Research Article

Types of Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior: Perspective of Self-Determination Theory

Jing Wang[1], Gangqiang Wang[2] and Gangcai Wang[1]*

[1]*School of Management, Zunyi Medical University, Zunyi, China*

[2]*Shool of Marxism Studies, Zunyi Normal University, Zunyi, China*

Check for updates

Abstract

The research topic of unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) has gained increasing popularity all around the world. Yet, it's worth noting that scholars' understanding of its connotation and type is still vague and inconsistent. Based on self-determination theory, this paper deeply analyses the motivation of the behavior and argues that we should distinguish between initiative and compulsory unethical pro-organizational behaviors, so as to construct order for the existing research. By analyzing the connotation and definition of the two types, comparing their similarities and differences with similar concepts, it is proposed that different types of scales should be developed in the future to provide tools for deepening researches on the effects and model testing.

Keywords

Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), Initiative, Compulsory types, Motivation

Introduction

In recent years, Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior (UPB) has become a hot topic in academic researches [1]. More than 100 studies have been conducted under the topic of "Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior" in the past decade. In particular, the article in which Umphress, et al. [2] originally proposed the concept of UPB has been cited more than 200 times, especially in the last 5 years (more than 140 times). It can be seen that the subject of UPB continues to attract the research interest of scholars. However, with the deepening of UPB research, some problems gradually emerged. For example, some scholars pointed out those existing studies have a vague understanding of the concept and types of UPB [3]. According to Cheng & Lin [3], the root cause of the problem is that there are various motivations for individuals to engage in UPB: pro-organization motivation, pro-member motivation and self-interest motivation. On the basis of in-depth investigation into the role played by various motivations in the formation of UPB, Cheng & Lin [3] distinguished UPB into four types. The first type is pure UPB, the second type is the UPB that both pro-organization and pro-members, the third type is the UPB that both pro-organization and self-interested, and the last type is the UPB that not only pro-organization and pro-members, but also self-interested.

However, considering that individuals' motives are always mixed up, how can we differentiate one UPB type to another according to Cheng & Lin [3]? Maybe a more operable and

scientific method for UPB classification is needed. Self-determination theory, a macro theory of human motivation, proposed that individuals' motivation and behavior should be distinguished according to the degree of motivation autonomy. As argued by Ryan & Deci [4], whether people engage in certain behaviors out of interest and values or other reasons is an important question in any culture. It is also an important measure to distinguish one's own behaviors from others. All human conscious motivations can be divided according to the degree of autonomy.

Some scholars have pointed out that different individuals who play the same role in an organization may adopt completely different behaviors. Some people will actively try to deal with problems, while others are driven by the environment. In other words, people's behaviors can be described as "initiative" and "compulsory" [5]. What about UPB? According to existing studies, there are at least two types of factors that trigger UPB. One is the factors that promote individuals to actively engage in this behavior. For example, scholars proved that individuals with high organizational

SCHOLARS.DIRECT

identity and emotional commitment will actively benefit their organizations by all means [6,7]. The other is factors that exert certain pressures on the individual. For example, studies proved that ethical pressure, performance pressure and other factors from organizations or leaders force individuals to engage in UPB in order to get rewards or avoid punishment [8,9]. The UPB in the two cases is induced by different antecedents and mechanisms, and may produce different results.

Therefore, on the basis of self-determination theory, this paper proposes that UPB should be divided into initiative UPB (IUPB) and compulsory UPB (CUPB) according to the degree of motivation autonomy. IUPB is the UPB that individuals actively and voluntarily engage in, and individuals identify with the value and significance of the behavior. CUPB is the UPB that individuals have to engage in under some pressure, and individuals do not agree with the value and significance of such behavior.

Goals of the study

The goal of this paper is to move beyond assumptions about UPB and to facilitate future research into this important behavior. It is not only conducive to the development of a broader and more comprehensive UPB theory [10], which establishes an order for different types of UPB, but also helpful to develop more accurate UPB measurement tools, facilitate the empirical test of UPB. This study is also a respond to the call of deepening understandings of UPB motivation and type [3].

The Concept and Motivation of UPB

The concept of UPB

What is UPB? UPB is defined as "actions that are intended to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members (e.g., leaders) and violate core societal values, mores, laws, or standards of proper conduct" [2,11], such as exaggerate the truth about one's company's products or services to customers to benefit one's company. It has both pro-organization and unethical features [12]. It is an intentional behavior decided by the individual, which is neither required by the leader nor specified in the job description. In other words, UPB is an extra-role behavior. There are three boundary conditions for a behavior to be defined as UPB. First, UPB is the behavior that individuals engage in intentionally. Before engaging in UPB, individuals should first have the behavioral motivation to maintain or realize the interests of the organization, and be able to realize that their behaviors deviate from morality [13]. Unethical behavior caused by unconscious negligence should not be called UPB. Second, pro-organization motivation is a necessary condition to constitute UPB. As long as the motivation of an unethical behavior contains pro-organization motivation (no matter whether the motivation of an unethical behavior contains other motives, such as pro-member motivation and egoistic motivation), it can be regarded as UPB. Third, we should call a behavior UPB based on its motivation rather than its outcome. Even if UPB ultimately brings adverse results to the organization, it is a UPB as long as its initial purpose is to

benefit the organization or its members. Prior studies focused on the latter two boundary conditions, and argued that pro-organization motivation or pro-member motivation must be included in order to define some unethical behavior as UPB [14]. Cheng & Lin [3] argued that pro-member motivation is not the "subset" of pro-organization motivation, and pro-organization motivation is the key to UPB. It can be seen that there are still some disputes about the motivation of UPB, which is worth further discussion.

Motivation of UPB

Scholars are interested in identifying individuals' motives for UPB. Guided by social exchange theory and organizational identity theory, scholars have identified a large number of motivations that lead individuals to engage in UPB, such as: Organizational identity, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, human resource management practice, employee organizational relationship of mutual investment, transformational leadership, leader-member exchange, ethical leadership and so on [6,7,15-23]. Scholars generally regard UPB as a kind of positive social exchange behavior displayed by individuals due to excessive identification and gratitude to organizations, affirm its positive components, and study this behavior based on the hypothesis that UPB is actively engaged by employees.

However, as argued by Cheng & Lin [3], the current definition of UPB is somewhat ambiguous, and the motivation of UPB may be complex. More and more evidence indicate other UPB motivations besides autonomous motivation. For example, Lewi [24] argued that although organizational identity, transformational leadership and ethical leadership are all important factors that lead to UPB, one factor may be missed. Furthermore, the author implicitly divides the antecedents of UPB into two types: Internal organization (leader) identification and external pressure. Further, in their review work, Cheng & Lin [3] categorize the factors that trigger UPB into three types: Factors that arouse individuals to engage in UPB spontaneously or not; factors that exert external pressure and internal drive on individuals to engage in UPB; and the moral element of an individual or organization. Multiple empirical studies have shown that cues from organizations or leaders increase the likelihood of individuals engaging in UPB. For example, Tian & Petersons [8] found that perceived ethical pressure from the organization was positively correlated with UPB, while Lian, et al. [25] reported the relationship between leader's UPB and the use of unethical sales practices by real estate agents. What's more, Mesdaghinia, et al., [26] and Wang, et al., [27] also confirm that a leader's bottom-line mentality and abusive supervision forces employees to engage in unethical behaviors that benefit the leader or the organization. Thus, not all UPB are motivated by the "good intentions" of individuals. On the contrary, UPB may also be a response to pressure exerted by important or powerful people in the workplace (such as leaders or colleagues). The ethical climate of the organization, the behavior and thinking mode of the leader all constitute the pressure forces individuals to engage in UPB. Although existing theories and empirical evidence have suggested the existence of different UPB motivations,

no study has systematically organized and classified these motivations, which leads to some confusion and ambiguity in the understanding and application of UPB types. This may deviate from the original definition of UPB by Umphress, et al., [2,11]. Guo, et al. [28], for example, in their studies reconceptualized UPB as behaviors subject to interpersonal constraints or out of organizational identification for the effective functioning of the organization and its members, but violating social core values, legal and moral standard. In this definition, two elements, active and passive, have been clearly included.

The Necessity and Theoretical Basis of Classifying the Types of UPB from the Perspective of Motivation

Necessity

Since the concept of UPB originated from one's motivation of engaging in unethical behavior, "motivation" has always been the core of UPB. However, the existing research did not pay enough attention to distinguish the motivation of individuals who engaging in UPB, but directly adopted Umphress's definition. The confused use of the UPB concept has gradually led to some deep-seated problems, mainly reflected in the emergence of some inconsistent conclusions under this issue.

First, some inconsistent relationships have been found between certain antecedents and UPB. For example, the relationship between organizational identity and UPB has been proved to be positively correlated [6,29], negatively correlated [30] or not correlated [2,31]. Researchers also found positive [18,32] or non-significant [33] relationships between transformational leadership and UPB.

Second, although most studies have overwhelmingly believed that UPB is a harmful behavior [11,34], such as leading to guilt, work-family conflict and increased turnover intention [26,35]. Some empirical studies recently suggested that UPB may produce positive results. For example, it can increase team performance, organizational citizenship behavior, customer service behavior, service-oriented helping behavior and voice behavior, reduce deviant behavior and counterproductive work behavior, and be conducive to career development [36]. Although there are many inconsistencies, the existing researches still mainly focus on the antecedents of UPB, without paying attention to the causes of these inconsistencies. This paper argues that distinguishing UPB types from the perspective of motivation can help solve these inconsistencies. This is because according to existing studies, individuals may engage in UPB for a variety of motives, including pro-organizational motivation, pro-social motivation, self-interested motivation and a mixture of various motivations. Different motivations reflect different psychological states [3], which may determine different types of UPB respectively.

UPB motivations under self-determination theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) was established by

scholars when discussing how external motivation affects internal motivation. It was first explicitly proposed by Deci and Ryan [37]. According to SDT, people engage in motivated behaviors due to either autonomous or controlled motives. Autonomous motives refer to motives that are intrinsically interesting or important to one's goals and values. It ranges from pure enjoyment of the activity (intrinsic motivation) and sense of self (integrated regulation) to identifying the instrumental value of the activity (identified regulation). In contrast, controlled motivation is an individual's tendency to engage in certain activities due to some pressure. This pressure may come from external sources, such as the promise of rewards and the threat of punishment (external motivation). It can also come from inside, such as when an individual engages in certain behaviors to avoid shame and maintain self-esteem (internal regulation). Under autonomous motivation, individuals engage in self-determined behavior while under controlled motivation, individuals engage in controlled behavior. It's important to point out that, autonomous and controlled motivation are independent of each other and are not opposite ends of a single continuum [38].

Based on social identity theory and social exchange theory, researchers found that some factors such as organizational identification, organizational commitment and job satisfaction can trigger one's sense of membership in their own organizations, and promote individuals to embed and support their own organizations [39]. With the strength of this perception, employees will internalize the success or failure of the organization as personal success or failure, and act in ways that are expected and beneficial to the organization, such as increasing loyalty, increasing extra-role behavior or job performance, and reducing the intention to leave [40,41]. They may even put the interests of the group above the interests of others, and regard UPB as a dutiful act serving the organization [42]. When employees have formed a positive social exchange relationship with the organization, they may regard UPB as a way to protect the organization. Therefore, they take the initiative to lie to customers or clients, fail to refund to customers or clients, and sell unsafe products in return for positive social exchange relationship with the organization. In this situation, individuals engage in UPB out of their recognition of its value and this type of UPB is determined by autonomous motivation. We name it Initiative Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior (IUPB).

In addition, stressors of the environment and the perception of pressure also exert external pressure on individual to engage in UPB. For example, employees may engage in UPB to please their leaders, avoid being ostracized, and reduce psychological insecurity [9,43-48]. They may also engage in UPB for good performance appraisal, pay raises, bonuses and promotions [8]. In this case, individuals who does UPB is not out of their identification of the value and importance of the behavior, but avoiding certain negative results. Individuals have the external regulation and introjected regulation of UPB, namely controlled motivation, and thus engage in UPB determined by controlled motivation. We name it Compulsory Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior (CUPB).

Types of UPB: IUPB and CUPB

According to the definition of Umphress and his colleagues [2,11], UPB is an individual's intentional behavior, but Umphress, et al. failed to distinguish different types of such behavior. However, according to self-determination theory, individual's intentional behavior should be divided into the behavior under autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. The two behaviors are independent of each other and can bring different impacts. Therefore, this paper will redefine UPB under the guidance of self-determination theory, with special emphasis on the difference between initiative and compulsory UPB types.

In this paper, UPB is defined as the behavior intentionally (initiatively or compulsorily) implemented by members of an organization in the process of completing work tasks and interacting with stakeholders, which is aimed at promoting the effective operation of the organization and its members but violates legal, ethical or appropriate standards of behavior. This new definition integrates and develops the previous definition of UPB by scholars. As same as the definition of Umphress and his colleagues, UPB is still an intentional behavior. But two changes have taken place in this new definition. First, it makes clear the area in which behavior occurs-in the course of completing tasks or interacting with stakeholders. Second, according to this definition, we should distinguish UPB according to different types of motivation.

On the basis of the definition of UPB, we define initiative and compulsory UPB respectively. Initiative UPB is the behavior that members of the organization carry out autonomously and voluntarily in the process of completing work tasks and interacting with stakeholders, aiming at promoting the effective operation of the organization and its members but in violation of laws, ethics or appropriate standards of behavior. The individual voluntarily and freely decides to engage in the behavior or not, recognizes its value and importance, and voluntarily invests time and energy into it, which meets SDT's definition of autonomous motivation and self-determined behavior. Variables such as organizational identity [6], leader-member exchange [20], organizational commitment [7], and positive employee-organization relationship [49], which can stimulate individuals' organization identity and positive social exchange relationship, promote individuals' autonomous motivation to engage in UPB, and easily lead to initiative UPB. At this moment, the individual's autonomous motivation is in the position of identity regulation on the self-determination continuum. Machiavellians who are keen on engaging in unethical behaviors [50] may also generate autonomous motivation to engage in UPB. At this time, the autonomous motivation is in the position of internal motivation in the continuum of self-determination.

Compulsory UPB is the behavior that members of the organization have to carry out under some external pressure in the process of completing work tasks and interacting with stakeholders. It aims to promote the effective operation of the organization and its members but violates the legal, ethical or appropriate standards of behavior. The individual does not actively or voluntarily engage in the behavior but is forced to

do so. He/she does not recognize the value and importance of the behavior, nor does he apply the value system guiding the behavior to other areas of life, which conforms to SDT's definition of controlled motivation. Variables such as high-performance expectation [51], ethical pressure [8], authoritarian leadership [52,53] can induce individuals to generate the controlled motivation to engage in UPB, which can easily trigger compulsory UPB. At this time, the controlled motivation is in the external motivation position of the self-determined continuum. Variables such as high-performance expectation [51], ethical pressure [8], authoritarian leadership [52,53] can induce controlled motivation to engage in UPB, which can easily trigger compulsory UPB. At this time, the controlled motivation is in the external motivation position of the self-determined continuum.

Differentiating Initiative and Compulsory UPB from Similar Concepts

Traditional UPB

It should be pointed out that although UPB is redefined in this paper and presents different characteristics from traditional UPB, they are identical in essence, that is, both are unethical behaviors that contribute to organizational interests. The reason for the redefinition is that this paper believes that the traditional definition of UPB is ambiguous [3], and the definition of behavior boundary is not clear enough. We argue that UPB should be classified according to SDT.

First of all, the UPB in this paper and the traditional UPB are both intentional behaviors. The intention of an action is the premise for it to be defined as UPB. Under the framework of SDT, individuals may engage in both intentional and unintentional behavior. When an unintentional behavior occurs, an individual lacks the will or motivation for the behavior, pays little attention to the results of the behavior, and does not believe that a specific behavior can produce valuable results. Therefore, the unethical behavior beneficial to the organization that an individual engages in due to unconscious negligence does not belong to the UPB category. Self-determination theory also points out that the individual intentional behavior should include active behavior and passive behavior. Prior UPB studies apparently did not distinguish the two. Based on SDT and UPB studies, we divide UPB into initiative and compulsory UPB in order to solve the problem of its conceptual ambiguity.

Secondly, under the definition of Umphress and his colleagues [2,11], all the unethical behaviors aimed at promoting the effective operation of the organization and its members are UPB, but the definition does not specify the field in which the behaviors occur. Organizational effectiveness should consist of actions that promote the completion of tasks and actions that promote the realization of relationships [54]. Although these two aspects are reflected in the UPB measurement items, they are not clearly defined in the traditional UPB definition. In order to solve this problem, the definition of UPB in this paper clearly points out that UPB are not only carried out in the process of completing work tasks,

Table 1: Comparison of our UPB with traditional UPB.

	The similarities	The differences	
	Nature	Motivation	Occurrence of areas
UPB in this paper	Unethical behaviors that contribute to the interests of the organization.	Differentiating UPB motivations into autonomous and controlled ones according to their degree of autonomy.	In the process of completing work tasks and interacting with stakeholders.
Traditional UPB		Failing to clarify.	Failing to clarify.

Table 2: Comparison of IUPB with OCB.

	The similarities			The differences	
	Nature	Motivation	Structure	Ethicality	Stakeholders
IUPB	Extra-role behavior aimed at promoting organizational interests.	Behavior determined by autonomous motivation.	Consist of task dimension and interpersonal dimension.	Unethical behavior;	External stakeholders
OCB				Ethical behavior	Internal stakeholders

Table 3: Comparison of CUPB with CCB.

	The similarities			The differences	
	Nature	Motivation	Result	Victim	Stressors
CUPB	Extra-role behaviors; unethical to some extent.	Controlled motivation	Beneficial to the organization.	External stakeholders.	Environment, organization, leaders or actor himself.
CCB				Employees.	Organization or leaders.

but also in the process of interacting with stakeholders, so as to clarify the area where UPB occurs. The comparison of the two is shown in Table 1.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

IUPB has many similarities with OCB. First of all, both of them are extra-role behaviors aimed at promoting the interests of the organization. Secondly, all actors have autonomous motivation to engage in UPB. Third, both of them are consist of task dimension and interpersonal dimension. However, IUPB is significantly different from OCB. First of all, IUPB is a behavior that adopts unethical means to realize organizational goals, while OCB is usually considered to be a "good citizen" behavior conforming to ethical norms. Second, IUPB mainly deals the relationship with external stakeholders of the organization, while OCB deals the relationship with internal members of the organization. The comparison of the two is shown in Table 2.

Compulsory Citizenship Behavior (CCB)

There are many similarities between CUPB and CCB. First of all, both of them are extra-role behaviors forced by external forces, and individuals have the controlled motivation to engage in these behaviors. Second, the outcome of the behavior may be "good" for the organization. In particular, since UPB is an unethical behavior, such organizational benefits can only be short-term [1]. In the long run, both IUPB and CUPB are harmful to organizations. Thirdly, both of them are unethical to some extent. The differences are as follows: First, CUPB violates the interests of external stakeholders, while CCB violates the interests of employees. Second, they have different stressors. The pressure of CUPB includes

environment, organization, leaders or actor himself, while the pressure of CCB is usually organization or leaders. The comparison of the two is shown in Table 3.

Propositions

Based on the rational developed thus far, we decided to formulate several propositions about IUPB and CUPB. The first proposition suggests that, there are employees in the workplaces who internalize the success or failure of the organization into their own success or failure, see themselves as part of the organization and are willing to do anything for the good of the organization. Engaging in UPB is seen as a way to repay the organization. They engage in this activity voluntarily, believing it to be of personal importance and feeling no external force. Therefore, at this time, employees are engaged in initiative UPB. In addition, because organizations and their members are under great pressure to provide better and more efficient services to customers and clients, they are often more inclined to engage in compulsory UPB. Employees in the workplace face multiple pressures from inside and outside the organization, such as high-performance expectations, psychological insecurity, fear of being ostracized by the colleagues, ethical climate, external competition, etc. In order to survive in the organization, they usually choose to succumb to these pressures, and may even use unethical means. Thus, the word "voluntary" is not applicable here and the term "CUPB" is a better description of such activities. My first proposition will thus be:

P1: Both IUPB and CUPB are prevalent phenomenon in organizations. A significant number of employees have experienced these behaviors in the workplace.

Wang et al. J Depress Anxiety Disord 2022, 4(1):132-140

Open Access | Page 136 |

Based on the first proposition, my second proposition suggests that IUPB can be clearly distinguished from CUPB and both IUPB and CUPB can be clearly distinguished from traditional UPB. Self-determination theory argued that the behavior determined by autonomous and controlled motivations are different from each other. Amabile, Hill, Hennessey, & Tighe [55] found that there was a negative correlation between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation in both student samples and adult samples (student sample: r = -0.21, adult sample: R = -0.08). It shows that autonomous motivation and controlled motivation are independent concepts. Besides, other scholars also support the idea that autonomous and controlled motivations are independent of each other, and found that they had very different effects on individuals [56-58]. In general, autonomous motivation can lead to a higher level of happiness and performance than controlled motivation [59]. Therefore, IUPB should be negatively correlated with CUPB. At the same time, since the concept of traditional UPB base on the assumption that individuals voluntarily engage in this behavior, traditional UPB should be positively correlated with IUPB and negatively correlated with CUPB. Hence, I suggest the second proposition:

P2: IUPB is negatively correlated with CUPB and positively correlated with traditional UPB, while CUPB is negatively correlated with traditional UPB.

The third and fourth hypotheses propose a linkage between both types of UPB with various workplace variables. These hypotheses suggest that both types of UPB are related to a series of work outcomes such as those tested in previous researches in relation to traditional UPB. If traditional UPB is positively related to OCB and guilt [2,27], I suggest that IUPB will have the same effect. That is, we expect that IUPB will be positively related to OCB and guilt. But the effect of CUPB on these variables may be opposite. That is, we expect that CUPB will be negatively related to OCB. However, as scholars argued that, when an individual expects to cause a negative event, or has actually caused a negative event, or an individual perceiving himself or herself to be associated with a negative event, guilt will occur [60]. We expect that CUPB will be positively related to guilt. In addition, Umphress & Bingham [11] pointed out that after independently choosing to engage in UPB, individuals will try to find a reasonable explanation for their own behaviors. They may think that they engage in unethical behaviors because they have a strong sense of identity with the organization and have established a positive social exchange relationship with the organization. Therefore, initiative UPB actors have low intention to leave. But if individuals are forced to engage in UPB, they will experience increased level of intentions to leave the organization [26]. Hence, the final proposition suggests that:

P3: IUPB is positively related to OCB and guilt, while CUPB will be negatively related to OCB and positively related to guilt.

P4: IUPB is negatively related to turnover intention while CUPB is positively related to turnover intention.

Discussion

Can we put all UPBs in one basket of voluntary behavior, elsewhere defined as the "blind loyalty" [36]? What happens when one's good will is forced by organizations or leaders? This paper raises some concerns about such practices and suggests that sometimes one's UPB is involuntary. We propose the concept of "Initiative UPB" and "Voluntary UPB" to describe all types of UPB in work field. We further distinguish among IUPB, CUPB, traditional UPB, OCB and CCB and suggest that IUPB and CUPB illustrate different aspect of UPB.

Theoretical Implications

First, the classification of UPB types strongly challenges a common assumption in the research field of UPB, that is, UPB is an individual's active and voluntary behavior. In daily work situations, individuals do not always actively and voluntarily engage in UPB, and there is also a passive UPB that is forced to engage in under pressure. This provides a more subtle and detailed perspective for the subsequent UPB research, which better responds to the call of scholars for detailed UPB research [3]. Although previous studies have suggested the existence of UPB types, this is the first time that the division between initiative and compulsory UPB is explicitly proposed.

Second, the classification of UPB types is conducive to a deeper understanding of the motivation behind employees' UPB behaviors, as well as a better distinction of the formation mechanism, action mechanism and results of UPB. Although the UPB theoretical model of Umphress & Bingham [11] elaborated the anamorphic causes, occurrence process, consequences and boundary conditions of UPB in detail, different types of UPB were not included. According to SDT, the formation of initiative and compulsory UPB should have different psychological mechanisms, which provides a more systematic and clear direction for future research. For example, future research can explore different environmental factors that trigger IUPB and CUPB based on the "environment-basic psychological needs-work motivation-outcome" theoretical model of SDT [61], and further reveal the mediating role of basic psychological needs and work motivation.

Third, the classification of UPB types solves the problem of fuzzy understanding and application of UPB concept in existing studies to a certain extent. The fundamental reason for the fuzzy understanding and application of UPB in previous studies is the lack of rules and order in the research field. To some extent, scholars regard UPB as an "umbrella construct" without paying attention to sorting out the internal logic. The concept of initiative and compulsory UPB constructs a kind of order for the subsequent UPB research, which can be carried out along at least two main lines, one is "antecedents-IUPB-outcomes", the other is "antecedents-CUPB- outcomes".

Fourth, the division of UPB types is an extension and deepening of existing research on UPB, because it emphasizes that individuals have different motives to engage in UPB: One is to maintain a positive relationship with the organization, and the other is to be forced to respond to the pressure of the organization and the leadership. This has important

implications for the level and complexity of analysis in future research designs. The existing studies on UPB results are not rich enough, and the only ones focus on the individual-level results brought about by this behavior. This study suggests that future studies should examine the effects of UPB on higher levels (e.g. group levels).

Practical Implications

First, it warns organizations to pay attention to the process of obtaining results while pursuing economic benefits. We should change the result-centered management mode to process-centered, pay attention to creating a good ethical climate, and provide guidance for employees' behavior. At the same time, attention should be paid to avoiding the high expectations of the organization or leaders for "good citizens" to turn into pressure for employees, thus engaging in compulsory UPB that is eager for quick success and instant benefits.

Second, when organizations strengthen the post-supervision of UPB, they should pay attention to the deep-seated reasons for employees who engage in this behavior and not be blinded by appearances. There are various reasons for employees to engage in unethical behaviors beneficial to the organization in the process of work. When punishing UPB actors, the organization should also reflect on the reasons other than employees, such as whether the setting of management goals is appropriate, whether the performance appraisal is too strict, and whether the managers themselves have played an ethical role.

Future Directions

In summary, the research on UPB types has great potential, and there are many areas worth further discussion:

First, develop initiative and compulsory UPB scales. The current UPB research generally uses the 6-item scale developed by Umphress, et al. [2], which is not adapted to the situation of many countries [18-20,44,49,62-64]. Detailed description of UPB types helps to develop more targeted scales, thus reducing measurement errors and improving the accuracy of research conclusions. Future research can develop scales for each type based on the definition of initiative and compulsory UPB in this paper, verify their discriminant validity, predictive validity and nomological networks.

Second, future research can deepen the research on the effect of UPB. Existing studies on UPB mainly focus on its antecedents and processes, which relatively ignore the effects of UPB. The proposal of initiative and compulsory UPB types helps to fill the gap in this aspect.

Third, future research can test the UPB theoretical model. Umphress& Bingham [11] put forward a theoretical model of UPB, and elaborated the causes, process, consequences and boundary conditions of the behavior from the theoretical level. However, a large number of empirical studies focus on the first half of the model, and empirical tests on the second half are relatively scarce, especially the studies on the effects of UPB. According to cognitive dissonance theory, individuals' perceived dissonance between cognition and behavior will lead to psychological discomfort. In order to reduce this discomfort, individuals will adopt a variety of strategies, including changing attitudes or behaviors. Which strategy to adopt depends on the difficulty of cognitive change [65,66]. Initiative UPB is the behavior that the actor actively and voluntarily engages in, and the individual agrees with the behavior or considers the behavior to be of great significance to a certain extent. After the occurrence of cognitive dissonance, it is relatively difficult for such actor to change his behavior, but it is relatively easy to stick to the original view and continue to agree with this behavior. As a result, the actor's attitude shifts in a more supportive direction. On the contrary, compulsory UPB is the behavior that the actor is forced to engage in, and the actor lacks identification with the behavior. After the occurrence of cognitive dissonance, it is relatively difficult for the actor to change his attitude towards the behavior to accept the behavior, while it is relatively easy for the actor to give up the behavior. That is to say, initiative and compulsory UPB may bring different effects to the actor. Future research can combine cognitive dissonance theory and UPB theoretical model to examine the different effects of IUPB and CUPB on actors and examine the mechanism of such effects.

Acknowledgement

References

1. Wang T, Zhang Y, Zhou H, et al. (2020) The negative effects and underlying mechanisms of unethical pro-organizational behavior. Advances in Psychological Science 28: 1246.

2. Umphress EE, Bingham JB, Mitchell MS (2010) Unethical behavior in the name of the company: The moderating effect of organizational identification and positive reciprocity beliefs on unethical pro-organizational behavior. J Appl Psychol 95: 769-780.

3. Cheng K, Lin YH (2019) Unethical pro-organizational behavior: A motivational perspective. Advances in Psychological Science 27: 1111-1122.

4. Ryan RM, Deci EL (2000) Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. American Psychologis 55: 68-78.

5. Bateman TS, Crant JM (1993) The proactive component of organizational behavior: A measure and correlates. Journal of Organizational Behavior 14: 103-118.

6. Chen M, Chen CC, Sheldon OJ (2016) Relaxing moral reasoning to win : How organizational identification relates to unethical pro-organizational behavior. J Appl Psychol 101: 1082-1096.

7. Matherne ICF, Litchfield SR (2012) Investigating the relationship between affective commitment and unethical pro-organizational behaviors: The role of moral identity. Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics 9: 35-46.

8. Tian Q, Peterson DK (2016) The effects of ethical pressure and power distance orientation on unethical pro-organizational behavior: The case of earnings management. Business Ethics 25: 159-171.

9. Li ZC, Wang Z, Zhu ZB, et al. (2018) Performance presure and

Wang et al. J Depress Anxiety Disord 2022, 4(1):132-140

Open Access | Page 138 |

unethical pro-organizational behavior: Based on cognitive appraisal theory of emotion. Chinese Journal of Management 15: 358-365.

10. Rich P (1992) The organizational taxonomy : Definition and design. Academy of Management Review 17: 758-781.

11. Umphress EE, Bingham JB (2011) When employees do bad things for good reasons: Examining unethical pro-organizational behaviours. Organization Science 22: 621-640.

12. Kong M, Xin J, Xu W, et al. (2020) The moral licensing effect between work effort and unethical pro-organizational behavior: The moderating influence of Confucian value. Asia Pacific Journal of Management 1-23.

13. Burnett EA (2017) Bad behavior with good intentions: The role of organizational climata in unethical pro-organizational behavior. Clemson University.

14. Johnson HH, Umphress EE (2019) To help my supervisor: Identification, moral Identity, and unethical pro-supervisor behavior. Journal of Business Ethics 159: 519-534.

15. Wang, XC, Gao XJ, Li Q (2018) The influence of unethical pro-organizational behavior on career development: A moderated mediation of cross level. Journal of Psychological Science 41: 646-652.

16. Dou K, Chen Y, Lu J, et al. (2019) Why and when does job satisfaction promote unethical pro-organizational behaviours? Testing a moderated mediation model. Int J Psychol 54: 766-774.

17. Xu T, Lv Z (2018) HPWS and unethical pro-organizational behavior: A moderated mediation model. Journal of Managerial Psychology 33: 265-278.

18. Effelsberg D, Solga M, Gurt J (2014) Getting followers to transcend their self-interest for the benefit of their company: Testing a core assumption of transformational leadership theory. Journal of Business and Psychology 29: 131-143.

19. Luo F, Xv RH (2017) The effect of high commitment human resource management practices on unethical pro-organizational behaviour-The mediating role of perceived organizational support and the moderating role of moral identity. Human Resource Development of China 28-38.

20. Lin YH, Cheng K (2016) Leader-member exchange and employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior: A differential mode perspective. Journal of Management Science 29: 57-70.

21. Graham KA, Ziegert, JC, Capitano J (2015) The effect of leadership style, framing, and promotion regulatory focus on unethical pro-organizational behavior. Journal of Business Ethics 126: 423-436.

22. Miao Q, Newman A, Yu J, et al. (2013) The relationship between ethical leadership and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Linear or curvilinear effects? Journal of Business Ethics 116: 641-653.

23. Li GQ (2016) Ethical leadership, organizational identification and employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior: The moderate effect of chronic regulatory focus. Science of Science and Management of S. &. T, 37: 125-135.

24. Lewi BA (2019) Leaders' Immorality-Encouragement: When do Subordinates Succumb?

25. Lian H, Huai M, Farh JL, et al. (2016) Leader UPB and employee unethical conduct: A moral disengagement perspective. In Academy of Management Proceedings.

26. Mesdaghinia S, Rawat A, Nadavulakere S (2018) Why moral

followers quit: Examining the role of leader bottom-Line mentality and unethical pro-leader behavior. Journal of Business Ethics 159: 491-505.

27. Wang J, Wang GQ, Liu GQ, et al. (2020) How abusive supervision affects unethical pro-organizational behavior: A moderated mediation examination of exchange and proactive personality. Journal of Psychology in Africa.

28. Guo YX, Su Y, Ji XX, et al. (2018) Employee future focus and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Examining a moderated-mediation model. Human Resource Development of China 35: 30-40.

29. Kong DT (2016) The pathway to unethical pro-organizational behavior: Organizational identification as a joint function of work passion and trait mindfulness. Personality and Individual Differences 93: 86-91.

30. Coppins TT (2019) Not in my occupation: An examination of occupational identification and unethical pro-organizational behavior. Western Ontario.

31. May DR, Chang YK, Shao R (2015) Does ethical membership matter? Moral identification and its organizational implications. J Appl Psychol 100: 681-694.

32. Yan AM, Zeng SS (2018) The antecedents of unethical pro-supervisor behavior: The infuence of transformational leadership. Human Resource Development of China 35: 63-72.

33. Effelsberg D, Solga M (2013) Transformational leaders' in-group versus out-group orientation: Testing the link between leaders' organizational identification, their willingness to engage in unethical pro-organizational behavior, and follower-perceived transformational leadership. Journal of Business Ethics 126: 581-590.

34. Liu HL, Ven-hwei L (2018) An integrated model of workload, autonomy, burnout, job satisfaction, and turnover intention among Taiwanese reporters. Asian Journal of Communication 28: 153-169.

35. Tang NY, Li YQ, Mo SJ (2021) The Impact of unethical pro-organizational behavior on work-to-family conflict. Humanities & Social Sciences Journal of Hainan University 1-9.

36. Wang HY, Tian H, Xing HW (2018) Research on internal auditors' unethical pro-organizational behavior: from the perspective of dual identification. Journal of Management Science 31: 30-44.

37. Deci EL, Ryan RM (1985) Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. Plenum press, New York.

38. Yam KC, Klotz AC, He W, et al. (2017) From good soldiers to psychologically entitled: Examining when and why citizenship behavior leads to deviance. Academy of Management Journal 60: 373-396.

39. Ashforth BE, Mael F (1989) Social identity theory and the organization. The Academy of Management Review 14: 20-39.

40. Mael FA, Ashforth BE (1995) Loyal from day one: Biodata, organizational identification, and turnover among newcomers. Personnel Psychology 48: 309-333.

41. Wan-Huggins VN, Riordan CM, Griffeth RW (1998) The development and longitudinal test of a model of organizational identification. Journal of Applied Social Psychology 28: 724-749.

42. Ashforth BE, Anand V (2003) The normalization of corruption in organizations. Research in Organizational Behavior 25: 1-52.

43. Zhang Y, He B, Sun X (2018) The contagion of unethical pro-

organizational behavior: From leaders to followers. Front Psychol 9: 1102.

44. Shu X (2015) Contagion effect of unethical pro-organizational behavior among members within organization. Metallurgical & Mining Industry 235-242.

45. Thau S, Derfler-Rozin R, Pitesa M, et al. (2015) Unethical for the sake of the group: Risk of social exclusion and pro-group unethical behaviour. J Appl Psychol 100: 98-113.

46. Zhang GP (2016) The influencing mechanism of workplace ostracism on unethical pro-organization behavior. Journal of Management Science 29: 104-114.

47. Ghosh SK (2017) The direct and interactive effects of job insecurity and job embeddedness on unethical pro-organizational behavior: An empirical examination. Personnel Review 46: 1182-1198.

48. Lawrence ER, Kacmar KM (2017) Exploring the impact of job insecurity on employees' unethical behavior. Business Ethics Quarterly 27: 39-70.

49. Wang T, Long, L, Zhang Y, et al. (2019) A social exchange perspective of employee-organization relationships and employee unethical pro-organizational behavior: The moderating role of individual moral identity. Journal of Business Ethics 159: 473-489.

50. Castille CM, Buckner JE, Thoroughgood CN (2018) Prosocial citizens without a moral compass? Examining the relationship between machiavellianism and unethical pro-organizational behavior. Journal of Business Ethics 149: 919-930.

51. Chen M, Liang J (2017) High performance expectation and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Social cognitive perspective. Acta Psychologica Sinica 49: 94-105.

52. Zhang YJ, Jiang, XY, Zhao GX (2017) The relationship between ethical climate and unethical pro-organizational behavior: Moral justication as a mediator. Journal of Psychological Science 40: 1189-1194.

53. Kang-Hwa S, Hung-Yi L (2018) How does authoritarian leadership lead to employee unethical pro-organizational behavior? The mediating effect of work stressor and moral disengagement. In Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research 51: 86-94.

54. Rotundo M (2002) The relative importance of task, citizenship, and counterproductive performance to global ratings of job performance: A policy-capturing approach. J Appl Psychol 87: 66-80.

55. Amabile TM (1993) Motivational synergy: Toward new conceptualizations of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the workplace. Human Resource Management Review 3: 185-201.

56. Grant AM, Nurmohamed S, Ashford SJ, et al. (2011) The performance implications of ambivalent initiative: The interplay of autonomous and controlled motivations. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes 116: 241-251.

57. Van den Broeck A, Lens W, De Witte H, et al. (2013) Unraveling the importance of the quantity and the quality of workers' motivation for well-being: A person-centered perspective. Journal of Vocational Behavior 82: 69-78.

58. Strauss K, Parker SK, O'Shea D (2017) When does proactivity have a cost? Motivation at work moderates the effects of proactive work behavior on employee job strain. Journal of Vocational Behavior 100: 15-26.

59. Moran CM, Diefendorff JM, Kim TY, et al. (2012) A profile approach to self-determination theory motivations at work. Journal of Vocational Behavior 81: 354-363.

60. Ilies R, Peng AC, Savani K, et al. (2013) Guilty and helpful: An emotion-based reparatory model of voluntary work behavior. J Appl Psychol 98: 1051-1059.

61. Zhang CH (2019) Streams and future directions of research on work motivation based on the self-determination theory. Advances in Psychological Science 27: 1489-1506.

62. Xu L, Wang JG, Fan CH (2018) The study of the impact of empowering leadership on unethical pro-organizational behavior of employees: A chain mediating model. Science of Science and Management of S. &. T, 39: 110-121.

63. Lin YH, Cheng K (2017) Differential leadership and employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior: A perspective of insider and outsider. Journal of Management Science 30: 35-50.

64. Sun YB, Ding XX, Deng CP (2018) The impact of the caring ethical climate on employees' unethical pro-organizational behaviour-An empirical study based on survey of pharmacertical enterprises. Journal of China University of Labor Relations 32: 97-109.

65. Rennekamp K, Rupar KK, Seybert N (2015) Impaired judgment: The effects of asset impairment reversibility and cognitive dissonance on future investment. Accounting Review 90: 739-759.

66. Bandura A (1990) Selective activation and disengagement of moral control. Journal of Social Issues 46: 27-46.

SCHOLARS.DIRECT