49*, 94–105. https://doi.org/10.3724/SP.J.1041.2017.00094
x. Cheng, K., Wei, F., & Lin, Y. (2019). *The trickle-down effect of responsible leadership on unethical pro-organizational behavior: The moderating role of leader-follower value congruence*. *Journal of Business Research, 102*, 34–43. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.04.044
xi. Clark, M., & Mills, J. (1979). *Interpersonal attraction in exchange and communal relationships*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 37*, 12–24. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.37.1.12
xii. Comen, E., & Frohlich, T. C. (2020, January 15). *The biggest corporate scandals of the decade*. Retrieved June 21, 2021, from: 24/7 Wall St.: https://247wallst.com/special-report/2019/12/20/the-biggest-corporate-scandals-of-the-decade/3/
xiii. Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. (2005). *Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review*. *Journal of Management, 31*, 874–900. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602
xiv. Crossen, B. R. (1993). *Managing employee unethical behavior without invading individual privacy*. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 8*, 227–243. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02230387
xv. Davis, K., & Fredrick, W. C. (1984). *Business and society: Management, public policy, and ethics* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
xvi. Demirtas, O., & Akdogan, A. (2015). *The effect of ethical leadership behavior on ethical climate, turnover intention, and affective commitment*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 130*(1), 59–67.
xvii. Dukerich, J. M., Kramer, R., & Parks, J. (1998). *The dark side of organizational identification*. In D. W. Godfrey (Ed.), *Identity in organizations: Developing theory through conversations* (pp. 245–256). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
xviii. Effelsberg, D., Solga, M., & Gurt, J. (2013). *Transformational leadership and follower's unethical behavior for the benefit of the company: A two-study investigation*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 120*, 81–93. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1644-z
xix. Eisenberger, R., Lynch, P., Aselage, J., & Rohdieck, S. (2004). *Who takes the most revenge? Individual differences in negative reciprocity norm endorsement*. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30*, 789–799. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167204264047
xx. Emerson, R. (1976). *Social exchange theory*. *Annual Review of Sociology, 2*, 335-362. Retrieved from: https://www.jstor.org/stable/2946096?origin=JSTOR-pdf
xxi. Ganu, J. (2015). *Moral courage: The lifeblood of ethical leadership and fellowship*. *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership, 12*(2), 41–53. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280880045_Moral_Courage_The_Lifeblood_of_ethical_leadership_and_followership
xxii. Ghosh, K. (2015). *Benevolent leadership in not-for-profit organizations*. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 36*(5), 592–611. https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-12-2013-0164
xxiii. Gouldner, A. (1960). *The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement*. *American Sociological Review, 25*, 161–178.
xxiv. Hair, J., Hult, G. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2013). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Incorporated.
xxv. Hair, J., Hult, G. T., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
xxvi. Halbusi, H., Ramayah, T., Williams, K., & Aldieri, L. (2020). *Linking ethical leadership and ethical climate to employees' ethical behavior: The moderating role of person-organization fit*. *Personnel Review*, 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-09-2019-0522
xxvii. Hannah, S., Avolio, B., & Walumbwa, F. (2011). *Relationships between authentic leadership, moral courage, and ethical and pro-social behaviors*. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 21*, 555–578. https://doi.org/10.5840/beq201121436
xxviii. Hansen, D. S., Dunfod, B. B., Bradley, A. J., & Jackson, C. L. (2016). *Corporate social responsibility, ethical leadership, and trust propensity: A multi-experience model of perceived ethical climate*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 137*(4), 649–662. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2745-7
xxix. Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). *A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling*. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 43*, 115–135. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8
xxx. Ivcevic, Z., Menges, J. I., & Miller, A. (2020, March 20). *How common is unethical behavior in U.S. organizations*. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved June 21, 2021, from: https://hbr.org/2020/03/how-common-is-unethical-behavior-in-u-s-organizations

xxxi. Kalshoven, K. H. (2011). *Ethical leadership at work questionnaire (ELW): Development and validation of a multidimensional measure*. *The Leadership Quarterly, 22*(2), 51–69.

xxxii. Kalshoven, K., Den Hartog, D., & De Hoogh, A. (2013). *Ethical leadership and followers' helping and initiative: The role of demonstrated responsibility and job autonomy*. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 22*(1), 165–181.

xxxiii. Kalshoven, K., van Dijk, H., & Boon, C. (2016). *Why and when does ethical leadership evoke unethical follower behavior? Journal of Managerial Psychology, 31*(2), 500–515. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-10-2014-0314

xxxiv. Koerner, M. M. (2014). *Courage as identity work: Accounts of workplace courage*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 63–93. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0641

xxxv. Li, Z., Wang, Z., Zhu, Z., & Zhan, X. (2018). *Performance pressure and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Based on cognitive appraisal theory of emotion*. *Chinese Journal of Management, 15*, 358–365.

xxxvi. Lu, C., & Lin, C. (2014). *The effects of ethical leadership and ethical climate on employee ethical behavior in the international port context*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 124*(2), 209–223.

xxxvii. Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. (1995). *Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification*. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 13*, 103–123. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030130202

xxxviii. Martin, K., & Cullen, J. (2006). *Continuities and extensions of ethical climate theory: A meta-analytic review*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 69*(2), 175–194. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-9084-7

xxxix. Mayer, D. M. (2012). *Who displays ethical leadership and employee misconduct: An examination of antecedents and consequences of ethical leadership*. *Academy of Management Journal, 55*, 151–171.

xl. Mayer, D., Kuenzi, M., & Greenbaum, R. (2010, September). *Examining the link between ethical leadership and employee misconduct: The mediating role of ethical climate*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 95*(1), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0794-0

xli. Mayer, D., Kuenzi, M., Greenbaum, R., Bardes, M., & Salvador, R. (2009). *How low does ethical leadership flow? The relative effects of top management and supervisors on follower ethical behaviors and job attitudes*. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 108*(1), 1–13.

xlii. Mentari, A. D., & Santoso, C. B. (2020). *The effect of paternalistic leadership on organisational ethical climate: The role of organisational justice as a moderating variable*. *Indonesian Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship, 6*(1), 41–52. https://doi.org/10.17358/ijbe.6.1.41

xliii. Miao, Q., Newman, A., Yu, J., & Xu, L. (2013). *The relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Linear or curvilinear effects? Journal of Business Ethics, 116*, 641–653. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1504-2

xliv. Peng, D., Zhang, J., & Tian, Q. (2017). *Ethical leadership and moral efficacy: Ethical climate as a mediator*. *Advances in Engineering Research, 86*. https://doi.org/10.2991/eame-17.2017.83

xlv. Peterson, D. K. (2002). *The relationship between unethical behavior and the dimensions of the ethical climate questionnaire*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 41*(4), 313–326. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1021243117958

xlvi. Ruiz-Palomino, P., & Martinez-Canas, R. (2011). *Supervisor role modelling ethics related organizational policies and employee ethical intention: The moderating impact of moral ideology*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 102*, 653–668.

xlvii. Schmidt, W., & Posner, B. (1983). *Managerial values in perspective*. New York, NY, USA: AMA Membership Publications Division.

xlviii. Schminke, M., Ambrose, M., & Neubaum, D. (2005). *The effect of leader moral development on ethical climate and employee attitudes*. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 97*(2), 135–151.

xlix. Sekerka, L. E., & Bagozzi, R. (2007). *Moral courage in the workplace: Moving to and from the desire and decision to act*. *Business Ethics European Review, 16*, 132–149. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8608.2007.00484x

l. Sekerka, L., Bagozzi, R. P., & Charnigo, R. (2009). *Facing ethical challenges in the workplace: Conceptualizing and measuring professional moral courage*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 89*(4), 565–579. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-00175

li. Shapira-Lishchinsky, O., & Raftar-Ozery, T. (2016). *Leadership, absenteeism acceptance, and ethical climate as predictors of teachers' absence and citizenship behaviors*. *Education Management Administration & Leadership, 46*(3), 491–510. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216665841

lii. Shin, Y., Sung, S., Choi, J., & Kim, M. (2015). *Top management ethical leadership and firm performance: Mediating role of ethical and procedural justice climate*. *Journal of Business Ethics, 129*, 43–57.

liii. Steffens, N., Shemla, M., Wegge, J., & Diestel, S. (2014). *Organizational tenure and employee performance: A multilevel analysis*. *Group & Organization Management, 39*, 664–690.

liv. Strang, S. (2008). *Ethical leadership and leader effectiveness: The roles of machiavellianism, narcissism, and ethical context.* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia). Retrieved from: https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/strang_sarah_e_200805_phd.pdf

lv. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986). *The social identity theory of intergroup behavior*. In W. A. S. Worchel (Ed.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (2nd ed., pp. 7–24). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

lvi. Trevino, L. K., Hartman, L. P., & Brown, M. E. (2000). *Moral person and moral manager: How executives develop a reputation for ethical leadership*. *California Management Review, 42*(4), 128–142. https://doi.org/10.2307/41166057

lvii. Tsiavia, N. (2016). *Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB): Concept and studies evolution*. *Science Journal of Business and Management, 4*(2), 34–41. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.sjbm.20160402.13

lviii. Umphress, E. E., & Bingham, J. B. (2011). *When employees do bad things for good reasons: Examining unethical pro-organizational behaviors*. *Organization Science, 22*, 621–640.
lix. Umphress, E. E., Bingham, J., & Mitchell, M. S. (2010). *Unethical behavior in the name of the company: The moderating effect of organizational identification and positive reciprocity beliefs on unethical pro-organizational behavior*. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 769–780.
lx. Verschoor, C. C. (2003). *Eight ethical traits of healthy organizations*. *Strategic Finance, 85*(3), 20–30.
lxi. Victor, B., & Cullen, J. B. (1987). *A theory and measure of ethical climate in organizations*. *Research in Corporate Social Performance and Policy, 9*, 51–71.
lxii. Victor, B., & Cullen, J. B. (1988). *The organizational bases of ethical work climates*. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 33*(1), 101–125. https://doi.org/10.2307/2392857
lxiii. Wang, Y., & Li, H. (2019). *Moral leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior: A moderated mediation model*. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02640
lxiv. Wu, M., Shao, X., Sun, X., & Li, N. (2017). *Research on the relationship among servant leadership, moral identity and unethical pro-organizational behaviors*. *Chinese Journal of Applied Psychology, 23*, 152–161.
lxv. Zhang, C., & Xiao, X. (2020). *Review of the influencing factors of unethical pro-organizational behavior*. *Journal of Human Resources and Sustainability Studies, 8*, 35–47. https://doi.org/10.4236/jhrss.2020.81003
lxvi. Zhang, X., & Yao, Z. (2019). *Impact of relational leadership on employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior: A survey based on tourism companies in four countries*. *PLOS ONE, 14*(12), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0225706