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Unethical pro-organizational behavior

# When and how organizational punishment can stop unethical pro-organizational behaviors in hospitality?

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

**Abstract**

How can hospitality employees be prevented from engaging in unethical behavior toward customers with the intention of helping their organization (i.e., from displaying unethical pro-organizational behavior directed at customers, UPB-C)? Drawing on ethical decision-making (EDM) theory, we propose that organizational punishment for unethical behavior and service climate will jointly inhibit UPB-C via moral disengagement. We test our hypotheses across two studies. In Study 1, using a sample of 122 frontline service employees, we find that, when both organizational punishment for unethical behavior and service climate are higher, UPB-C is lower. In Study 2, we replicate the above findings using a two-wave panel data from a sample of 191 employees who had service roles in the hospitality industry, and further indicate the role of moral disengagement in explaining the interactive effects of organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C.

*Keywords*: Unethical pro-organizational behavior, organizational punishment for unethical behavior, service climate, moral disengagement.

## 1. Introduction

Today's hospitality industry is plagued by a host of ethical debacles, ranging from accounting scandals of manipulated financial statements to food fraud. Recently, research has noted that employees might conduct these unethical behaviors for the benefit of their organizations – actions known as unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB). Unlike the traditional hostile and self-focused view of unethical behavior, the conceptualization of UPB allows researchers to capture unethical actions that are motivated by good intentions (Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell, 2011). For example, employees might want to protect their organizations by withholding information about the potential safety problems of a product. Ironically, this "well-intentioned" pro-organizational unethical behavior, though it may bring short-term benefit, is likely to harm an organization in the long run (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). For example, concealing a potential food safety hazard to increase short-term sales can lead to reputational damage to an organization and even to criminal investigations and heavy fines. In this study, we seek to contribute to UPB research by examining the factors that could inhibit UPB. Considering that customers are the primary targets of unethical behaviors in the hospitality industry, we limit our investigation to UPB directed at customers (UPB-C).

A critical gap in the existing UPB literature is a lack of focus on the inhibiting mechanism of UPB. This omission is not an accident; rather, it was primarily caused by the early research, which contended that UPB occurs when individuals act unethically toward the out-group (the broader community) in order to benefit their in-group (their organization and its members). The psychological mechanism that drives UPB can be understood via a) social identity theory, b) social exchange theory, c) social learning theory, and d) dark personality models. These lines of research enable us to identify a wide range of key antecedents of UPB, including positive attitudinal or relationship factors related to the organization (e.g., organizational identification: Chen et al., 2016; positive employee–organization relationship: Wang et al., 2019; organizational commitment: Grabowski et al., 2019), positive leadership practices (e.g., transformational leadership: Effelsberg et al., 2014; ethical leadership: Miao et al., 2013; authentic leadership: Gigol, 2020), and dark traits (e.g., Machiavellianism: Castille et al., 2018). Along with these studies, research has also examined the organizational environment (e.g., inter-organizational competition: Chen et al., 2016; bottom-line mentality climate: Castille et al., 2018) and individual moral characteristics (e.g., moral identity: Wang et al., 2019) as the key boundary conditions that lead to UPB (see the appendix for a full summary of the nomological network of UPB). Although insightful, the conceptualization of

UPB as a dark outcome of the positive relationship with the organization or its members limits our understanding of how this paradoxical behavior can be managed. Consequently, current UPB research cannot recommend an effective organizational strategy to suppress UPB. For example, it would be inappropriate to recommend that an organization reduce organizational identification or ethical leadership as a means to prevent UPB.

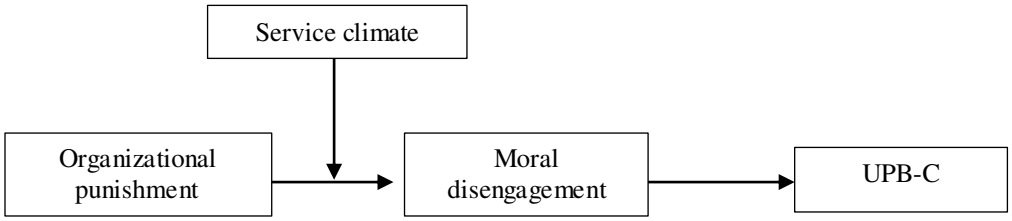
To understand how to inhibit the occurrence of UPB, especially UPB directed at customers (UPB-C) in the hospitality context, we draw on ethical decision-making (EDM) theory (Schwartz, 2016) to guide our investigation. EDM theory suggests that ethical behaviors are the results of ethical decision-making, a mental process that is likely to be invoked when an individual faces an ethical dilemma in a specific situation. Following this proposition, we conceptualize UPB-C as a behavior resulting from an ethical dilemma, in which employees face a decision to conduct or not to conduct certain behaviors for the benefit of the organization at the cost of customers. In this situation, multiple ethical standards apply (i.e., organizational obligation vs hyper norm) and different stakeholders' interests are involved (i.e., organization vs customers).

EDM theory further indicates that, when facing an ethical dilemma, individuals need to rely on multiple relevant pieces of information to make a decision on the ethically appropriate action to take. Following this proposition, we identify organizational punishment for unethical behavior (hereinafter "organizational punishment") and service climate as two sources of environmental information that will jointly shape UPB-C. We argue that organizational punishment addresses the concern of ethics in the workplace and thus influences individuals' ethical consideration of engaging in UPB-C, whereas service climate addresses organizations' priorities and thus influences individuals' pro-organizational consideration of engaging in UPB-C. In brief, organizational punishment, or a manager's application of negative consequences or withdrawal of positive consequences to unethical behavior (Treviño, 1992), signals the importance of behaving in an ethical manner in an organization. Service climate refers to the extent to which employees perceive that provision of high-quality service is a top priority of the organization, which helps clarify what is pro-organizational and what is not. In brief, we expect that high organizational punishment and high service climate will jointly inhibit UPB-C effectively as employees will see that UBP-C is neither pro-organizational nor ethical.

To underpin the mental process of ethical decision-making informed by EDM theory, we identify moral disengagement as the mental/cognitive process that underlies the joint effect of

organizational punishment and service climate, a mechanism that has also been suggested in the existing UPB research (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). We argue that when employees are aware of the negative consequence of unethical behavior, signaled by high organizational punishment, and at the same time want to serve the organizational goals, signaled by high service climate, they are less likely to disengage their moral self-sanction processes to commit unethical behavior (i.e., low moral disengagement) (Bandura, 1999), and, in turn, are less likely to engage in UBP-C. In sum, we propose that a combination of organizational punishment and service climate will mitigate moral disengagement and thus UPB-C. Figure 1 shows our conceptual model.

**Fig. 1.** Conceptual model.




## 2. Theoretical background and hypothesis development

### *2.1. UPB-C as an ethical dilemma*

Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) refers to "actions that are intended to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members and violate core societal values, mores, laws or standards of proper conduct" (Umphress & Bingham, 2011, p. 622). UPB has three features. First, it is voluntary in nature, which means that any unethical behavior performed as directed by the supervisor does not count as UPB. Second, it is driven by pro-organizational intentions. So, if the primary purpose is to sabotage customers or meet a personal sales target, it cannot be considered UPB. Third, UPB is unethical behavior that undermines the interests of the larger community. For example, serving tainted food will put customers' health at risk.

In the hospitality context, UPB by frontline employees is most likely to happen during a service encounter and involves a behavior to benefit the organization but harm customers. For example, serving tainted food helps to reduce waste for the restaurant but puts customers' health at risk. This type of unethical behavior, UPB-C, is different from unethical behaviors driven by self-interest (e.g., stealing customers' credit card information) (Cheng et al., 2013;

Schwepker & Hartline, 2005; Kim & Brymer, 2011; Reynolds, 2000), which has attracted much attention in the hospitality literature.

Drawing on EDM theory, UPB can be understood from the perspective of ethical dilemma, "a situation in which an individual must reflect upon competing moral standards and/or stakeholders claims in determining what is the morally appropriated decision or action" (Schwartz, 2016, p. 757). That is, in the case of UPB, employees involve a challenging situation where multiple moral standards apply – fulfilling the organizational obligation (i.e., a moral standard that an individual may hold as an organization's employee) versus fulfilling the hyper moral obligation (i.e., a moral standard that is widely held by society) (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994). Further, employees also face tradeoffs between claims from multiple stakeholders. For example, in a typical UPB scenario of withholding negative information about the organization's product from customers, employees have the organization's interests on the one side and customers' interests on the other. This is particularly true for frontline service employees working in the hospitality industry, where they often confront a bifurcated social landscape with multiple demands stemming from the organization and customers (Korschun, 2015; Johnson & Ashforth, 2008).

### *2.2. The joint effects of organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C*

As indicated in EDM theory, an individual will seek information from multiple sources when they need to make a decision in an ethical dilemma (Schwartz, 2016). As UPB-C involves an ethical component and a pro-organizational consideration, individuals will need information related to both aspects in order to evaluate if the engagement in UPB-C is appropriate or not. Following this notion, we propose that organizational punishment and service climate serve as the situational factors that can provide information in these two aspects, respectively.

The sanctioning system, which constitutes an important component of an organization's ethical infrastructure (Treviño et al., 1998), has a critical impact on employees' (un)ethical actions (Tenbrunsel et al., 2003). This is because such ethical infrastructure urges employees to become more aware of ethical issues, the importance of behaving ethically, and the consequence of not behaving in an ethical manner in the organization (Schwartz, 2016). In parallel, organizational punishment literature also suggests that punishment could act as a deterrent to reduce the occurrence of future transgressions (e.g., unethical behaviors) by

sending an information cue to employees that behaviors that are unethical in nature would be subject to punishments (Carlsmith, 2006; Carlsmith et al., 2002).

Although it is intuitive that employees will restrain themselves from performing unethical behavior when organizations punish those behaviors, the paradoxical nature of UPB means that the relationship between organizational punishment and UPB might not be straightforward. Known as a "morally equivocal" behavior, UPB is both unethical and pro-organizational (May et al., 2015). The pro-organizational aspect of UPB means that employees may easily view UPB as dutiful acts that serve the greater good of the organization, and downplay or justify away the unethicality of the behavior. For example, a waiter/waitress who exaggerates a dish's nutrition value to a customer might not consider this act unethical; instead, they may frame it as loyalty or an act that is dutiful to the organization. That is, even though they recognize that unethical behaviors are punished by the organization, such a perception might not necessarily put a stop to this type of unethical action. Therefore, for a complex ethical issue like UPB, employees' decision-making would be shaped not only by the organization's ethical environment (i.e., organizational punishment) but also organizational climate, which concerns employees' perception of what is expected in the organization (Johnson, 1996), thus providing an information cue on what can be considered "pro-organizational."

Organizational climate, a multidimensional construct that encompasses a wide range of individual evaluations of the work environment (James & James, 1989), serves to clarify what is pro-organizational and what is not. Although initially conceptualized as a global construct, the current paradigm for organizational climate tends to advocate a facet-specific approach (e.g., climate for service, and climate safety). Different focal facets of organizational climate represent organizations' preferences in strategic focuses and emphasis on competing operational demands (Zohar, 2010). For our focus on UBP-C, we consider service climate, a focal facet of organizational climate that conveys to employees that the organization's strategic goals are to deliver high-quality service and prioritize customer satisfaction and thus that the organization rewards, supports, and expects behaviors aimed at satisfying customer needs (Schneider et al., 1998). This organizational signal will exert a strong influence over the way employees make sense of their job and responsibilities, determining what they consider important and appropriate during service encounters (Johnson, 1996; Bowen & Schneider, 1995).

Specifically, with a strong service climate, employees will understand that the organization values behaviors intended to meet customer needs (Myer et al., 2016; Kang & Busser 2018). In other words, with a strong service climate, employees perceive that the customer's interests align with the interests of the organization. Thus, behaviors that harm customers' interests (i.e., UPB-C) would be viewed as incongruent with the organization's values, and thus not pro-organizational. In brief, the information cue delivered through service climate helps to remove the "pro-organizational" aspect of UPB-C, making the "unethical" aspect more salient. Conversely, when service climate is low, employees may not view behaviors that harm customer interests as deviating from what the organization expects (Lam & Mayer, 2014). As such, in this case, even though organizational punishment places an overall emphasis on acting ethically, employees might fail to respond to such punishments, because the pro-organizational aspect of UPB-C magnifies and covers up its unethical part.

Taken together, we argue that organizational punishment and service climate provide different information cues to individuals when they involve an ethical decision-making related to UPB-C. We thus expect a synergistic interaction of organizational punishment and service climate in predicting UPB-C.

**Hypothesis 1.** Organizational punishment for unethical behavior and service climate will have an interactive effect on UPB-C. When organizational punishment and service climate both are higher, UPB-C will be lower.

### *2.3. The mediating effect of moral disengagement*

We next investigate the role of moral disengagement as the underlying mechanism that translates the interactive effect of organizational punishment and service climate to UPB-C.

EDM theory suggests that, when a complex ethical dilemma exists, a critical step triggering unethical behavior is a lack of awareness of the existence of an ethical dilemma (Schwartz, 2016). One particular psychological process that underlies an individual's lack of moral awareness is moral disengagement (Bandura, 1999), which depicts "a process by which one convinces oneself in a particular context that ethical stands do not apply" (Schwartz, 2016, p. 765). Specifically, moral disengagement involves a set of psychological processes that allow individuals to commit unethical acts while disengaging from the moral norms and self-sanctions that ordinarily inhibit such acts (Bandura, 1999). These processes can switch

off 'moral self-sanction' through moral justification, devaluating of targets, and distorting consequences. Depending on the situations, moral disengagement can be activated or deactivated and influence one's engagement in ethical or unethical behavior.

Following this, we suggest that when employees perceived a higher organizational punishment and a higher service climate at their organization, they are less likely to be morally disengaged. Organisational punishment may serve as an important situational factor that influences ethical decision making (Schwartz, 2016) by raising individuals' awareness of the moral implications (Carlsmith, 2006) and personal responsibility of their behavior (Schnake, 1986). When punishment is coupled with a strong service climate, employees will become more attuned to moral implications of their behaviors towards customers and are less likely to devaluate customers, reconstrue their behavior as acceptable, or distribute responsibility to others. In other words, we argue that organizational punishment and service climate together raise employees' ethical considerations by highlighting the importance of ethical concerns, as well as promoting behaviors that align organization's goals with customer-oriented goals, preventing them from being morally disengaged.

Moral disengagement in turn, can affect employees' engagement in UPB. EDM theory suggests that when morally disengaged, individuals are less likely to be aware that an ethical issue or dilemma exists, which in turn would increase the potential for unethical behavior (Schwartz, 2016). Applying this to the case of UPB, when moral disengagement occurs, people convince themselves that ethical standards are not applicable in the current situation as they fail to aware of the ethical implication of their behavior but overly focus on the pro-organizational part of UPB. For example, the pro-organizational feature of UPB helps employees to justify UPB as dutiful acts that serve the greater benefits of the organization, which minimize the individual's responsibilities in unethical actions (Chen et al., 2016). In brief, through moral disengagement, UPB becomes a pure business decision aiming to protect the organization rather than an ethical dilemma that calls for deliberate moral scrutiny (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). As such, when moral disengagement can be prevented, such as under the condition of higher punishment and a strong service climate, employees will be less likely to engage in UPB.

Based on the above reasoning, we expect that moral disengagement serves as a mediator in the relationship between the interaction of organizational punishment and service climate and employees' engagement in UPB-C.

**Hypothesis 2.** Moral disengagement mediates the relationship between the interactive effect of organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C.

### *2.4. Overview of studies*

We conducted two survey studies to test our hypotheses. Using a sample of 112 frontline employees from 11 restaurants in China, Study 1 examined the interactive effect of organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C (Hypothesis 1). We focused on the interaction hypothesis first because, theoretically, it is the initial and core hypothesis underpinning our examination. In Study 2, we then sought to replicate the same finding in a sample from a different cultural setting and to examine the full research model by incorporating the mediating effect of moral disengagement (Hypothesis 2). In Study 2, we used a sample of employees to perform customer service roles in the hospitality industry, recruited via an online panel in the United Kingdom. We used a two-wave time-lagged design where we were able to measure UPB-C at a time later than other measures, to avoid common method bias in predicting UPB-C (Podsakoff et al., 2003). These two studies together offer stronger examination regarding when employees are less likely to engage in UPB-C.

## 3. Study 1

### *3.1. Participants and procedure*

Participants were full-time frontline service employees from 11 Chinese restaurants, located in Shanxi Province, China. Prior to the study, we had informal conversations with managers, who agreed to aid in data collection. Data were collected using online surveys. The survey questionnaires were distributed by providing a printed copy of the QR code of the online survey in each restaurant.

In total, 145 online questionnaires were received, from a total of 238 service employees. The response rates ranged from 30% to 73% across the 11 restaurants. Of the 145 submitted questionnaires, 122 provided usable responses. Among them, 105 were female. Participants reported a mean age of 35.79 years (SD = 10.68) and an average tenure of 24 months (SD = 29.91).

### *3.2. Measures*

In Study 1, all measures were translated from English into Chinese adopting a back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1980). The response format ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) for all variables except for demographics.

#### *3.2.1. Organizational punishment for unethical behavior*

This construct was measured by three items from Treviño et al. (1998). The original scale measured employees' perceptions of various aspects of the ethical culture of their organization. We used the three items that captured the extent to which employees perceived that unethical behavior would be punished in the organization. An example item is "Management in my organization disciplines unethical behavior when it occurs."

#### *3.2.2. Service climate*

This was measured by Schneider et al.'s (1998) seven-item scale. An example item is "Employees receive recognition and rewards for the delivery of superior work and service."

#### *3.2.3. UPB-C*

UPB-C was measured by adopting five items from Umphress et al. (2010). The original scale is a six-item scale. Following the approach of Fehr et al. (2019), we dropped the item "If my organization needed me to, I would give a good recommendation on the behalf of an incompetent employee in the hope that the person will become another organization's problem instead of my own," because it was not aligned with the context of this study, which focuses on UPB directed at customers rather than peer firms. Furthermore, we rephrased the items to suit the restaurant context, for example in the item "If it would help my organization [replaced with restaurant], I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization [restaurant] look good."

#### *3.2.4. Control variables*

We also collected data for controls likely to provide alternative explanations for UPB as suggested by previous research, in an effort to more accurately describe the relationships among the constructs in our model (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016). Specifically, we controlled for organizational identification using the six-item scale from Mael and Ashforth (1992), because previous UPB research has identified it as a critical predictor of UPB through placing the interests of the ingroup above the interests of those who could be harmed by the unethical act (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Kong, 2016; Umphress et al., 2010). We also controlled for

Machiavellianism using the four-item subscale from Jonason and Webster's (2012) dark triad measure, because research suggests that people high in this trait have a strong motive to achieve their goals by all means (including UPB) (Castille et al., 2018). Regarding demographic variables, we controlled for age, as the meta-analytic findings of Kish-Gephart et al. (2010) revealed a weak correlation between age and unethical behaviors. Finally, to account for participants' social desirability when answering self-report items, we measured impression management bias using a subscale of social desirability from Paulhus (1991). We reported results without the control variables for the purposes of clarity and parsimony (Carlson & Wu, 2012), though the results remained the same whether or not we included them (data available upon request).

### *3.3. Data assessment*

Participants in this study were nested within organizations, thus the design effect (Shackman, 2001) for dependent variables was calculated by using this formula: Design effect = 1 + (k − 1) ICC (1), where k represents the average group size (k = 15.25 at the restaurant level), and ICC (1) is an index representing the degree to which variance in a measure is attributable to the grouping factor. The design effect for this sample is 1.99, which falls below the conventional cutoff of 2. Thus, the traditional regression analysis using SPSS is suitable.

### *3.4. Data analysis*

Preliminary data screening and preparation were conducted in SPSS 26. Specifically, the VIFs are below 3 (ranging from 1.08 to 1.56), indicating that there is no cause for concern about the multicollinearity. The result of the Jarque–Bera test showed the data did not seriously deviate from a normal distribution ($p = .22$) (Gujarati, 2006). Further, after computing the Mahalanobis distance in SPSS, no observation was detected as an outlier. Then, we tested the hypothesis by using a hierarchical regression and PROCESS macro code. The predictors were mean-centered prior to creating the interaction term (i.e., multiply mean-centered organizational punishment by mean-centered service climate).

### *3.5. Results*

#### *3.5.1. Descriptive statistics*

Table 1 reports means, SD, and correlations among our key study variables. Organizational punishment was negatively related to UPB-C ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$).

**Table 1**

Study 1: Means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency estimates

| | *M* | *SD* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Age | 35.79 | 10.68 | — | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Gender | 1.86 | 0.35 | — | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Education | 2.33 | 0.88 | — | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Tenure | 24.45 | 29.91 | .24** | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Service climate | 4.08 | 0.54 | −.05 | .23* | .00 | −.12 | (.80) | | | | | |
| 6. Organizational punishment | 4.18 | 0.57 | −.08 | −.05 | .02 | .11 | .38** | (.72) | | | | |
| 7. Organizational identification | 4.05 | 0.66 | −.09 | −.04 | .15 | .11 | .19* | .29** | (.80) | | | |
| 8. Social desirability | 2.08 | 0.76 | .05 | −.19* | .07 | .03 | −.24* | −.16 | −.16 | (.67) | | |
| 9. Machiavellianism | 1.79 | 0.67 | −.06 | −0.14 | −.02 | .01 | −.26** | −.16 | −.18 | .47** | (.77) | |
| 10. UPB-C | 2.29 | 0.82 | .15 | −0.01 | −.20* | −.03 | −.26** | −.23** | −.24** | .19* | .52** | (.78) |

*Notes.*

$N = 122$. For Gender, 1 = male, 2 = female. UPB-C = unethical pro-organizational behavior directed at customers. Cronbach's alphas are given in parentheses on the diagonal.

$^{*}p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$, two-tailed tests.

### 3.5.2. *Confirmatory factor analyses*

Before testing the hypotheses, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in AMOS 25 for the three key variables in our model, namely organizational punishment, service climate, and UPB-C. As shown in Table 2, a three-factor model (Model 1) demonstrated good fit to data ($\chi^2$ = 133.43, d*f* = 84, CFI = .91, IFI = .91, SRMR = .08, RMSEA = .07), with all standardized factor loadings significant at the $p < .001$ level. The results provided evidence of the discriminant and convergent validity of the three study variables (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

**Table 2**

Study 1: Comparison of measurement models

| Model | $\chi^2$ | d*f* | $\chi^2$/d*f* | CFI | IFI | SRMR | RMSEA | $\Delta\chi^2(\Delta df)$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Three-factor model | 133.43 | 84 | 1.59 | .91 | .91 | .08 | .07 | — |
| 2. Two-factor model[a] | 187.61 | 86 | 2.18 | .81 | .82 | .09 | .10 | 54.18 |
| 3. Two-factor model[b] | 214.13 | 86 | 2.49 | .76 | .77 | .11 | .11 | 80.70 |
| 4. One-factor model | 282.99 | 87 | 3.25 | .64 | .65 | .12 | .14 | 149.56 |

*Notes*.
$\Delta\chi^2$ and ($\Delta df$) denote differences between the three-factor model and other models.
*CFI* = comparative fit index; *IFI* = incremental fit index; *SRMR* = standardized root mean square residual; *RMSEA* = root mean square error of approximation.
[a] This model combines service climate and organizational punishment into one factor.
[b] This model combines organizational punishment and UPB-C into one factor.

### 3.5.3. *Common method variance*

We used the unmeasured method factor approach (Podsakoff et al., 2003) to examine the amount of common method variance (CMV) resulting from the use of cross-sectional, single-source data. All indicators in the model were loaded on their respective latent variables as well as the latent method factor. We followed Schermuly and Meyer (2016) in fixing all unstandardized factor loadings associated with this method factor to 1 and making it uncorrelated with other latent variables. The model with a method factor fitted the data ($\chi^2(72)$ = 116.49, $p < .01$, CFI = .91, SRMR = .09, RMSEA = .07). Although both had the same indicators, the two models were not nested, so we followed Castanheira (2016) in using CFI difference to compare this model to the original three-factor model. Widaman (1985) indicates that two models with a CFI difference of close to or less than .01 are functionally equivalent, and this rule of thumb, verified to be reliable by Cheung and Rensvold (2002), has been effectively used in prior studies comparing alternative models (Lent et al., 2008; Parker et al., 1997). In our study, the CFI difference is smaller than .01, suggesting that, while the method

400 factor resulted in a slight improvement of the model fit, this improvement tends to be less
401 meaningful (Widaman, 1985). Taken together, these results indicate that the CMV, although
402 present, was not a major problem in this study.

403 *3.5.4. Hypothesis testing*

404 Hypothesis 1 suggested that organizational punishment and service climate interactively
405 predict UPB-C. As shown in Table 3, the model with the interaction effect (Model 3) explains
406 more variances of UPB-C than the model without the interaction effect (Model 2) ($\triangle R^2 = .03$,
407 $p < .05$). While organizational punishment and service climate did not have significant main
408 effects on UPB-C, the interaction between organizational punishment and service climate was
409 significantly related to UPB-C ($b = -.41$; $SE = .17$; $t = -2.48$; 95% confidence interval [CI] =
410 −.74, −.08; $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Following the approach recommended by
411 Preacher et al. (2006), we plotted this interaction effect at one standard deviation above and
412 below the mean of service climate. In line with Figure 2, the results of simple slope analysis
413 showed that, when service climate was high, there was a negative relationship between
414 organizational punishment and UPB-C (simple slope = −.32, $t = -2.27$, $p < .05$). When service
415 climate was low, organizational punishment was not related to UPB (simple slope = .12, $t$
416 = .80, *n.s.*). Hypothesis 1 was supported.

**Table 3**

Study 1: Multiple regressions of hypothesized relationships

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* |
| Constant | 1.55 | .53 | 2.60 | .77 | 2.79** | .76 |
| Age | .01*** | .01 | .01*** | .01 | .01*** | .01 |
| Organizational identification | −.16 | .10 | −.12 | .10 | −.12 | .10 |
| Machiavellianism | .83 | .12 | .80 | .12 | .81*** | .12 |
| Social desirability | −.23 | .11 | −.25 | .11 | −.27* | .10 |
| Organizational punishment | | | −.12 | .12 | −.10 | .12 |
| Service climate | | | −.15 | .13 | −.21 | .12 |
| Organizational punishment × service climate | | | | | −.41* | .17 |
| $R^2$ | .37 | | .39 | | .42*** | |
| $\triangle R^2$ | | | .02 | | .03* | |

*Notes.*
$N = 122$. UPB-C = unethical pro-organizational behavior directed at customers. All tests are two-tailed. Coefficients are unstandardized. *$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$.

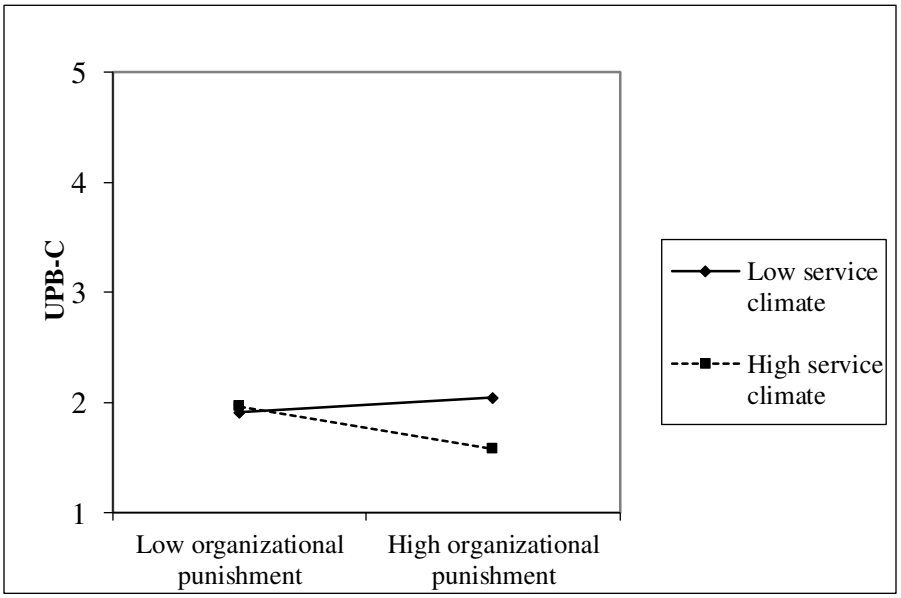



**Fig. 2.** Interaction effect of organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C in Study 1. Higher and lower service climate represent one standard deviation above and below the mean.

## 4. Study 2

In Study 2, we aimed to build on and extend the results of Study 1. First, we intended to replicate the interaction effect in Study 1. Second, we extended Study 1 by testing the full moderated mediation model, including moral disengagement as a mediator. With this purpose

in mind, we adopted a two-wave online panel design and surveyed a sample consisting of service employees who worked in the hospitality industry in the UK.

### *4.1. Sample, design, and procedure*

Participants were recruited through Prolific Academic, a UK-based research service company that recruits participants across Europe and North America for online surveys. To reduce CMV (Podsakoff et al., 2003), we collected data at two time points with a three-week gap. In the first survey, employees reported organizational punishment, perceived service climate, moral disengagement, demographic information, and control variables. In the second survey, employees reported their UPB-C.

To ensure the recruitment of a sample appropriate for our research question, we set a prescreen question to restrict participation to participants who work in the hospitality industry. At Time 1, 425 participants completed the questionnaire. We removed responses from participants who failed to provide the correct response to any one of the four attention checkers ($N = 71$) and those who were not in a customer services role (e.g., they worked in IT, human resource management, or accounts, $N = 63$). Thus, a total number of 291 valid responses were obtained at Time 1. Among them, 225 provided responses at Time 2. We removed 13 cases of careless responses, and 14 cases in which the participants had a change in their employment status between Time 1 and Time 2 (e.g., becoming unemployed, moving to a new organization), and seven cases where we were unable to match their data across time. A final sample of 191 valid responses was obtained for Time 2.

In the combined sample, 66 were male, 122 were female, and three identified as other. Mean age was 31.63 ($SD = 11.41$), ranging from 16 to 71. Participants reported working in their current role for an average of 2.51 years ($SD = 1.33$ years), ranging from 1 to 5 years. Participants worked in a variety of customer service roles, such as cook, receptionist, waitress/waiter and cashier. To rule out the possibility that our results were influenced by response attrition bias, we divided participants from Time 1 ($N = 291$) into two groups, based on whether they provided valid responses at Time 2 ($N = 191$) or not ($N = 100$), and conducted an independent group t-test to compare the mean scores on all study variables. No significant statistical differences between these two subgroups were found on any study variables, suggesting that our results were unlikely to be affected by selective attrition.

### *4.2. Measures*

In Study 2, organizational punishment, service climate, UPB-C, and control variables were the original English measures for the scale we used in Study 1. To be consistent with Study 1, as control variables did not impact the results, we only reported results without the control variables. The response format ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) for all variables except for demographics.

#### *4.2.1. Moral disengagement*

To assess this construct, we adopted five items adapted from Moore et al. (2012). The original scale is an eight-item scale, but we dropped three items to account for the specific situational features and the correspondent-specific moral disengagement process in the hospitality industry, as suggested by Kish-Gephart et al. (2014). An example item is "It is ok to lie to the others (e.g., customers) to defend your organization."

### *4.3. Data analysis*

We first used AMOS to test our measurement model (Arbuckle, 2007). To be consistent with Study 1, multicollinearity, normality, and outliers were checked, and no issues were found. Hypothesis 1 was tested using hierarchical regression in SPSS 23 to examine the interaction between organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C. Hypothesis 2 was tested using the SPSS PROCESS macro code (Hayes & Preacher, 2013). Specifically, a moderated mediation model (95% CI using 5000 bootstrap samples) was used to examine the indirect effect of the interaction between organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C through moral disengagement. Following Hayes (2013), we mean-centered our predictors. In all analyses, age, organizational identification, social desirability, and Machiavellianism were entered as covariates.

### *4.4. Results*

#### *4.4.1. Confirmatory factor analyses*

We conducted CFAs for organizational punishment, service climate, moral disengagement, and UPB-C. As shown in Table 4, a four-factor model (Model 1) demonstrated a good fit with the data ($\chi^2$ = 326.28, *df* = 163, CFI = .92, IFI = .92, SRMR = .06, RMSEA = .07), with all standardized factor loadings significant at the $p < .001$ level. The results provided evidence to the discriminant and convergent validity of the four study variables (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

**Table 4**

Study 2: Comparison of measurement models

| Model | $\chi^2$ | d*f* | $\chi^2$/d*f* | CFI | IFI | SRMR | RMSEA | $\Delta\chi^2(\Delta df)$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Four-factor model | 326.28 | 163 | 2.00 | .92 | .92 | .06 | .07 | — |
| 2. Three-factor model[a] | 556.83 | 166 | 3.35 | .81 | .81 | .08 | .11 | 230.55 |
| 3. Three-factor model[b] | 390.80 | 166 | 2.35 | .89 | .89 | .08 | .08 | 230.55 |
| 4. Three-factor model[c] | 558.04 | 166 | 3.36 | .81 | .81 | .14 | .11 | 64.52 |
| 5. Two-factor model[d] | 792.79 | 168 | 4.72 | .69 | .69 | .16 | .14 | 231.76 |
| 6. One-factor model | 1285.62 | 169 | 7.61 | .44 | .45 | .20 | .19 | 466.51 |

*Notes*.
$\Delta\chi^2$ and ($\Delta df$) denote differences between the four-factor model and other models.
*CFI* = comparative fit index; *IFI* = incremental fit index; *SRMR* = standardized root mean square residual; *RMSEA* = root mean square error of approximation.
[a] This model combines organizational punishment and service climate into one factor.
[b] This model combines moral disengagement and UPB-C into one factor.
[c] This model combines organizational punishment and moral disengagement into one factor.
[d] This model combines organizational punishment, service climate, and moral disengagement into one factor.

### *4.4.2. Descriptive statistics*

Table 5 displays means, SDs, and correlations among our key study variables. Organizational punishment did not have a significant correlation with UPB-C.

**Table 5**

Study 2: Means, standard deviations, correlations, and internal consistency estimates

| | *M* | *SD* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Age | 31.63 | 11.41 | — | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Gender | 1.38 | .52 | — | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Education | 2.64 | .68 | — | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Tenure | 2.51 | 1.33 | .40** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Service climate (T1) | 4.86 | 1.23 | .21** | .00 | .07 | .19** | (.88) | | | | | | |
| 6. Organizational punishment (T1) | 4.84 | 1.34 | .11 | −.06 | .03 | .16* | .54** | (.89) | | | | | |
| 7. Moral disengagement (T1) | 3.08 | 1.05 | −.36** | −.03 | −.09 | −.16* | −.25** | −.26** | (.75) | | | | |
| 8. Organizational identification (T1) | 4.48 | 1.48 | .21** | −.12 | .10 | .23** | .55** | .21** | −.07 | (.91) | | | |
| 9. Social desirability (T1) | 4.21 | 1.06 | −.16* | −.14* | .10 | .13 | −.08 | −.03 | .29** | .05 | (.70) | | |
| 10.Machiavellism (T1) | 2.91 | 1.36 | −.22** | −.03 | −.13 | .03 | −.16* | −.11 | .29** | −.01 | .46** | (.84) | |
| 11. UPB-C (T2) | 2.98 | 1.26 | −.18* | −.08 | .04 | .03 | −.03 | −.13 | .58** | .15* | .26** | .35** | (.89) |

*Notes.*
$N = 191$. T = time. UPB-C = unethical pro-organizational behavior directed at customers. For Gender, 1 = male, 2 = female, 3 = other. Cronbach's alphas are given in parentheses on the diagonal. $^{*}p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$, two-tailed tests.

### *4.4.3. Hypothesis testing*

Hypothesis 1 was tested using a moderation model as in Study 1. Again, we found that the model (Model 6, Table 6) with the interaction effect between organizational punishment and service climate explains more variances of UPB-C than the model without the interaction effect (Model 5, Table 6) ($\triangle R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$). The interaction between organizational punishment and service climate significantly predicted UPB-C ($b = -.13$, $SE = .05$, $t = -2.46$, $p < .05$). Figure 3 shows that, when service climate was high, organizational punishment was negatively associated with UPB-C (simple slope = −.32, $SE = .11$, $t = -2.96$, $p < .01$).

We also found that, in predicting moral disengagement, the model with the interaction effect between organizational punishment and service climate (Model 3, Table 6) explains more variances of moral disengagement than the model without the interaction effect (Model 2, Table 6) ($\triangle R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$). The interaction between organizational punishment and service climate significantly predicted moral disengagement ($b = -.11$, $SE = .04$, $t = -2.55$, $p < .05$). We plotted the interaction effect in Figure 4.

To test Hypothesis 2, we additionally included moral disengagement in Model 6 and found that the interaction effect between organizational punishment and service climate on UPB-C becomes insignificant (see Model 7, Table 6), suggesting that moral disengagement can mediate the interaction effect on UPB-C.

**Table 6**

Study 2: Regression results for estimated coefficients of the moderated mediation model

| | DV = Moral disengagement | | | | | | DV = UPB-C | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | | Model 3 | | Model 4 | | Model 5 | | Model 6 | | Model 7 | |
| | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* | *b* | *SE* |
| Constant | 2.59*** | .49 | 3.43*** | .54 | 3.70*** | .49 | 1.29* | .60 | 1.77*** | .67 | 2.11*** | .68 | −.24 | .66 |
| Age | −.03 | .01 | −.03*** | .01 | −.02*** | .01 | −.02*** | .01 | −.01 | .01 | −.01 | .01 | .00 | .00 |
| Organizational identification | −.01 | .05 | .05 | .06 | .04 | .05 | .15** | .06 | .17* | .07 | .16* | .07 | .13 | .06 |
| Machiavellianism | .11 | .06 | .09 | .06 | .08 | .06 | .25*** | .07 | .24** | .07 | .22** | .07 | .17** | .06 |
| Social desirability | .25 | .11 | .25** | .10 | .25 | .10 | .18 | .13 | .18 | .13 | .18 | .13 | .02* | .11 |
| Organizational punishment | | | −.13** | .06 | −.16** | .06 | | | −.12 | .07 | −.16* | .08 | −.06 | .07 |
| Service climate | | | −.09 | .08 | −.09 | .08 | | | .01 | .10 | .00 | .10 | .06 | .08 |
| Organizational punishment × service climate | | | | | −.11* | .04 | | | | | −.13* | .05 | −.06 | .05 |
| Moral disengagement | | | | | | | | | | | | | .63*** | .08 |
| $R^2$ | .20 | | .24 | | .27*** | | .17 | | .19 | | .22 | | .42 | |
| $\triangle R^2$ | | | .05** | | .03* | | | | .02 | | .03* | | .20*** | |

*Notes.*

*N* = 191. UPB-C = unethical pro-organizational behavior directed at customers. All tests are two-tailed. Coefficients are unstandardized. *$p$ < .05 **$p$ < .01 ***$p$ <

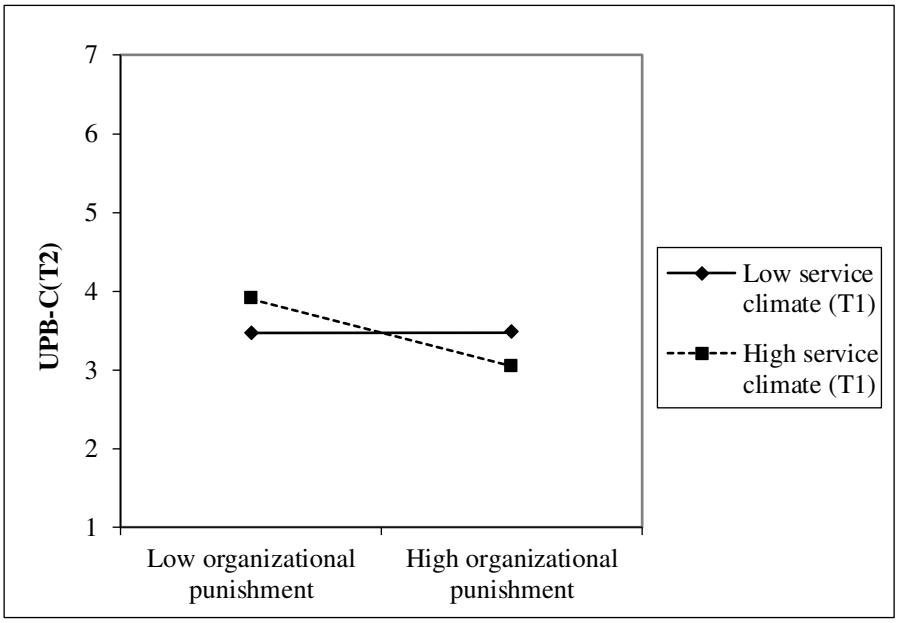



**Fig. 3.** Interaction effect of organizational punishment (T1) and service climate (T1) on UPB-C (T2) in Study 2. Higher and lower service climate represent one standard deviation above and below the mean.

To further understand the moderated mediation process as implied in our model, Table 7 shows the conditional effects for both higher (1 SD above the mean) and lower levels (1 SD below the mean) of service climate. The results revealed that the indirect effect of organizational punishment, via moral disengagement, on UPB-C was significant when service climate is high (95% bootstrapping CI [−.30, −.08]) and was not significant when service climate is low (95% bootstrapping CI [−.13, .07]). Altogether, our findings support our expectation that higher organizational punishment and higher service climate are associated with lower moral disengagement and thus UPB-C.

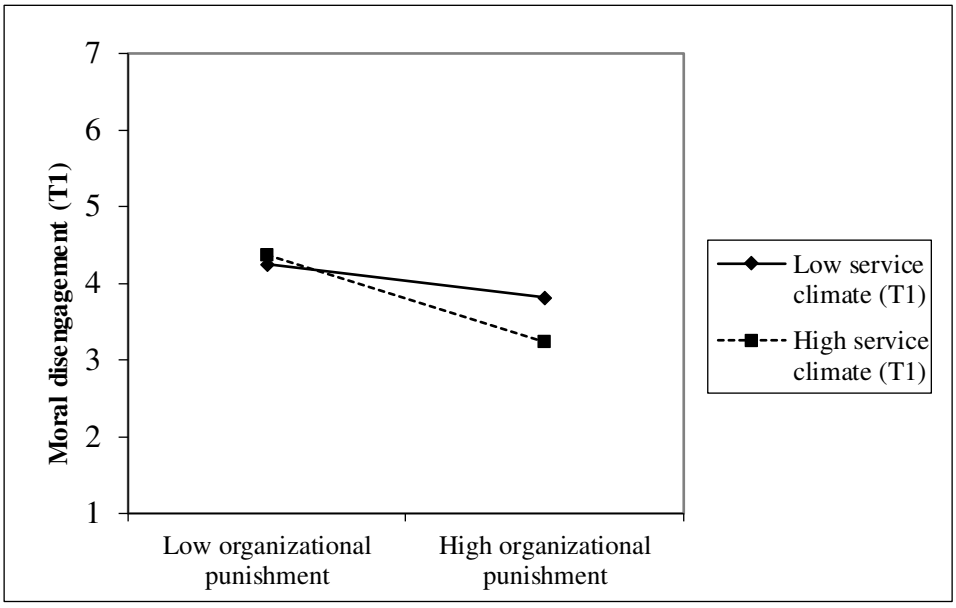



**Fig. 4.** Interaction effect of organizational punishment (T1) and service climate (T1) on moral disengagement (T1) in Study 2. Higher and lower service climate represent one standard deviation above and below the mean.

**Table 7**

Study 2: Results of indirect and conditional indirect relationships

| Organizational sPunishment → Moral disengagement → UPB | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Relationships | *B* | *SE* | 95% bias-corrected CI |
| Indirect relationship | −.12 | .04 | [−.20, −.04] |
| Conditional indirect relationship | | | |
| Higher level of service climate (+1 SD) | −.18 | .06 | [−.30, −.08] |
| Lower level of service climate (−1 SD) | −.03 | .05 | [−.13, .07] |
| | Index of moderated mediation | | |
| | Index | Boot SE | 95% bias-corrected CI |
| Service climate | −.07 | .03 | [−.13, −.01] |

*Notes.*
$N = 191$. CI = confidence interval.
The indirect effect and conditional indirect effect tests were based on 5,000 bootstrapping resamples. $^{*}p < .05$ $^{**}p < .01$ $^{***}p < .001$.

## 5. General discussion

In this study, we explored how organizations might mitigate employees' well-intended unethical behavior (UPB-C). Drawing on EDM theory, we conceptualized UPB-C as a behavior reflecting an ethical dilemma. Our results indicated that organizational punishment and service climate jointly inhibit the moral disengagement process that activates UPB-C. When a high level of organizational punishment is accompanied with a high level of service climate, employees are more likely to refrain from UPB-C.

559 *5.1. Theoretical implications*

560 Our findings have provided a number of implications for UPB literature, EDM theory, and
561 hospitality management literature.

562 First, by examining how organizations might prevent UPB in the hospitality context, our
563 study advances UPB literature by switching the research question from "what are the
564 prosocial antecedents that might motivate UPB?" to "how might organizations manage and
565 potentially eliminate such behavior?" A great challenge that prevents UPB researchers from
566 answering the latter question is the fact that UPB is well-intended with a pro-organizational
567 feature, and thus tends to be evoked by positive attitudes or relationships with the
568 organization or its members (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Miao et al., 2013). Rather than
569 suppressing these positive antecedents, we examined alternative ways that help to manage
570 UPB and suggest that UPB might be effectively reduced by ethical infrastructure that
571 regulates unethical behavior and organizational that signals the priority of the organization.

572 Second, diverging from existing UPB research, we reconceptualized UPB as an ethical
573 dilemma based on EDM theory. In doing so, we were able to examine how organizational
574 ethical infrastructure (i.e., organizational punishment) and organizational climate (i.e., service
575 climate) interact to influence UPB-C. EDM theory suggests that, when confronting an ethical
576 dilemma, more information needs to be gathered "in order to properly understand the
577 ramifications of a particular issue" (Schwartz, 2016, p. 763); our research specified and
578 empirically tested these two types of information from the organization that help to resolve an
579 ethical dilemma like UPB-C. Furthermore, findings on the mediating mechanism of moral
580 disengagement have provided further empirical support for how such work environmental
581 factors encouraging employees to stay morally engaged and be morally aware when facing a
582 dilemma (Schwartz, 2016). Taken together, by examining the information cues that related to
583 both "pro-organizational" and "ethical" – related situational cues, our research has extended
584 EDM theory and extant UPB literature, both of which have focused more on the "ethical" –
585 related situational cue, such as ethical climate and ethical culture in EDM theory (Schwartz,
586 2016), or amoral culture in UPB literature (Umphress & Bingham, 2011).

587 Third, our research responds to recent calls in hospitality literature to explore the
588 relationship between organizational variables and employee ethical behavior (Myung, 2018).
589 Specifically, to our best knowledge, our research is among the first to investigate how
590 managers can prevent employees' well-intentioned unethical behavior (UPB-C) in a
591 hospitality context. Prior hospitality ethics research tends to focus on employees' self-

interested behaviors, such as theft (Tresidder & Martin, 2018), service sabotage (Haldorai et al., 2020), alcohol abuse (Hight & Part, 2019), incivility towards customers (Kim & Qu, 2019) or general deviant behavior that threaten the well-being of an organization and its members (Tuzun & Kalemci, 2018). By shifting the focus onto the unethical behaviors with pro-organizational intentions, our research has broadened the scope of ethical research in the hospitality context.

Besides, in terms of organizational variables, the findings on the boundary condition of service climate are also important because it indicates that service climate is not only a relevant construct when investigating employees' in-role or out-role service behaviors, but also worthwhile when exploring unethical behaviors. Indeed, prior research on service climate in the hospitality context has largely focused on its impact on employees' service performance (Ye & He, 2019; Yang et al., 2020) and employees' service-oriented OCB (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020; Elche et al., 2020). Diverging from these threads of research, our examination suggests that when interacting with organisation's ethical infrastructure, the impact of service climate goes beyond typical 'service behaviors' and may shape employees' ethical decision and ethical behaviors directed to customers.

### *5.2. Practical implications*

Unethical behaviors have proven to be detrimental to organizations (Treviño et al., 2014). The hospitality industry places employees in tempting situations, such as frequent cash transactions, which could provide even more opportunities for employees to commit unethical behaviors (Jung et al., 2010; Reynolds, 2000). Such situations have made the management of unethical behavior even more challenging when they are accompanied by pro-organizational motives in UPB. However, most managers in the hospitality have tended to fixate their attention onto self-interested unethical behaviors, with relatively limited awareness that good organizational practices may also lead to this particular type of unethical behavior - UPB. As such, managers in hospitality organizations will need to have a closer look to detect employees' UPB to uncover its unethical implications.

In addition, we found that organizational punishment will only help prevent UPB under a strong service climate, suggesting that having a strong ethical infrastructure only is not effective to prevent UPB. While hospitality organisations would benefit from having a strong ethical infrastructure in place, which helps to raise employees' awareness of ethical issues, convey the importance of behaving ethically, as well as emphasize the consequence of not doing so, fostering a strong service climate is also important. This is particularly important in

the case of UPB, as employees may fail to recognize the unethicality of their behaviors due to its pro-organizational intention. Hence, practically, the organization could, on the one hand, enforce codes of ethics by incorporating them into the strategic planning and daily operations; on the other hand, having their reward system, training programs, strategic goals, and service rules deliver a consistent and strong message to employees that behaviors compromising the welfare of customers are not expected nor rewarded by their organization.

Finally, the findings on moral disengagement suggest that organizations can influence their employees' properties to morally disengage. Also, as noted in the EDM theory, employees are more likely morally disengage when working in an organization where ethical consideration pales in comparison with bottom-line; thus, organizations would benefit from investing more efforts to bolstering employees' moral engagement and such as through a strong ethical infrastructure and a service climate which is genuine for the welfare of customers, rather than solely intended to promote the company's bottom-line interests (Moore et al., 2012; Myer et al., 2016).

### *5.3. Limitations and future research*

Despite above implications, our research has two key limitations that warrant future research. First, we rely on employees' self-reported UPB, because, in the hospitality industry, services are often provided without close monitoring and thus may not be easily observed by others, which makes others' ratings of UPB not necessarily more accurate in reporting UPB. Nevertheless, future studies might use an experimental design with hypothetical scenarios to capture UPB, which will help to corroborate the evidence for our framework provided by self-reports. For example, future study may follow the approach employed in Chen et al.'s (2016) study, which used a scenario-based managerial decision-making to measure UPB.

Second, our study treated service climate as an individual perception, rather than shared perceptions among employees (Morrow et al., 2010). Therefore, our study provides limited insight into how shared perceptions might influence team and individual cognition and behavior. Therefore, future research could investigate climate strength and the variance of the perception shared within the group. Specifically, future research could take a multilevel approach to examine whether shared perceptions of service climate in the group might be a boundary condition of the relationship identified at the individual level.

## 6. Conclusion

In closing, we explored how organizations in hospitality could stop employees from engaging in UPB. Drawing on EDM theory, we identified that organizational punishment for unethical behavior interact with service climate to prevent UPB-C through its inhibiting effect on moral disengagement. We found that, where there is a higher level of organizational punishment and a higher level of service climate, employees are less likely to morally disengage, and thus less likely to engage in UPB-C. Research should continue to explore other ways that organizations might manage this well-intended but unethical behavior.

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## Appendix A. Measures

***Organizational sanction for unethical behavior***

1. Management in my organization disciplines unethical behavior when it occurs.
2. Penalties for unethical behavior are strictly enforced in my organization.
3. Unethical behavior is punished in this organization.

***Service climate***

1. Employees in our organization have knowledge of the job and the skills to deliver superior quality work and service.
2. Employees receive recognition and rewards for the delivery of superior work and service.
3. The overall quality of service provided by our organization to customers is excellent.
4. Employees are provided with tools, technology, and other resources to support the delivery of quality work and service.
5. Our organization spend great efforts to measure and track the quality of the work and service.
6. Our communications efforts to both employees and customers are very effective.
7. The leadership shown by management in our organization in supporting the service quality effort is excellent.

***Moral disengagement*** (Study 2)

1. It is ok to lie to the others (e.g. customers, suppliers, regulatory bodies) to defend your organization.
2. Considering the ways organizations in hospitality industry grossly misrepresent themselves, it's hardly a sin to inflate your organization's profile a bit.
3. Employee shouldn't be held accountable for doing questionable things when they were just doing what their boss told them to do.
4. Employee can't be blamed for doing things that are technically wrong when all their colleagues are doing it too.
5. Customers who get mistreated have usually done something to bring it on themselves.

***UPB-C***

1. If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good.

2. If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients.
3. If it would benefit my organization, I would withhold negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients.
4. If needed, I would conceal information from the public that could be damaging to my organization.
5. If my organization needed me to, I would withhold issuing a refund to a customer or client accidentally overcharged.

913 **Appendix B: The nomological network of UPB research**