

# Feeling proud but guilty? Unpacking the paradoxical nature of unethical pro-organizational behavior

Pok Man Tang<sup>a,\*</sup>, Kai Chi Yam<sup>b</sup>, Joel Koopman<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Texas A&M University, United States

<sup>b</sup> National University of Singapore, Singapore

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## ABSTRACT

Integrating appraisal theories of emotion and the literature of self-conscious emotion, we argue that UPB has a paradoxical nature that can lead to ambivalent emotional reactions, with implications for subsequent behavior. On the one hand, because UPB benefits one's organization, it should trigger feelings of pride. However, given its unethical nature, UPB should also trigger feelings of guilt. Using an experience sampling study of 91 customer-service agent dyads in the technology consultancy industry, we find that daily UPB is positively associated with daily pride and guilt. These emotions in turn lead to increased citizenship behavior directed towards the organization and customers, respectively. We replicate these findings with another experience sampling study of 78 triads (focal employees, co-workers, and customers) in the financial service industry. More importantly, we find that service employees' guilt proneness moderates the link between daily UPB and pride, such that UPB leads to heightened feelings of pride especially when the service employees have lower levels of guilt proneness. We conclude by discussing the theoretical and practical implications of our work.

## 1. Introduction

*"On a daily basis, I engage in different degrees of selling behavior that would harm the customers, yet it is good for the company...Sometimes I feel like I am achieving something...Sometimes I feel like I am doing a wrong thing..."*

Anonymous study participant, customer service

The opening quote reflects a sentiment that many customer service employees may feel on a daily basis. Indeed, unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB), defined as "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. 621), is ubiquitous among service industry employees. Research reveals that many employees, particularly those in the service sector, admit to engaging in these questionable behaviors in order to benefit their organizations (e.g., Bellizzi, 2008; Chen, Chen, & Sheldon, 2016; Kaptein, 2008a). Given this trend, scholars have paid increasing attention to UPB in recent years. To date, this growing literature has revealed numerous antecedents, such as organizational identification (Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell, 2010), affective commitment (Matherne & Litchfield, 2012), and leadership styles (e.g., transformational leadership; Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014).

Despite the valuable insights from prior research on UPB to date, our understanding of the nature and nomological net of UPB is incomplete for two reasons. First, scholars have largely focused on various individual and organizational antecedents of UPB, with correspondingly little attention paid to the consequences of this behavior. This scant attention paid to UPB's consequences suggests that the outcomes of this behavior may be seen as relatively obvious, or of less theoretical significance, compared to theory building regarding antecedents. We submit, however, that such a belief would be short-sighted. Despite the normatively "negative" nature of this behavior, there are reasons to suspect that its enactment might lead employees to subsequently engage in "positive" prosocial behaviors. Indeed, recent behavioral ethics studies have suggested the co-occurrence of both ethical and unethical behavior at the workplace (Ghorbani, Liao, Çayköylü, & Chand, 2013; Liao, Yam, Johnson, Liu, & Song, 2018; Yam, Klotz, He, & Reynolds, 2017).

Second, extant UPB research has largely adopted a between-person perspective focused on differences between employees who engage in more or fewer UPBs over some specified period of time. We submit, however, that unethical acts such as UPB are a dynamic and daily occurrence. To this point, Kouchaki and Gino (2016) noted that unethical behavior is "a phenomenon that we see over and over in organizations, in everyday life." Relying on between-person conceptualizations and

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [ptang@mays.tamu.edu](mailto:ptang@mays.tamu.edu) (P.M. Tang).

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empirics therefore limits our ability to explain and understand unethical behaviors like UPB. Instead, these above points suggest that unethical behavior should be conceptualized and operationalized as a behavior that varies daily, within-individuals, which allows researchers to examine the consequences of an employee engaging in more or less of this behavior than is typical, for that employee (e.g., [Umphress, Gardner, Stoverink, & Leavitt, 2019](#)). In fact, daily fluctuations of unethical behavior among employees are even more evident in fast-paced industries like customer service and retail, which is the typical setting for many studies of UPB (e.g., [Chen et al., 2016](#)). Given this, dynamic theory and empirics are even more necessary ([Dalal, Bhawe, & Fiset, 2014](#); [Mitchell, Greenbaum, Mawritz, & Edwards, 2018](#)).

To address both of the aforementioned limitations of prior research, we apply a within-individual lens to the study of UPB's daily consequences. As evidenced by the opening quote, UPB appears to be a phenomenon that may lead employees to experience both strong, and opposing, emotional reactions because of its paradoxical nature (i.e., unethical to customer yet beneficial to the company) ([Chen et al., 2016](#)). To this end, we expect that the enactment of UPB in a service context may be a source of daily *emotional ambivalence* ([Rothman, Pratt, Rees, & Vogus, 2017, p. 35](#)). Specifically, drawing from appraisal theories of emotion (for reviews, see [Roseman & Smith, 2001](#); [Scherer et al., 2001](#)) and the literature on self-conscious emotions ([Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007](#); [Tracy & Robins, 2004](#)), we propose that on a daily basis, UPB simultaneously triggers both positive and negative self-conscious emotions ([Larsen, McGraw, & Cacioppo, 2001](#)). This theory holds that emotions are elicited during the appraisal process based on the congruence of an employee's behavior and their own stable, cognitive self-representation (which theory generally views as being favorable; [Sedikides & Strube, 1997](#); [Tracy & Robins, 2004](#)). Drawing from this, the pro-organizational component of UPB is likely relatively well-aligned with this self-representation, which should trigger feelings of pride ([Tracy, Robins, & Tangney, 2007](#)). In contrast, we expect that the unethical component of UPB is likely misaligned with this self-representation, which should trigger feelings of guilt ([Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994](#)).

Theory on self-conscious emotions focuses on the self-evaluative information provided by emotions such as guilt and pride. That is, the experience of pride serves as a signal that one's behavior has been positive and beneficial to the organization, whereas guilt serves as a signal that one's behavior has violated existing norms (e.g., [Tangney et al., 2007](#)). Because emotions often serve as precursors to subsequent action (e.g., [Frijda, 1986](#)), we expect that experiencing pride or guilt should motivate employees to engage in *self-enhancing* and *self-compensatory* behavior enacted towards different stakeholders ([Tracy & Robins, 2004](#)). Specifically, we expect employees to engage in citizenship behavior towards the organization for self-enhancement purposes (via pride), and citizenship behavior towards customers—given the service context in which we test our theory—for self-compensatory purposes (via guilt) ([Tracy et al., 2007](#)).

It is unlikely, however, that the aforementioned processes occur in the same way for all service employees. Instead, theory suggests that individuals can be sensitized to particular aspects of their own behavior, as well as the resulting comparison between that behavior and the comparison standard, based on stable personal characteristics (e.g., [Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989](#)). Speaking directly to our theory, this suggests that some employees could exhibit different emotional reactions following the enactment of UPB. Given the morally-relevant nature of our focal independent variable, and our focus on an employee's subsequent emotional reactions, we looked specifically to the employee's level of guilt proneness ([Cohen, Wolf, Panter, & Insko, 2011](#)). Guilt proneness is an “emotional trait” that reflects a stable means by which individuals evaluate their current behavior through a moral lens ([Cohen, Panter, & Turan, 2013, p. 46](#)). In this way, guilt proneness serves as a reminder to employees regarding the “norms of what they should do,” thus providing an interpretive filter through which employees can assess the ethical ramifications of their current actions ([Schaumburg & Flynn, 2017, p. 984](#)). Therefore, we posit that the unethical component of UPB will be particularly salient to employees with high levels of guilt proneness, leading those employees to experience lower levels of pride and higher levels of guilt upon engaging in unethical conduct like UPB. We tested these hypotheses with two multi-

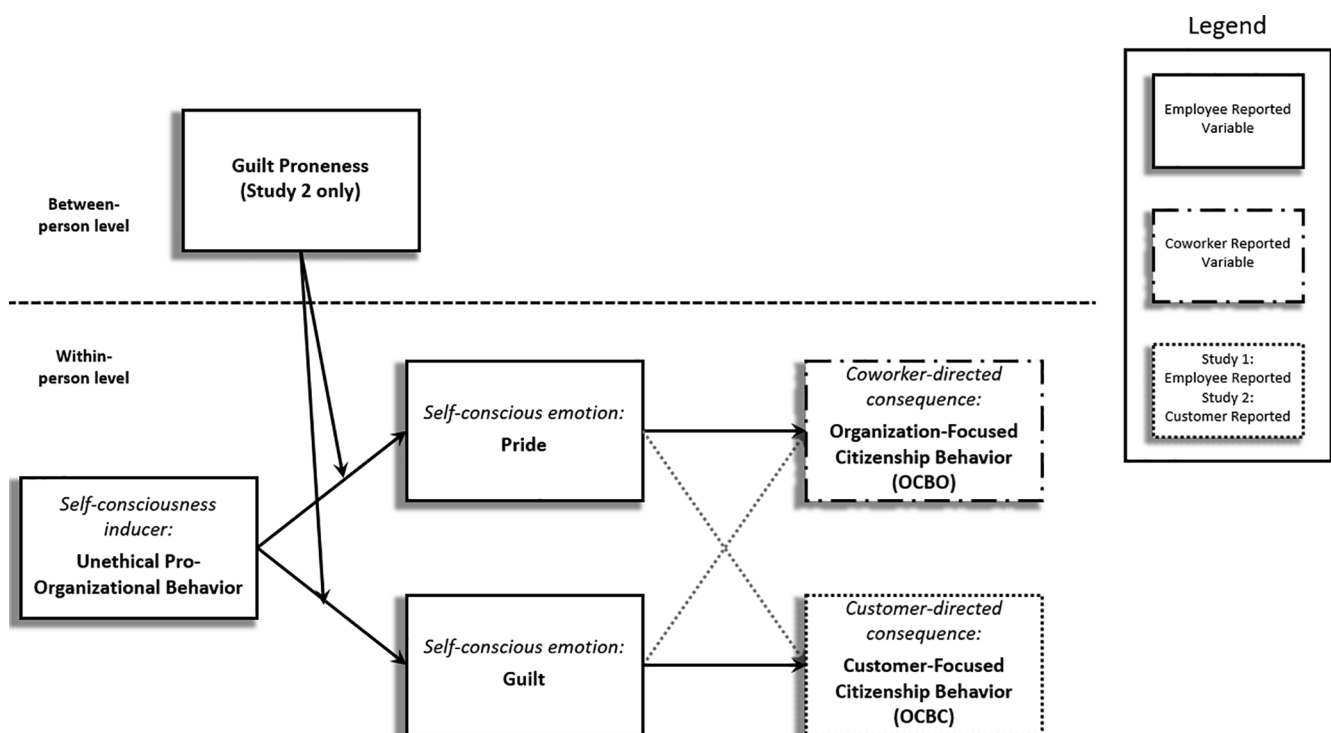


Fig. 1. Hypothesized model.

source experience sampling studies (ESM), both of which were situated in the service industry where UPB is relatively common. We survey employees, their co-workers, and a customer (Study 2) multiple times on a daily basis to provide a rigorous test of our theoretical model (Fig. 1).

Our research makes three contributions to the UPB literature. First, while scholars have largely focused on exploring its antecedents and motivating factors (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Umphress et al., 2010), we instead explore the emotional and behavioral consequences of UPB through the theoretical lens of appraisal theories of emotion (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Scherer et al., 2001; Tangney et al., 2007; Tracy & Robins, 2004). In doing so, we enrich the nomological net of this construct and reveal that UPB can lead to mixed emotions, and further downstream to positive behaviors towards both the organization and customers via two distinct mediating pathways. Furthermore, by examining the dual emotional mechanisms, this research concurrently answers calls from scholars to further enrich our understanding of both the antecedents and outcomes of emotional ambivalence (Rothman et al., 2017). Second, our dynamic model diverges from the conventional static, between-person approach of studying UPB to explore the daily fluctuations and the within-person process. Instead, our approach aligns with the daily and dynamic nature of unethical behavior in the workplace (Kouchaki & Gino, 2016), and thus answers calls to take a more dynamic process perspective in behavioral ethics (Collins, 2012; Liao et al., 2018) and UPB research (e.g., Umphress et al., 2019). Finally, beyond explaining *why* engaging in UPB affects the focal employees, we go further by showing *for whom* these effects will be more pronounced, in terms of their effects on the discrete self-conscious emotions of pride and guilt. This allows us to augment scholars' understanding of the individual dispositions that regulate both the emotional and behavioral consequences of UPB at work.

## 2. Theoretical development and hypotheses

Over the past decade, motivated in large part by the work of Umphress and colleagues in both defining the construct space and developing a measure (e.g., Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2010), scholars have become increasingly intrigued by UPB in general, with a particular focus on antecedents. To that end, scholars have found that employees usually engage in UPB when they feel more identified with the company or their supervisors (Johnson & Umphress, 2019; Umphress et al., 2010), when they observe their supervisors engaging in UPB (Fehr et al., 2019), and when the organizations have high-performance work systems (Xu & Lv, 2018). Yet this research, however, tells only half of the story about UPB. That is, while scholars know a great deal about the antecedents of UPB, there has been little theory development regarding the consequences of enacting UPB. Our position is that the morally charged, and paradoxical, nature of UPB means that employees are unlikely to simply enact this behavior mindlessly. Instead, we suspect that service employees will consider the implications of their behavior in its aftermath. Specifically, we build theory articulating that employees will have differential emotional reactions based on how they appraise UPB in terms of its pro-organizational vs. unethical nature. We turn to this theory building now.

### 2.1. UPB as a trigger of appraisal-based self-conscious emotions

According to appraisal theories, emotions are not objective responses to stimuli, but instead emerge from subjective evaluations of these stimuli (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003). Thus, individual appraisals of events and behaviors—and not the event or behavior itself—trigger emotions (e.g., Tepper et al., 2018). For example, individuals experience pride when they believe they have achieved something praiseworthy (e.g., received the best employee of the year award; Haidt, 2003), or when they identify with a group's praiseworthy behavior (e.g., a firm's CSR practices; Ng, Yam, & Aguinis, 2019). Similarly,

individuals experience guilt when they identify themselves as the cause of an unethical event or behavior (Baumeister et al., 1994), or when their behaviors violate normative standards such as not upholding religious traditions (Bierbrauer, 1992).

Although appraisal theorists have generally suggested that individuals experience *either* positive or negative emotions after appraising a behavior or event (Bain, 1859; Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Russell & Carroll, 1999), there are reasons to expect that some appraisals can lead to *mixed* emotional reactions (i.e., emotional ambivalence; Larsen et al., 2001; Larsen & McGraw, 2011; Scherer, 1998; Wolgemuth, 1919). Emotional ambivalence refers to the “simultaneous existence of strong, polar opposite feelings...towards a given event.” (Rothman et al., 2017, p. 35). To this point, scholars have both proposed and empirically demonstrated that individuals can experience seemingly contradictory emotions simultaneously in response to their own behavior, or some experienced event. For example, Hume (2003) theorized that people can experience both positive and negative emotions stemming from stimuli with a mixed or ambiguous nature. Empirically, Larsen and McGraw (2011) demonstrated that participants felt both happy and sad on the day of graduation, and Hemenover and Schimmack (2007) found that viewing humorous video clips can lead to the discrete emotions of disgust and amusement (see also McGraw & Warren, 2010). In fact, the simultaneous experience of mixed emotions has also been shown in numerous contexts, such as listening to music that contains conflicting cues (Hunter, Schellenberg, & Stalinski, 2011), watching bittersweet advertisements (Williams & Aaker, 2002), and experiencing nostalgia (Sedikides, Wildschut, Arndt, & Routledge, 2008).

As it pertains to UPB, Rothman et al. (2017, p. 38) recently contended that behaviors or events containing “positive and negative elements” may lead individuals to experience both positive and negative emotions, resulting in a state of emotional ambivalence. UPB aptly fits this description, given its paradoxical nature as something unethical, yet organizationally-beneficial. We thus postulate that UPB might lead employees to experience emotional ambivalence. Further, we submit that the elicited emotions should be self-conscious in nature. Self-conscious emotions are related to our sense of self and help people understand how others perceive them (Haidt, 2003; Lewis, 1993). We reason that the paradoxical nature of UPB has implications for both the positive and negative self-conscious processes of the actors (e.g., Tangney et al., 2007; Tracy & Robins, 2004). The pro-organizational aspect of UPB should allow service employees to maintain a positive self-representation (e.g., “I am a good employee who engages in behavior that benefits the organization”). This positive self-evaluation should trigger correspondingly positive self-conscious emotions. In contrast, the unethical nature of UPB is likely at odds with the maintenance of a positive self-representation (e.g., “I have done something wrong to the customers”). As such, this behavior should lead service employees to possess a negative self-evaluation, resulting in negative self-conscious emotions (Tracy & Robins, 2004).

Following from the above, the pro-organizational component of UPB suggests employees should feel pride following their UPB. Seminal work in this literature suggests that as form of pro-organizational behavior, UPB should elicit a sense of achievement (Umphress et al., 2010). Along similar lines, scholars have suggested that pro-organizational behavior is associated with positive self-appraisals (e.g., Belschak & Den Hartog, 2009). For example, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) found that employees feel proud after engaging in pro-group behavior that promotes the group's success. Pride, in turn, is elicited when individuals feel they have “specific accomplishments,” and is likely to be accompanied by enhanced self-worth (Tracy & Robins, 2007, p. 507).

Drawing from the literature on self-conscious emotions (Tangney et al., 2007; Tracy & Robins, 2004), we argue that daily enactment of UPB leads to pride because service employees appraise UPB as a behavior that is relevant and congruent with their identities and goals. In other words, the “pro-organizational” aspect of UPB activates a self-

representation that reflects “I am a good worker” (Lazarus, 1991; Oveis, Horberg, & Keltner, 2010). Furthermore, research on the service context has highlighted that engaging in pro-organizational behavior can manifest the service employees’ identity as a responsible service employee for the company (He, Wang, Zhu, & Harris, 2015). Thus, after engaging in UPB, service employees should feel a sense of achievement, because this behavior promotes organizational functioning and profits (Lewis, 1993; Miller, 1995; Tangney, Wagner, & Gramzow, 1992). As such, employees may be more inclined to take credit for engaging in UPB, sparking a momentary mindset of “I’m proud of what I did” to help my organization (Tracy & Robins, 2004, p. 116).

**Hypothesis 1.** Daily UPB is positively related to daily feelings of pride.

In contrast, engaging in UPB can also be simultaneously appraised as unethical and thus a form of negative self-appraisal, leading to feelings of guilt.<sup>1</sup> Guilt often arises when individuals perceive that their behavior has violated moral standards or norms (Haidt, 2003; Lazarus, 1991). Research on behavioral ethics suggests that most people strive to be a moral person (Aquino & Reed, 2002). As a result, enactment of unethical behavior jeopardizes this self-representation. Drawing from the literature on self-conscious emotions (Tangney et al., 2007; Tracy & Robins, 2004), we suspect that the incongruence between employee desired self-representations on the one hand, and their unethical behavior on the other, may result in momentary feelings of guilt (Haidt, 2003). Indeed, research suggests that people experience a sense of guilt even when contemplating unethical behavior (Tracy & Robins, 2006). Perhaps this is especially true in the service context, because service employees bear “a primary ethical responsibility” to provide their customers with “good quality products and services” (e.g., Kaptein, 2008b, p. 982). Because of the incongruence between the unethical nature of UPB and the service employees’ cognitive self-representation, using ethically questionable tactics to make a sale should lead service employees to hold themselves responsible for the negative consequences that would happen to their customers because of UPB (Stanton & Spiro, 1999; Tangney et al., 2007).

Emotion theorists have furthermore pinpointed that immoral behaviors mostly likely will elicit guilt when the actors can observe the consequences of their unethical behavior and attribute the behavior as under their control (Tangney, 1990; Tracy & Robins, 2006). This is because these factors reduce the psychological distance between the actors and the victims, which further intensifies feelings of guilt (Yam & Reynolds, 2016). Given that UPB is often carried out by sales agents with direct customer contacts (e.g., a sales agent can readily witness a customer purchasing a defective product) in the service industry (Chen et al., 2016) and that such behaviors are often volitional, guilt is a likely emotional response after engaging in UPB.

**Hypothesis 2.** Daily UPB is positively related to daily feelings of guilt.

## 2.2. Downstream consequences for organization- and customer-focused citizenship behaviors

The literature on self-conscious emotions (Fischer & Tangney, 1995; Tracy & Robins, 2007) suggests that emotions, regardless of valence, cue individuals to display social behaviors (Tangney, 1990). As Tangney et al. (2007, p. 22) mention, self-conscious emotions such as

<sup>1</sup> Guilt is often discussed alongside another negative self-conscious emotion—shame. In general, these constructs are regarded as both theoretically and empirically distinct. As Tangney et al. (2007, p. 25) noted, “guilt involves a negative evaluation of a specific behavior,” whereas “shame involves a negative evaluation of the global self.” Put differently, guilt is experienced following an appraisal of one’s behavior, whereas shame is experienced following an appraisal of one’s her whole self. Because we expect UPB to vary on a daily basis in the service interactions between customers and service employees, guilt is thus more theoretically suited in our model than shame.

pride and guilt “function as an emotional moral barometer, providing immediate and salient feedback on our social and moral acceptability.” Self-conscious emotions should thus serve as behavioral regulators that provide dynamic and timely feedback on one’s prior behavior.

Scholars contend that behaviors triggered by emotional arousal are often targeted to the source of that trigger (e.g., Baumgartner, Pieters, & Bagozzi, 2008; Yang & Diefendorff, 2009). This claim is consistent with appraisal theories of emotions, which suggest that specific emotions often drive goal- or target-directed behavior (Bagozzi & Pieters, 1998). For example, McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, and Larson (2001) found that experiencing gratitude leads individuals to act prosocially toward the direct benefactor, but not others. Mitchell, Vogel, and Folger (2015) found that abusive supervision triggers target-specific anger, thereby increasing supervisor-targeted deviant behavior. Given that UPB benefits the organization, but harms the customers, we propose that the emotions triggered by UPB (i.e., pride and guilt) will lead to behaviors that benefit the organizations and behaviors that benefit the customers, respectively.

Specifically, pride (a positive self-conscious emotion) likely propels individuals to enact *self-enhancing* behavior—behaviors that help individuals “view themselves as better than others, thus maintaining and enhancing their own self-esteem” (Taris, 2000, p. 35). Self-enhancing behaviors can help maintain the desirable self-evaluation generated through UPB. In contrast, guilt (a negative self-conscious emotion) is likely to motivate *self-compensatory* behavior—reparative behavior that aims at amending one’s past wrongdoings in order to compensate for the deficient self-representation followed by daily UPB (Robins, Nettle, & Tracy, 2007; Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Below, we propose that UPB leads to increased organizational citizenship behavior (OCBO) via pride and customer-focused citizenship behavior (OCBC) via guilt.

OCBO is broadly defined as discretionary behavior that immediately “benefit[s] the organization in general” (Williams & Anderson, 1991, p. 602). Prototypical OCBOs include adhering to informal rules and conserving organizational property. After feeling proud, individuals are motivated to preserve such feelings. Indeed, as Ng et al. (2019) mentioned, “self-enhancement is one of the most fundamental goals of human existence” (p. 3). When individuals feel proud after engaging in UPB, they may seek to maintain the momentary feeling of self-enhancement by further enacting prosocial behavior directed at the organization (Swann, Griffin, Predmore, & Gaines, 1987; Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989). Because the momentary feelings of pride are the result of behaviors that benefit the organization (i.e., daily UPB), we suggest that the ensuing prosocial behavior will correspondingly be targeted towards the organization.

Recent research provides support for this, noting that citizenship behavior can generate an immediate positive boost in positive affect (Conway, Rogelberg, & Pitts, 2009; Glomb, Bhawe, Miner, & Wall, 2011). As such, behaviors such as OCBO may preserve and extend positive feelings like pride. We therefore suggest OCBO serves as a way to further maintain the momentary feelings of pride that result from one’s UPB by enhancing an employee’s self-evaluation. Supporting this logic, previous studies have found that feelings of pride are associated with prosocial behavior because people want to fulfil the motive of self-enhancement after feeling proud (Helm, Renk, & Mishra, 2016; Verbeke, Belschak, & Bagozzi, 2004). All in all, we suggest that UPB, on a daily basis, elicits the positive self-conscious emotions of pride, which in turn motivates employees to exhibit citizenship behavior targeted at the organization.

**Hypothesis 3.** Daily pride mediates the indirect effect between daily UPB and daily organization-focused citizenship behavior (OCBO).

OCBC reflects the discretionary behaviors of service employees toward customers that go beyond formal job requirements (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997). Prototypical OCBCs include voluntarily helping and assisting customers with problems beyond what is explicitly required by the job itself. This concept originates from consumer psychology,



highlighting the importance of providing “spontaneous” extra-role service and “extra attention” during service encounters (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). When service employees are sensitized to the harm caused to customers by their UPB, ensuing prosocial behavior should be specifically targeted at this group. That is, when feeling guilty from UPB, service employees may be more likely to engage in reparative behavior as a means of compensating for their deficient self-evaluations.

Research in both organizational behavior and social psychology provides support for the hypothesis that unethical behavior often leads to subsequent prosocial behavior as a result of guilt. For example, Ilies, Peng, Savani, and Dimotakis (2013) revealed that deviant employees washed away their guilt by engaging in more citizenship behavior. In another study, Liao et al. (2018) found that abusive leaders engage in more positive leadership behaviors towards the abused followers (but not other followers), such as consideration and initiating structure, in order to cleanse their feeling of guilt. This argument is also consistent with the broader literature of the interplay between immoral behavior and guilt. For example, Zhong and colleagues (West & Zhong, 2015; Zhong, Liljenquist, & Cain, 2009) found that individuals are most likely to engage in compensatory behaviors aimed at eliminating the provoking moral threat itself.

**Hypothesis 4.** Daily guilt mediates the indirect effect between daily UPB and daily customer-focused citizenship behavior (OCBC).

### 2.3. The moderating effect of guilt proneness

Our theory thus far highlights that UPB can result in service employees’ emotional ambivalence in the form of pride and guilt. However, there are reasons to think that the strength of these emotional reactions could differ across service employees. By drawing further from appraisal theories of emotion and the literature on self-conscious emotion (e.g., Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Tracy & Robins, 2004; Tracy et al., 2007), we identify guilt proneness (Cohen et al., 2011) as an employee characteristic that may account for these differences.

Following theory from Gross, individuals may focus on particular aspects of emotion-eliciting cues (i.e., UPB) and, in so doing, alter both their appraisal, and subsequent emotional reaction (Gross, 1998). Our focus on self-conscious emotions specifically guides us to focus on factors that affect the “evaluation of the ethics of the behavior” (Tangney et al., 2007, p. 22). For this reason, we look to service employee’s level of guilt proneness, which is an individual characteristic that captures how service employees appraise their own immoral behaviors (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2017). Cohen et al. (2011) describe guilt proneness as an emotional trait that prompts people to both evaluate their behavior, as well as experience emotional responses to that behavior. As it pertains to UPB, service employees with higher levels of guilt proneness should be particularly attuned to the negative effects of UPB for customers (Tangney, 1990). This likely makes salient the unethical, and not pro-organizational, nature of this behavior (Cohen, Panter, & Turan, 2012). Indeed, employees with higher levels of guilt proneness are viewed as “more motivated by other-oriented concerns and what they believe they should do” (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2017, p. 983; see also Tangney & Dearing, 2002), which may lead them to hold themselves responsible for any potential negative consequences that afflict their customers as a result of their UPB. In other words, these employees should be more likely to appraise their UPB negatively and as a form of unethical conduct (as opposed to seeing it positively as being pro-organizational), which should be misaligned with their desired self-representation (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Tangney et al., 2007; Tracy & Robins, 2004). As a result, we expect this appraisal will weaken feelings of pride and strengthen feelings of guilt following UPB.

In contrast, the reverse should be true of service employees with lower levels of guilt proneness. That is, we expect these employees should be less attentive to the negative and unethical aspects of their

UPB, and instead focus on the positive and pro-organizational component of this behavior (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2012, 2017). These employees are unlikely to feel personally responsible for any negative consequences that befall their customers. We expect these employees will tend to appraise their UPB not as a form of unethical conduct, but instead as a means by which their behavior benefits the organization (Cohen et al., 2012). This should align with their desired self-representation and reaffirm their worth and value as an employee (Tracy & Robins, 2004). As a result, we expect this appraisal will weaken feelings of guilt while strengthening feelings of pride following UPB. Taken together, we hypothesize:

**Hypothesis 5a.** Guilt proneness will moderate the positive relationship between daily UPB and pride, such that this relationship will be stronger for service employee with lower (vs. higher) levels of guilt proneness.

**Hypothesis 5b.** Guilt proneness will moderate the positive relationship between daily UPB and guilt, such that this relationship will be stronger for service employee with higher (vs. lower) levels of guilt proneness.

Integrating our theoretical arguments presented in Hypotheses 1–5, we further posit the following moderated mediation hypotheses.

**Hypothesis 6a.** Guilt proneness will moderate the mediated relationship between daily UPB organization-focused citizenship behavior (OCBO) through pride, such that this relationship will be stronger for service employee with lower (vs. higher) levels of guilt proneness.

**Hypothesis 6b.** Guilt proneness will moderate the mediated relationship between daily UPB and customer-focused citizenship (OCBC) through guilt, such that this relationship will be stronger for service employee with higher (vs. lower) levels of guilt proneness.

## 3. Overview of studies

We examined our hypotheses by conducting two multi-source ESM studies. In Study 1, we test Hypotheses 1–4 (our main effect and mediation hypotheses) with a *dual source* (i.e., obtaining responses from employees and coworkers) ESM study with three daily contacts. In this study, we further confirm the distinctiveness of guilt from a closely related emotion—shame—by controlling for it in our analyses. We then present Study 2 which is, to our knowledge, the first *triple-source* ESM study (i.e., obtaining responses from employees, coworkers, and customers) with four daily contacts. The incorporation of Study 2 augments the contribution of our manuscript in several ways.

First, Study 2 replicates our findings from Study 1. Replication is increasingly recognized as critical to advancing scientific knowledge, and to that end, the alignment of results between both studies should give readers considerable confidence in the theory we develop. Second, Study 2 allows us to extend the breadth of our theory by examining the extent to which some employees are more likely to experience pride or guilt following their enactment of UPB (i.e., Hypotheses 5–6). Specifically, we examine employee guilt proneness as a cross-level moderator of the effects of UPB on both pride and guilt.

Third, although Study 1 addressed one potential alternative explanation for our findings (i.e., shame), there are other potential alternative explanations, at both the between- and within-individual level, that we should also rule out. For example, at the between-individual level, organizational identification is the mostly widely studied factor in the UPB literature (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Kong, 2016; Umphress et al., 2010), and employees with high levels of trait organizational identification might experience different emotional responses to UPB compared to employees who do not identify with the organization. In a similar vein, an employee’s service role identity could also influence how individual appraise their enactment of UPB, which would have similar implications for their subsequent emotional

response (e.g., Galperin, Bennett, & Aquino, 2011). At the within-individual level, we also controlled for daily organizational identification, following arguments that this construct can involve a dynamic construction process that may change upon the daily occurrence of organizational events (e.g., Schneider, Hall, & Nygren, 1971). We also controlled for the employees' daily self-esteem, as it is plausible that engaging UPB may affect one's momentary self-concept (Bersoff, 1999). Together, our two studies provide a rigorous and comprehensive test of both why, and for whom, daily UPB influences feelings of pride and guilt, and ultimately different forms of citizenship behavior.<sup>2</sup>

## 4. Study 1 method

### 4.1. Sample and procedure

We collected data from a European technology service company located in Southern China, approved by the institutional review board of the National University of Singapore (Approval No. MO-DER-18-002). The managing director and human resource department distributed study announcements to customer service representatives, and we followed up by contacting participants with an email in which we further described the study (e.g., the daily nature of our study, confidentiality, and compensation). We contacted 131 sales agents, 113 of whom initially agreed to participate. Employee responsibilities included responding to corporate customers' requests, handling complaints, making cold calls, providing after-sales customer service, and occasionally meeting with customers on sites. We specifically selected this sample to test our theory, as prior research has demonstrated that such a job context is suitable for examining daily interactions with customer, emotions, and customer-oriented behaviors (e.g., Liu et al., 2017; Song et al., 2018). The nature of this context is also especially suited in testing UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016).

We collected data over three work weeks. Following past ESM studies, we began with an initial, one-time survey wherein we obtained consent and demographic information, followed by a series of daily surveys (e.g., Lanaj, Kim, Koopman, & Matta, 2018). The daily surveys were completed in the second and third weeks (10 consecutive work days, and were sent via email at three fixed timeslots everyday (i.e., before work, midday, and end of workday). The before-work survey (sent between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m.), contained measures of daily baseline positive and negative affect, which we include as control variables. The midday survey (sent between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m.) contained measures of daily unethical pro-organizational behavior, pride, and guilt. Lastly, we sent a survey to each focal employee, as well as to a coworker based on his/her physical proximity at work to the focal employee, at the end of the workday between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. (for a similar design, see Trougakos, Beal, Cheng, Hideg, & Zweig, 2015). The focal employee survey contained a measure of customer-focused citizenship behavior, whereas the coworker rated the focal employee's daily organizational citizenship behavior. During recruitment, we ensured that the coworker interacted frequently with the focal employee (e.g., they were seated in close proximity at work). We compensated each participant with \$30.

After eliminating 22 dyads who did not provide enough data for analysis, our final sample consisted of 91 dyads who completed 732 day-level observations. Most of the sales agents identified as female (58.40%), with an average age of 28.73 years ( $SD = 5.60$ ), and an average organizational tenure of 1.63 years ( $SD = 1.07$ ).

### 4.2. Measures

We translated the measures from English to Chinese following Brislin (1980) back-translation procedure. As recommended by Beal (2015), and

following prior ESM studies, we used shortened versions of scales to limit the length of the surveys, and used the same scale anchors (1 = Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree) for our measures (e.g., Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott, 2016; Mitchell, Greenbaum, Mawritz, & Edwards, 2018). See Table A1 in Appendix A for all scales used in this study.

#### 4.2.1. Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB)

Employees reported their enactment of UPB on the midday survey using 4 items from a scale developed by Umphress et al. (2010). We selected these four items because they are typical behaviors in the customer service industry and should display the most daily variance. We asked focal employees to think about their day and rate their agreement on each item. An example item is "Today, I exaggerated the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients." Coefficient alpha was 0.85.

#### 4.2.2. Pride

Employees reported their level of pride on the midday survey with the 3-item scale developed by Tracy and Robins (2007), and recently used by Baer et al. (2015). Participants reported their agreement with a series of adjectives about how they felt during interactions with customers at work today. An example item is "Accomplished." Coefficient alpha was 0.93.

#### 4.2.3. Guilt

Employees reported their level of guilt on the midday survey with the 3-item scale developed by Izard, Dougherty, Bloxom, and Kotsch (1974), and used by Livingston and Judge (2008). Participants reported their agreement with adjectives about how they felt in interactions with customers at work today. An example item is "Guilty." Coefficient alpha was 0.80.

#### 4.2.4. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCBO)

A coworker rated the focal employee's OCBO at the end of the workday using 5 items from a scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). Coworkers were instructed to consider the focal employee's citizenship behavior. An example item is "Today, (name of focal employee) complained about insignificant things at work" (reverse-coded). Coefficient alpha was 0.76.

#### 4.2.5. Customer-focused citizenship behavior (OCBC)

Employees reported their enactment of OCBC at the end of the workday using the 5-item scale developed by Bettencourt and Brown (1997) and recently used in a sample of service employees by Chen, Zhu, and Zhou (2015). An example item is "Today, I helped customers with problems beyond what is expected or required." Coefficient alpha was 0.89.

### 4.3. Control variables

#### 4.3.1. Positive and negative affect (PA and NA)

To control for the effects of daily baseline affective state (Song et al., 2018), employees reported their level of PA and NA before beginning work each day using 10 items (Mackinnon et al., 1999). Coefficient alpha for PA and NA were 0.87 and 0.91 respectively.

#### 4.3.2. Shame

Employees reported their level of shame on the midday survey with 3 items from Marschall, Sanftner, and Tangney (1994). We included this variable as a control in our analysis because although guilt and shame have been distinguished both empirically and theoretically (Tangney et al., 2007), past research has often shown a small to moderate correlation between them (Orth, Robins, & Soto, 2010). Participants reported their agreement with several statements about how they felt during interactions with customers at work today. An example item is "I felt like I am a bad person." Coefficient alpha was 0.80.

<sup>2</sup> Interested readers can access additional study materials at <https://osf.io/a98st>.

**Table 1**  
Descriptive statistics and correlations for Study 1 variables.

| Variable  | Mean | s.d. | 1      | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     |
|---|------|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Positive Affect  | 4.10 | 0.69 |        |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 2. Negative Affect  | 2.40 | 0.87 | −0.10* |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 3. Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior                      | 3.35 | 0.93 | 0.00   | 0.08* |       |       |       |       |       |
| 4. Pride  | 3.77 | 0.76 | 0.05   | 0.01  | 0.31* |       |       |       |       |
| 5. Guilt  | 3.16 | 0.85 | −0.06  | 0.03  | 0.35* | 0.07  |       |       |       |
| 6. Shame  | 3.53 | 0.81 | 0.05   | 0.10* | 0.03  | −0.01 | 0.12  |       |       |
| 7. Customer-focused Citizenship Behavior                      | 3.13 | 0.83 | −0.05  | 0.02  | 0.31* | 0.01  | 0.47* | 0.02  |       |
| 8. Organization-focused Citizenship Behavior (Coworker rated) | 3.82 | 0.57 | 0.02   | 0.00  | −0.03 | 0.10* | −0.02 | −0.02 | −0.03 |

Note. Level 1 N = 732, Level 2 N = 91. Means, standard deviations, and correlations represent group-mean centered relationships at the within-individual level of analysis.

\*  $p < .05$ .

#### 4.4. Analytic strategy

We controlled for a number of variables in this study, which we describe below. However our results were unchanged when all control variables were removed (see Table B1 in Appendix B). First, we included baseline PA and NA in our analyses, because daily general affective states could influence the perceptions of both discrete emotions and our proposed downstream outcomes (e.g., Foulk, Lanaj, Tu, Erez, & Archambeau, 2018; Liao et al., 2018). We also controlled for daily shame, measured at the same time as daily pride and guilt, for reasons discussed above.

Beyond these emotions, we also controlled for several artifactual sources of variance. First, following recent ESM studies (e.g., Koopman, Lin, Lennard, Matta, & Johnson, in press; Song et al., 2018), we controlled for a lagged version of each endogenous variable to capture changes in the level that have occurred in the intervening time period (Scott & Barnes, 2011). Second, we included a linear growth term for each day of the study (i.e., 1–10) to account for potential measurement reactance over the course of the study (e.g., Lanaj, Johnson, & Wang, 2016; Trougakos et al., 2015). Third, Beal and Ghandour (2011) raised the issue that daily emotional states may fluctuate cyclically over the course of a week. To rule out this alternative explanation, these authors recommend including three additional variables: a linear term representing the day of the week, as well as the sine and cosine of that variable (for examples, see Rosen, Koopman, Gabriel, & Johnson, 2016; Trougakos, Hideg, Cheng, & Beal, 2014).

Because our data is multilevel (repeated daily observations nested within individuals), we used multilevel modeling in Mplus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). A multilevel confirmatory factor analysis on the eight study variables (five variables with hypothesized relationships and three control variables) revealed adequate fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 917$ ,  $df = 601$ , CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.03, SRMR = 0.03). We also found that the majority of variance in our daily variables was within-individual, thus confirming that our analytic approach is appropriate (Podsakoff, Spoelma, Chawla, & Gabriel, 2019).<sup>3</sup> Given this, we proceeded to test our model. We group-mean centered our level 1 predictors (e.g., centering each individual's daily observations relative to their overall mean on that variable; Enders & Tofighi, 2007). Although we did not hypothesize relationships between guilt and OCBO, and between pride and OCBC, we included these paths in our model. To calculate mediation, we followed recommendations for multilevel models to implement a parametric bootstrap with 20,000 resamples (Preacher, Zyphur, & Zhang, 2010). This uses the parameter and standard error from the analyses to estimate 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals from the sampling distribution of the indirect effect (for examples, see Gabriel, Koopman, Rosen, & Johnson, 2018; Liu et al., 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Of note, the percentage of variance that fluctuated daily for UPB was 91%. This finding has important implications for the extant UPB literature that we return to in our discussion.

#### 5. Study 1 results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of our study variables, and Table 2 provides full results from our multilevel path model. Hypotheses 1 and 2 pertained to the effects of UPB on pride and guilt. Supporting Hypothesis 1, daily UPB was positively associated with pride ( $\gamma = 0.26$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Supporting Hypothesis 2, daily UPB was positively associated with guilt ( $\gamma = 0.30$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The incremental variance explained in pride and guilt was 10% and 12%, respectively. Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted mediation relationships of UPB predicting OCBO (through pride) and OCBC (through guilt). Supporting Hypothesis 3, daily pride was positively associated with OCBO ( $\gamma = 0.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not OCBC ( $\gamma = -0.11$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The indirect effect of UPB on OCBO, via pride, was 0.023, and the 95% confidence interval excluded zero (0.003, 0.050). Supporting Hypothesis 4, guilt was positively associated with OCBC ( $\gamma = 0.42$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not OCBO ( $\gamma = -0.01$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The indirect effect of UPB on OCBC, via guilt, was 0.124, and the 95% confidence interval excluded zero (0.078, 0.182). The incremental variance explained in OCBO and OCBC was 1% and 15%, respectively.

#### 6. Study 1 discussion

Study 1 provides initial evidence for the theory that we developed regarding the dual effects of daily UPB on pride and guilt, and further for the mediating role these emotions play in transmitting the effects of UPB to subsequent citizenship behavior directed at the organization and customers. This study, however, is not without limitations. First, despite obtaining a report from a coworker of each participating employee for the measure of OCBO, we did still rely upon a self-report for the measure of OCBC. It is important to note that self-reports are generally accepted in ESM studies, even for behaviors, due to the potential deficiencies of relying upon other-reports (Gabriel et al., 2019). That is, the relatively narrow time-frames over which ESM studies are conducted puts considerable strain upon others to have sufficiently observed the focal employee's behaviors at work. Yet despite the limitations of other-reports, the use of a self-report for OCBC leaves us unable to definitively rule out common-method variance as an alternative explanation for the relationship between guilt and customer-directed citizenship. Second, our measure of OCBO captures only passive OCBOs (e.g., adhered to informal rules) or merely the absence of negative behavior (e.g., did not spend a great deal of time speaking on one's personal phone). However, this measure is difficult to disentangle from measures of deviance (e.g., Spector, Bauer, & Fox, 2010), and so a better measure would focus on more active OCBOs aimed at bettering the organization.

Third, although we ruled out shame as a potential alternative explanation in Study 1, there are other viable alternative explanations that we should examine (as we mentioned in our 'Overview of Present Research' section). Fourth, although our theory specifies that the

**Table 2**  
Results of multilevel path analysis of Study 1.

| Variables                             | Pride    |      | Guilt    |      | OCBC                           |      | OCBO                           |      |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
|                                       | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   |
| Intercept                             | 3.77*    | 0.05 | 3.16*    | 0.06 | 3.13*                          | 0.06 | 3.82*                          | 0.06 |
| <i>Independent Variable</i>           |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior | 0.26*    | 0.04 | 0.30*    | 0.04 | 0.17*                          | 0.06 | −0.04                          | 0.03 |
| <i>Controls</i>                       |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Baseline Positive Affect              | 0.05     | 0.04 | −0.08    | 0.05 | −0.03                          | 0.04 | 0.01                           | 0.03 |
| Baseline Negative Affect              | −0.01    | 0.03 | −0.01    | 0.04 | −0.01                          | 0.04 | 0.01                           | 0.03 |
| Shame                                 | −0.02    | 0.04 | 0.12*    | 0.05 | −0.03                          | 0.05 | −0.01                          | 0.03 |
| <i>Lagged Controls</i>                |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Prior Pride                           | −0.02    | 0.05 | –        | –    | –                              | –    | –                              | –    |
| Prior Guilt                           | –        | –    | −0.22*   | 0.05 | –                              | –    | –                              | –    |
| Prior OCBC                            | –        | –    | –        | –    | −0.12*                         | 0.05 | –                              | –    |
| Prior OCBO                            | –        | –    | –        | –    | –                              | –    | −0.07                          | 0.05 |
| <i>Other Controls</i>                 |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Day of the study                      | −0.01*   | 0.01 | 0.01     | 0.01 | 0.00                           | 0.01 | 0.00                           | 0.01 |
| Day of the week                       | 0.04     | 0.02 | 0.00     | 0.03 | −0.03                          | 0.03 | 0.04                           | 0.02 |
| Sine                                  | −0.02    | 0.04 | −0.06    | 0.05 | −0.08                          | 0.04 | 0.01                           | 0.03 |
| Cosine                                | −0.10*   | 0.05 | −0.05    | 0.05 | 0.05                           | 0.04 | −0.02                          | 0.04 |
| <i>Mediators</i>                      |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Pride                                 | –        | –    | –        | –    | −0.11                          | 0.07 | 0.09*                          | 0.04 |
| Guilt                                 | –        | –    | –        | –    | 0.42*                          | 0.05 | −0.01                          | 0.03 |
| <i>Mediation</i>                      |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Indirect Effect                       | –        |      |          |      | <b>0.124</b><br>(0.078, 0.182) |      | <b>0.023</b><br>(0.003, 0.050) |      |

Note. Level 1 N = 732. Level 2 N = 91. Full results from multilevel path analyses are provided. OCBC represents customer-focused citizenship behavior and OCBO represents organizational citizenship behavior. Indirect effects for mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.

experience of self-conscious emotions should follow the enactment of UPB, our study design does not allow us to rule out the potential that the experience of these emotions could actually precede the behavior in question. Finally, although we found support for our mediation hypotheses, Study 1 presents a relatively narrow test of our theory. That is, there are reasons to question whether all employees will tend to experience both pride and guilt following UPB (i.e., there are likely boundary conditions to this relationship). To address these aforementioned issues, as well as expand the range of our theorizing (and replicate our prior findings), we thus conducted a second ESM study by adopting a more rigorous design (i.e., triple source design with four daily assessments: 2 by focal employees, 1 from a coworker, and 1 from a customer).

## 7. Study 2 method

### 7.1. Sample and procedure

The participants of Study 2 were financial service agents of a multinational insurance company located in Hong Kong, China. The district director and the administrative team distributed study announcements to these financial service agents, and similar to Study 1, we followed up by contacting participants with an email in which we provided details of this study (e.g., the daily nature of our study, confidentiality, and compensation). We initially contacted 96 sales agents, 88 of whom agreed to participate. Employee responsibilities included responding to individual customers' requests, providing customers' tailor-made financial service, and meeting with customers on sites. Consistent with Study 1, we deem this sample to be appropriate in testing our hypothesized model given that the service industry is a setting that enables us to capture changes in UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016).

In line with Study 1, we collected data over three work weeks. We began with an initial, one-time survey wherein we obtained consent and demographic information, followed by a series of daily surveys. We sent the daily surveys in the second and third weeks at fixed timeslots everyday via email (i.e., before work, midday, and at the end of the workday [to a coworker and to a customer]) for 10 consecutive work

days. The before work survey (sent between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. to the focal employee), contained measures of daily baseline positive and negative affect as well as daily baseline pride and guilt in which we include as control variables. The midday survey (sent between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to the focal employee), contained measures of daily unethical pro-organizational behavior, pride, and guilt. At the end of the workday, between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m., we sent a survey containing the measure of OCBO to a coworker who has close physical proximity to the focal employee during the study period. Then, between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m., the employee sent a survey containing a measure of OCBC to the most recent customer that focal employee has interacted with after work (i.e., in this industry, agents commonly meet clients after working hours, as these clients themselves often have jobs that preclude them from meeting during the day), approved by the institutional review board of the National University of Singapore (Approval No. DER-18-0905). We compensated the participating financial service agents with a raffle for cash prizes (10 prizes of \$50 each). After eliminating 10 triads who did not provide enough data for analysis, our final sample consisted of 78 triads who completed 584 day-level observations. Most of the sales agents identified as female (53%), with an average age of 33.7 years ( $SD = 9.8$ ) and an average organizational tenure of 2.8 years ( $SD = 1.4$ ).

### 7.2. Measures

Similar to Study 1, we translated the measures from English to Chinese following Brislin (1980) back-translation procedure, and used the same scale anchors (1 = Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree) for our measures. Like Study 1, we provide all survey items used in this study in Appendix (see Table A2 in Appendix A).

#### 7.2.1. Guilt proneness

Employees reported their level of guilt proneness in the opt-in survey with items from Cohen et al. (2011). The guilt proneness scale captures two distinct factors: proneness to feel guilty after evaluating one's negative behavior and proneness to initiate reparative actions following one's negative behavior. Because our focus is on evaluation of one's UPB, we measured guilt proneness with three items with highest



factor loadings from the original scale, in which employees evaluate their own negative behavior. We asked focal employees to indicate the likelihood that they would react in the way described. A sample item is “You lie to people but they never find out about it. What is the likelihood that you would feel terrible about the lies you told?” Coefficient alpha was 0.86.

#### 7.2.2. Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB)

We measured UPB as in Study 1. Coefficient alpha was 0.82.

#### 7.2.3. Pride

We measured pride as in Study 1. Coefficient alpha was 0.95.

#### 7.2.4. Guilt

We measured guilt as in Study 1. Coefficient alpha was 0.88.

#### 7.2.5. OCBo

A coworker rated the focal employee's OCBO at the end of the workday using 4 items from a scale developed specifically for ESM research by Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, and Hulin (2009). Coworkers were instructed to consider the focal employee's citizenship behavior. An example item is “Today, (name of focal employee) defended organizational policies.” Coefficient alpha was 0.96.

#### 7.2.6. OCBC

A customer that the focal employee has served during the fixed timeslot at the end of the workday was asked to fill in the customer survey to assess the focal employees' OCBC. We adapted 3 items from Study 1 to minimize the burden placed on customers. An example item is “Today, (name of the focal employee) helped me with problems beyond what I expected.” Coefficient alpha was 0.95.

### 7.3. Control variables

#### 7.3.1. Baseline organizational identification

Because previous research has demonstrated relationships between organizational identification and UPB (Chen et al., 2016; Graham et al., 2019; Umphress et al., 2010), we controlled for it in our analyses to parse out its effects on our results. Employees reported their level of organizational identification in the opt-in survey using the 5-item scale from Mael and Ashforth (1992). A sample item is “When I talk about my company, I usually say ‘we’ rather than ‘they’.” Coefficient alpha was 0.74.

#### 7.3.2. Baseline service role identity

Because employees with a strong service role identity might on the one hand want to engage in more UPB to enhance their job performance and on the other hand want to protect their professional image and engage in less UPB, we controlled for service role identity to account for these potential paradoxical internal conflicts (e.g., Grube & Piliavin, 2000). Employees reported their level of service role identity in the opt-in survey with the adapted 3 items from Farmer, Tierney, and Kung-McIntyre (2003). A sample item is “I often think about being a financial service agent.” Coefficient alpha was 0.90.

#### 7.3.3. PA and NA

We measured daily baseline affect as in Study 1. Coefficients alpha for PA and NA were 0.95 and 0.70 respectively.

#### 7.3.4. Pride

We measured daily baseline pride using the same scale as in Study 1. Coefficient alpha was 0.91.

#### 7.3.5. Guilt

We measured daily baseline guilt using the same scale as in Study 1. Coefficient alpha was 0.85.

#### 7.3.6. Self-esteem

We controlled for employees' daily self-esteem, because those who engaged in UPB might experience heightened self-esteem, and as a result after their workplace behaviors such as OCBs. Employees reported their level of self-esteem on the midday survey with 3 items adapted from the scale used in Thewissen, Bental, Lecomte, van Os, and Myin-Germeys (2008). Participants reported their agreement with statements about how they felt about themselves during their interactions with customers today. A sample item is “Today, I liked myself.” Coefficient alpha was 0.94.

#### 7.3.7. Organizational identification

Because organizational identification may have a dynamic component as well as a stable component (e.g., Schneider et al., 1971), we also controlled for day-level organizational identification. Employees reported their level of organizational identification daily on the midday survey using an adaptation of the five-item scale from Mael and Ashforth (1992). Participants reported their agreement with statements about their feeling today. A sample item is “Today, I felt that my company's successes are my successes.” Coefficient alpha was 0.90.

### 7.4. Analytic strategy

We controlled for a number of variables in this study, which we describe below. However, our results were again unchanged when all control variables were removed (see Table B2 in Appendix B). At between-person level, and as previously discussed, we controlled for both an employee's organizational identification and service role identity. At the within-person level, we controlled for the employee's daily organizational identification and self-esteem. In addition, to further disentangle the directional relationship between UPB and both pride and guilt, we controlled for baseline versions of both measured before work (e.g., Scott & Barnes, 2011). Beyond these, we again controlled for both baseline measures of PA and NA, as well as the same artifactual sources of variance as in Study 1 (i.e., lagged versions of endogenous variables, a linear growth term, and variables to account for cyclical fluctuation).

Our analytical process was similar to Study 1, given the multilevel nature of our data (daily observations nested in persons). A multilevel confirmatory factor analysis on the 14 study variables (6 variables with hypothesized relationships and 8 control variables) revealed adequate fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 2158.31$ ,  $df = 1113$ , CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.04, SRMR = 0.06). Given this, we proceeded to test our model. As with Study 1, the majority of variance in our daily variables was within-individual (Podsakoff et al., 2019). We again used group-mean centering for our level 1 predictors (Enders & Tofighi, 2013) and grand-mean centering for our level 2 moderator. We tested mediation as in Study 1, and extended this procedure to test for moderation mediation by examining conditional indirect effects at  $\pm 1$  standard deviation of guilt proneness.

## 8. Study 2 results

Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations of our study variables, and Table 4 provides full results from our multilevel path model. Hypotheses 1 and 2 pertained to the effects of UPB on pride and guilt. Supporting Hypothesis 1, daily UPB was positively associated with pride ( $\gamma = 0.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Supporting Hypothesis 2, daily UPB was positively associated with guilt ( $\gamma = 0.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The incremental variance explained in pride and guilt was 6% and 2%, respectively. Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted mediation relationships of UPB predicting OCBO (through pride) and OCBC (through guilt). Supporting Hypothesis 3, daily pride was positively associated with OCBO ( $\gamma = 0.23$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not OCBC ( $\gamma = 0.06$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The indirect effect of UPB on OCBO, via pride, was 0.015, and the 95% confidence interval excluded zero (0.001, 0.040). Supporting Hypothesis 4, guilt was positively associated with OCBC ( $\gamma = 0.31$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not

**Table 3**  
Descriptive statistics and correlations for study variables of Study 2.

| Variable   | Mean | SD   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7      | 8      | 9     | 10     | 11    | 12    | 13    |
|--|------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Level 1 Variables</b>                                       |      |      |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 1. Positive Affect   | 4.22 | 1.47 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 2. Negative Affect   | 3.20 | 1.04 | −0.01  |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 3. Pride (baseline)  | 4.36 | 1.26 | 0.39*  | −0.14* |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 4. Guilt (baseline)  | 3.25 | 1.55 | −0.13* | 0.24*  | −0.39* |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 5. UPB   | 3.95 | 1.26 | 0.36*  | 0.19*  | 0.12*  | 0.06   |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 6. Pride   | 4.79 | 1.19 | 0.55*  | −0.13* | 0.52*  | −0.24* | 0.29*  |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 7. Guilt   | 2.13 | 1.21 | −0.05  | 0.36*  | −0.31* | 0.35*  | 0.13*  | −0.20* |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 8. Self-esteem   | 5.04 | 1.70 | 0.15*  | −0.03  | 0.25*  | −0.15* | 0.03   | 0.18*  | −0.22* |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 9. Organizational identification                               | 4.70 | 1.19 | 0.57*  | 0.00   | 0.38*  | −0.15* | 0.37*  | 0.64*  | −0.10* | 0.16*  |       |        |       |       |       |
| 10. Organization-focused Citizenship Behavior (Coworker rated) | 5.04 | 1.58 | 0.25*  | −0.02  | 0.28*  | −0.05  | 0.15*  | 0.29*  | −0.05  | 0.34*  | 0.30* |        |       |       |       |
| 11. Customer-focused Citizenship Behavior (Customer rated)     | 2.26 | 1.54 | 0.00   | 0.18*  | −0.22* | 0.22*  | 0.20*  | −0.06  | 0.34*  | −0.34* | −0.01 | −0.12* |       |       |       |
| <b>Level 2 Variables</b>                                       |      |      |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |       |        |       |       |       |
| 12. Guilt-proneness  | 3.70 | 1.28 | −0.37* | −0.77* | 0.07   | 0.08   | −0.45* | −0.17  | −0.01  | 0.05   | −0.20 | −0.10  | −0.06 |       |       |
| 13. Role identity  | 5.74 | 1.16 | 0.48*  | 0.16   | 0.12   | −0.21  | 0.31*  | −0.14  | 0.16   | 0.18   | 0.26* | −0.11  | 0.10  | −0.08 |       |
| 14. Organizational identification                              | 3.50 | 1.21 | 0.46*  | 0.04   | 0.50*  | −0.07  | 0.10   | 0.76*  | 0.25*  | 0.23*  | 0.07  | −0.17  | 0.02  | 0.20  | −0.20 |

Note. Level 1 N = 584, Level 2 N = 78. Means, standard deviations, and correlations represent group-mean centered relationships at the within-individual level of analysis.

\* p < .05.

**Table 4**  
Results of multilevel path analysis of Study 2.

| Variables                                   | Pride  |      | Guilt  |      | OCBC                           |      | OCBO                              |      |
|---|--------|------|--------|------|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
|   | γ      | SE   | γ      | SE   | γ                              | SE   | γ                                 | SE   |
| Intercept                                   | 4.79*  | 0.05 | 2.13*  | 0.05 | 2.26*                          | 0.07 | 5.05*                             | 0.06 |
| <i>Independent Variable</i>                 |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior (UPB) | 0.07*  | 0.03 | 0.09*  | 0.04 | 0.18*                          | 0.06 | 0.07                              | 0.06 |
| <i>Moderator</i>                            |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Guilt-proneness (GP)                        | −0.05  | 0.04 | 0.00   | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Interaction (UPB × GP)                      | −0.05* | 0.02 | 0.04   | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| <i>Level 2 Controls</i>                     |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Organizational identification (OI)          | 0.11*  | 0.04 | 0.05   | 0.04 | 0.01                           | 0.05 | −0.03                             | 0.05 |
| Interaction (OI × UPB)                      | −0.03  | 0.03 | 0.01   | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Role Identity (RI)                          | 0.00   | 0.04 | 0.03   | 0.05 | 0.03                           | 0.05 | −0.02                             | 0.06 |
| Interaction (RI × UPB)                      | −0.01  | 0.03 | −0.02  | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| <i>Level 1 (Daily) Controls</i>             |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Baseline Positive Affect                    | 0.16*  | 0.04 | 0.03   | 0.04 | −0.01                          | 0.06 | 0.10                              | 0.06 |
| Baseline Negative Affect                    | −0.12* | 0.04 | 0.33*  | 0.05 | 0.09                           | 0.07 | 0.01                              | 0.07 |
| Baseline Pride                              | 0.23*  | 0.04 | —      | —    | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Baseline Guilt                              | —      | —    | 0.19*  | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Self-esteem                                 | 0.01   | 0.02 | −0.12* | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Organizational identification               | 0.41*  | 0.05 | −0.08  | 0.06 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| <i>Lagged Controls</i>                      |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Prior Pride                                 | −0.09* | 0.04 | —      | —    | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Prior Guilt                                 | —      | —    | −0.09* | 0.03 | —                              | —    | —                                 | —    |
| Prior OCBC                                  | —      | —    | —      | —    | −0.21*                         | 0.04 | —                                 | —    |
| Prior OCBO                                  | —      | —    | —      | —    | —                              | —    | −0.07                             | 0.05 |
| <i>Other Controls</i>                       |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Day of the study                            | 0.00   | 0.01 | −0.03  | 0.02 | 0.01                           | 0.02 | −0.01                             | 0.02 |
| Day of the week                             | 0.06   | 0.04 | −0.04  | 0.06 | 0.02                           | 0.08 | −0.05                             | 0.08 |
| Sine  | 0.12   | 0.08 | 0.03   | 0.09 | −0.01                          | 0.13 | −0.09                             | 0.14 |
| Cosine                                      | −0.01  | 0.06 | −0.09  | 0.09 | 0.07                           | 0.11 | 0.02                              | 0.10 |
| <i>Mediators</i>                            |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Pride                                       | —      | —    | —      | —    | 0.01                           | 0.08 | 0.23*                             | 0.07 |
| Guilt                                       | —      | —    | —      | —    | 0.31*                          | 0.06 | 0.06                              | 0.06 |
| <i>Mediation &amp; Moderated Mediation</i>  |        |      |        |      |                                |      |                                   |      |
| Indirect Effect                             | —      | —    | —      | —    | <b>0.028</b><br>(0.005, 0.062) | —    | <b>0.015</b><br>(0.001, 0.040)    | —    |
| Indirect Effect (low)                       | —      | —    | —      | —    | 0.013<br>(−0.017, 0.053)       | —    | <b>0.031</b><br>(0.009, 0.068)    | —    |
| Indirect Effect (high)                      | —      | —    | —      | —    | <b>0.043</b><br>(0.013, 0.086) | —    | 0.000<br>(−0.022, 0.023)          | —    |
| Indirect effect (difference)                | —      | —    | —      | —    | 0.012<br>(−0.004, 0.031)       | —    | <b>−0.012</b><br>(−0.029, −0.002) | —    |

Note. Level 1 N = 584. Level 2 N = 78. Full results from multilevel path analyses are provided. OCBC represents customer-focused citizenship behavior and OCBO represents organizational citizenship behavior. Indirect effects for mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.

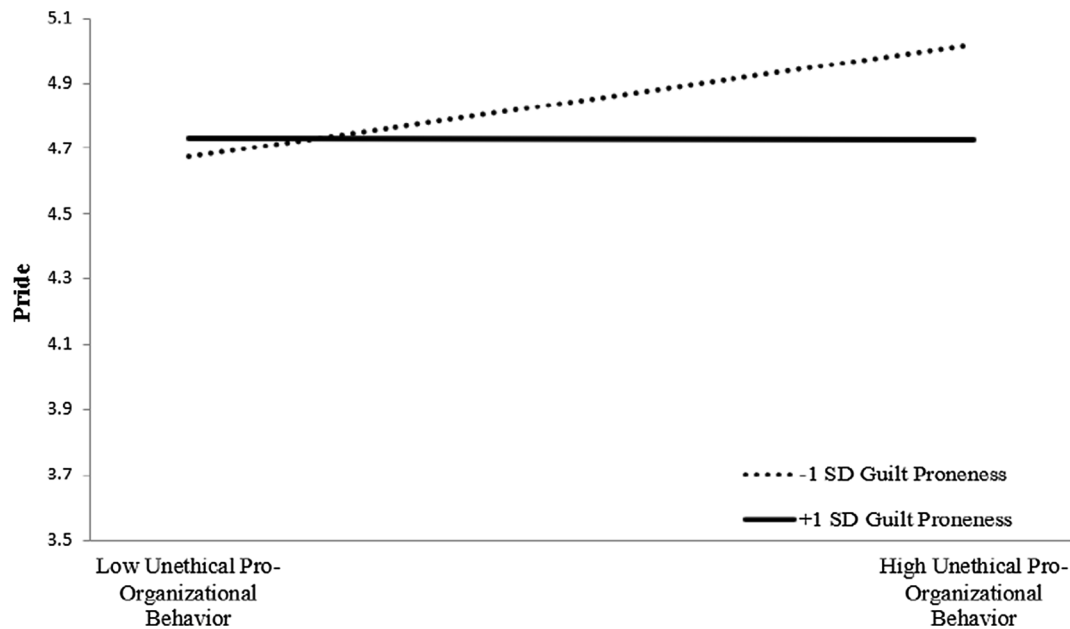


Fig. 2. Guilt proneness moderates the relationship between daily unethical pro-organizational behavior and pride.

OCBO ( $\gamma = 0.01$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The indirect effect of UPB on OCBC, via guilt, was 0.028, and the 95% confidence interval excluded zero (0.005, 0.062). The incremental variance explained in OCBO and OCBC was 2% and 5%, respectively.

Hypothesis 5a predicted cross-level moderating effect of guilt proneness on the relationship between daily UPB and daily pride, such that the effects of UPB would be weaker when the focal employees have higher levels of guilt proneness. This interaction was negative and significant ( $\gamma = -0.05$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As we expected, the strength of the relationship between UPB and pride was stronger and significant at low levels of guilt proneness ( $\gamma = 0.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but was not significant at high levels of guilt proneness ( $\gamma = 0.00$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Fig. 2 shows the interaction pattern, which further supports our hypothesis. Hypothesis 5b, on the interaction of guilt-proneness and UPB predicting guilt, however, was not significant ( $\gamma = 0.04$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Yet in spite of this, the pattern of simple slopes is in the predicted direction. That is, the strength of the relationship between UPB and guilt was stronger and significant at high levels of guilt proneness ( $\gamma = 0.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but was not significant at low levels of guilt proneness ( $\gamma = 0.04$ ,  $p > .05$ ). That the simple slopes correspond with our predictions is intriguing, but ultimately given that the interaction effect was not significant, we consider this hypothesis to be not supported.

Finally, Hypothesis 6 predicted that guilt proneness would moderate the mediation relationships between a) daily UPB and OCBO through pride, and b) daily UPB and OCBC through guilt. Supporting hypothesis 6a, the conditional indirect effect at low (-1 SD) levels of guilt proneness was positive and significant (0.031; 95% CI = [0.001–0.068]), whereas the indirect effect at high (+1 SD) levels of guilt proneness was non-significant (0.000; 95% CI = -0.022 to 0.023). These conditional indirect effects were likewise significantly different from each other (difference = -0.012, 95% CI [-0.029, -0.002]). For Hypothesis 6b, because the interactive effect of daily UPB and guilt proneness predicting guilt was not significant, we ultimately consider this hypothesis to be not supported. However, as with the simple slopes, the conditional indirect effects do correspond with our predictions. That is, the conditional indirect effects was significant at high (0.043; 95% CI = 0.013–0.086), but not low (0.013; 95% CI = -0.017 to 0.053) levels of guilt proneness. The difference in these indirect effects, however, was not significant (difference = 0.012, 95% CI [-0.004, 0.031]).

## 9. Study 2 discussion

As highlighted earlier, Study 1 had several limitations (e.g., the potential for common method variance, a deficient measure of OCBO, and the potential for alternative explanations and reverse causality). Also, Study 1 tested only our main and mediation hypotheses (Hypotheses 1–4). We therefore designed Study 2 to both constructively replicate our previous findings, as well as address these limitations with an even more rigorous data collection.

As it pertains to our theory, we found that an employee's level of guilt proneness did indeed moderate the daily relationship between UPB and pride in the expected direction. As it regards the daily relationship between UPB and guilt, however, our findings were murkier. The coefficient representing this interaction was not significant. However, an examination of the simple slopes for this relationship, and corresponding conditional indirect effects, revealed significant effects in the predicted direction. Overall, while we consider these hypotheses as unsupported, the results are suggestive of the theory we develop, and warrant future examination.

As it pertains to several of the empirical limitations of Study 1, we took a number of steps in Study 2. First, to alleviate the concerns of common method variance, we not only collected data from both employees and coworkers (as in Study 1), but also from a customer as well. The resulting *triple-source* ESM study thus constitutes a substantially rigorous test of our theory by using other-reports for both dependent variables. We also continue to employ other important study-design features such as temporal lags and controlling for artifactual sources of variance. Second, we further enhanced our methodological rigor by ruling out several more alternative explanations for our findings at both the between- and within-individual level. As it pertains to reverse causality, we control for daily baseline levels (measured in the before-work survey) of our self-conscious emotions (pride and guilt)—thus the relationship between UPB and emotions can be interpreted as reflecting a change in their level (e.g., Beal, 2015; Scott & Barnes, 2011).

Lastly, although the scale that we used in Study 1 to measure OCBO has been used in prior research (e.g., Takeuchi, Bolino, & Lin, 2015), this scale is limited, in that it measures more passive forms of OCBO that are similar to measures of deviant behavior. To address this, in Study 2 we used a different scale that was developed specifically for

ESM studies (Dalal et al., 2009).<sup>4</sup> Overall, Study 2 both replicates and extends our findings from Study 1, thus providing us with confidence in the theory we develop.

## 10. General discussion

Drawing from appraisal theories of emotion and the literature on self-conscious emotions, we proposed and tested a dynamic model of UPB in a service industry context. In our first multi-source ESM study of 91 dyads (focal employees and coworkers), we found daily enactment of UPB results in a state of emotional ambivalence for service employees, wherein they experience both pride and guilt. We also found the experience of these emotions, in turn, prompts target-specific citizenship behavior (with pride being associated with subsequent OCBO, and guilt being associated with subsequent OCBC). In our second multi-source ESM study of 78 triads (focal employees, coworkers, and customers), we successfully replicated the results of Study 1. Furthermore, we found that service employees' guilt proneness moderates the link between daily UPB and pride, such that high levels of guilt proneness attenuate the relationship between UPB and pride. Below, we discuss the theoretical and practical implications of our findings.

### 10.1. Theoretical implications

Our study makes a number of key contributions to the UPB literature. First, although research on UPB has increased significantly in recent years, these studies have largely focused on exploring the antecedents of UPB in organizations, at the neglect of its consequences (c.f., Fehr et al., 2019). Thus, we contribute to the literature by revealing how the paradoxical nature of UPB has differential consequences for subsequent emotions and behaviors. On the one hand, service employees may feel proud for helping the organization after engaging in UPB. Yet on the other hand, service employees may also feel guilty for cheating the customers. These mixed discrete emotions, in turn, lead respectively to either self-enhancing (i.e., OCBO) or self-compensatory behavior (i.e., OCBC).

By identifying various forms of citizenship behavior stemming from UPB, our findings reveal that although UPB is a form of unethical behavior, its consequences can actually be positive to stakeholders both within and outside of the organization. These findings align with an emerging stream of studies highlighting the co-occurrence of ethical and unethical behaviors (e.g., Liao et al., 2018; Lin, Ma, & Johnson, 2016; Yam et al., 2017). Overall, our research diverges from conventional approaches to UPB by expanding the nomological network of the literature through exploring its emotional and behavioral consequences.

Second, our research responds to recent calls in the behavioral ethics literature to explore UPB using a dynamic, within-person approach (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2018; Umphress et al., 2019). To this point, scholars have recently articulated the day-to-day nature of workplace unethical behaviors in general, and between-person methodologies are ill-equipped to capture these daily fluctuations (e.g., Cervone, 2005). This is particularly important when considering UPB for two reasons. First, as a form of unethical behavior, there are already reasons to suspect that UPB may vary on a daily basis (e.g., Kouchaki & Gino,

2016). Second, the service context in which we examine UPB further highlights the within-individual nature of UPB, given that service work is inherently dynamic and variant (Tam & Wong, 2001). Encapsulating both of these arguments, Umphress et al. (2019, p. 8) make this point directly in their recent ESM paper on UPB, noting that “individual’s engagement in unethical behaviors and deviant behavior can also vary on a daily basis.” We note, however, that the majority of papers on UPB to this point have been conducted at the between-individual level. As a result, it is possible that scholars have to this point overlooked a critical component of the UPB phenomenon. Indeed, across the two ESM studies we found that the within-person variance in UPB exceeds 90%. Thus, we contribute both to the emerging line of research adopting within-person designs in the behavioral ethics literature in general (e.g., Liao et al., 2018; Ng & Yam, 2019), and specifically add our voices to those who have recently considered UPB specifically as a within-individual phenomenon (Mitchell et al., 2018; Umphress et al., 2019). To advance both scholarly and managerial understanding about the nature of UPB, however, more research is still needed. Thus we call as well for continued research on the daily dynamics of unethical behavior in general, and UPB in particular.

Third, in line with appraisal theories of emotion and the literature of self-conscious emotion, we found that service employees' level of guilt proneness can influence the emotional appraisal processes following UPB. Specifically, we found support for the moderating effect of guilt proneness on the relationship between daily UPB and pride, and that employees with high guilt proneness are less likely to experience feelings of pride after UPB relatively to their low guilt proneness counterparts. This is important, because it reveals that not all employees likely have the same emotional consequences to UPB. All in all, our study resonates with the literature on self-conscious emotions by identifying an individual difference that affects the “evaluation of the ethics of the behavior” during the emotional appraisal process (Tangney et al., 2007, p. 22).

Relatedly, our research sheds light on emotional ambivalence by revealing a novel antecedent—UPB. While past research in social psychology often suggests that only bittersweet events (e.g., graduations; Larsen & McGraw, 2011, 2014) tend to have mixed emotional consequences, we reveal that UPB—given its paradoxical nature—can also trigger a mixed emotional reaction. Our theory thus augments the behavioral ethics literature by illuminating the complex nature of UPB that scholars have recently hinted at (e.g., Miao, Newman, Yu, & Xu, 2013). Specifically, by examining how UPB is associated with differentially-valenced, self-conscious emotions, our research answers calls to enrich our understanding regarding the antecedents and outcomes of emotional ambivalence (Rothman et al., 2017).

More generally, we also extend the self-conscious emotion literature by capturing within-person fluctuations of these emotions on a daily basis. Previous studies have predominantly examined the antecedents and outcomes of self-conscious emotions at the between-person level (e.g., Harth, Kessler, & Leach, 2008; Onwezen, Antonides, & Bartels, 2013). However, as recent studies noted, self-conscious emotions also fluctuate on a daily basis because they are often triggered by dynamic behaviors and events in daily life (e.g., Newton, 2000; Somerville et al., 2013; Tracy & Robins, 2007). In light of this, our research has further advanced the scholarly understanding of self-conscious emotions on a daily basis.

Finally, despite the fact that the service industry employs more than 10% of the total U.S. workforce (Hortaçsu & Syverson, 2015), organizational scholars have been relatively silent (at least, compared to scholars in disciplines such as hotel management and service marketing) when it comes to considering potentially unique aspects of this context (see Chen et al., 2015 for an exception). However, as illustrated by our usage of the OCBC construct as a consequence of the guilt that stems from UPB, these employees may have experiences, and enact behaviors, that can differ from employees not employed in a service context. Thus, employees engaged in the service context are likely quite relevant for organizational scholars. For example, OCBC has been

<sup>4</sup> Beyond our constructive replication of the relationship between pride and OCBO in Study 2, to better ascertain the validity of our Study 1 findings, we conducted a separate study with 186 U.S. participants using Prolific. We administered the OCBO scales used in both Studies 1 and 2 (with items specifically referenced to what employees did “today”) and examined their intercorrelation. The order of presentation was randomized. Results showed that the correlation of these two scales is relatively high ( $r = 0.41, p < .01$ ). Thus, given (a) that this scale has been used to measure OCBO in prior research, (b) that the Study 1 measure correlates moderately with the Study 2 measure, and (c) that results between the two studies converge, it is reasonable to have confidence in our Study 1 findings.



shown to be associated with a number of customer-centric indicators of organizational profitability (e.g., Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Kelley & Hoffman, 1997). Overall, our theory and model call attention to the need for increasing our understanding of the service-industry context.

### 10.2. Practical implications

To be clear, despite UPB being associated with various forms of citizenship behavior (i.e., OCBC and OCBO), we do not encourage UPB in the workplace. From a utilitarian perspective, the net costs of UPB should still outweigh the benefits revealed in this research. For example, even if UPB led to short-term gains in sales and OCBCs, the organization still runs a long-term risk of suffering reputational losses as a result of this behavior among their employees.

With this said, our results involving OCB potentially explain why UPBs continue to be relatively common in organizations, especially in the service industry. Umphress and Bingham (2011, p. 634) described individuals who engage in UPBs as attempting to be “good soldiers” in their efforts. Our results show more clearly that these employees might literally be considered as good soldiers (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983), as both mechanisms lead to higher levels of citizenship behavior (whether directed at customers or coworkers). Even though an employee may be engaged in what is ostensibly unethical behavior (i.e., UPB), managers may not want to scrutinize or punish those employees whose citizenship is adding value to the unit (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). In fact, it may be the opposite, as citizenship behaviors are often rewarded in the workplace (Podsakoff & Mackenzie, 1997). Overall, by turning a blind-eye to this behavior, managers may in fact be tacitly approving of an employee’s UPB. Given this, managers need to be aware of the longer-term costs of UPB (Umphress et al., 2010) and be aware that not all good citizens may be acting in the true long-term interests of the company.

### 10.3. Limitations and future research directions

Although we contributed to a better understanding of the emotional and behavioral consequences of UPB and adopted a relatively strong research design (multi-source ESM study and surveyed employees three times per day), our research is not without limitations. First, although we focus on the emotional consequences of UPB, recent research suggested that engaging in unethical conduct could also lead to various moral cognitions such as perceived loss of moral credits (e.g., Liao et al., 2018). That is, employees who engage in UPB may feel not only emotionally ambivalent, but also cognitively ambivalent. For example, they might give themselves moral credit for helping the organization, or they might perceive a loss of moral credits for engaging in unethical behavior. Therefore, we call for future research to investigate the paradoxical cognitions generated after engaging in UPB.

Second, we did not find support for either the moderating effect of guilt proneness on the relationship between daily UPB and daily guilt, or the corresponding conditional indirect effect (Hypothesis 5b and 6b). From a theoretical perspective, that our hypothesis regarding the effects to pride, but not to guilt, was supported potentially suggests something unexpected regarding how guilt-prone individuals conceptualize their UPB. Consider the paradoxical nature of UPB—both pro-organizational, but also unethical (Chen et al., 2016). As we hypothesized, those employees who focus on the former aspect of UPB would tend to feel proud, while those focusing on the latter aspect of UPB would tend to feel guilty. That is, we expected employees would generally focus on *either* the pro-organizational or unethical aspect of UPB. As it pertains to the relationship with pride, perhaps employees with high levels of guilt-proneness were actually sensitized to the *dual*-nature of this construct (i.e., *both* pro-organizational *and* unethical). Regarding guilt, however, it seems that guilt proneness had no additional effect on those employees who were already focused on the unethical nature of UPB. Put differently, high levels of guilt proneness did not make employees feel as if

their behavior was any more unethical than they had already appraised it. This suggests that the local consequences of the already negative appraisal of UPB as unethical seem to outweigh any additional global influence of the trait. In terms of understanding this, it is well-known that “bad” things tend to have significant weight in people’s daily experiences (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). To that end, perhaps it is the case that when UPB was appraised as unethical, the strength of the resulting guilt overwhelmed any need for cognitive comparison processes between the stimuli and the individual’s stable self-representation. Put more simply, perhaps when UPB is seen as unethical, the emotional consequences are largely dictated by that appraisal, irrespective of one’s traits. That said, there are many ways to interpret null findings, and we call for additional research on this point.

Third, it is the case that most variables in Study 1 were self-reported, which could lead to concerns regarding common method variance (CMV) as an alternative explanation for our study findings. In some cases, relying on self-reports was a necessity dictated by our research question. For example, it would be unreasonable to obtain other-reports for an employee’s self-conscious emotions. Moreover, scholars have recently noted that many negative forms of workplace behavior are often conducted discretely, and thus are difficult for others to observe (e.g., Carpenter, Rangel, Jeon, & Cottrell, 2017). Further, a number of scholars have recently noted that obtaining other-reports in ESM research in general is difficult, and potentially deficient, given the relatively short windows over which the observation would need to occur (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2019; McClean, Barnes, Courtright, & Johnson, 2019).

For these reasons, obtaining an other-report for UPB was impractical. In spite of this, we did obtain an other-report for OCBO (which was reasonable, given the close proximity of the focal employees and coworker). Moreover, we addressed CMV issues in other ways, such as (1) using group-mean centering for the study variables, (2) temporally separating construct measurement (to the extent possible), and (3) controlling for baseline affective states (Gabriel et al., 2019). We went further in Study 2 by not only obtaining an other-report for OCBO as in Study 1, but also by obtaining an other-report (e.g., a customer) for the measure of OCBC, as well as. Study 2 thus relies upon data sourced from three distinct perspectives (employees, a coworker, and a customer). In this way, not only should the replication of effects across studies reduce concerns about CMV, but also actually represents an empirical contribution of our research, in that we are the first (to our knowledge) to conduct such an ESM study. At the end of the day, self- or other-reports can have biases, and so we strongly encourage future replications and extensions of our model, perhaps with objective indicators of citizenship or prosocial behaviors (e.g., Carlo, Mestre, Samper, Tur, & Armenta, 2011).

Finally, it is the case that our effect sizes are relatively small across both of our studies. Thus, although our hypotheses were supported (and, explained meaningful variance in our dependent variables), this could have implications for the practical importance of our findings. We acknowledge this, however we do also note that small effect such as this are relatively common in ESM research (e.g., Koopman, Rosen, et al., *in press*). Plus, scholars have previously posited that small effect sizes can still have important theoretical and practical implications (Cascio & Boudreau, 2008; Prentice & Miller, 1992). Thus, these effect sizes should not impact the validity of our findings or conclusions. Instead, these effects may actually point to opportunities for future research in terms of identifying other unmeasured processes that could explain additional variance.

For example, in both studies, the direct effect between UPB and OCBC was significant. This is a clear signal as to the potential for additional mediating mechanisms between these variables. One option arises from moral regulation theory (Zhong et al., 2009). Perhaps the unethical nature of UPB, beyond eliciting guilt, further creates a perception of moral deficit (Yuan, Barnes, & Li, 2018). In this case, employees might enact a compensatory behavior such as OCBC which may help to reduce that deficit. Although the direct effect between UPB and

OCBO was not significant, it is still possible that other mediating mechanisms exist here as well (Shrout & Bolger, 2002)—to this point, such a non-significant relationship would be expected if the alternative path were opposite in sign. The theory we built above positively links UPB with OCBO through pride, and so it may be fruitful to examine a potential negative indirect relationship between these constructs. To that end, we recommend that scholars examine this relationship through the lens of moral licensing theory (Miller & Effron, 2010). That is, the pro-organizational nature of UPB may lead employees to feel as if they have earned moral credits, which moral licensing theory predicts would potentially result in the enactment of fewer OCBOs.

In terms of future research opportunities, one interesting direction would be to examine the role of organizational culture. Consider, for example, the recent UPB scandal that afflicted Wells Fargo. It was clear that there was widespread acceptance of the unethical actions of Wells Fargo employees (Glazer, 2016). One potential explanation for this could be that employees in such a culture are more likely to engage in UPB (i.e., culture is an antecedent of UPB). An alternative explanation, however, is that employees in such a culture are more likely to experience emotions such as pride as a result of UPB (i.e., culture is a moderator of the effects of UPB). More generally, other contextual factors such as perceived organizational support and leader member exchange can also enhance one's likelihood of engaging in UPB and moderate the links between UPB and subsequent emotions. These possibilities open the door to further investigations about culture and other contextual factors and UPB.

Finally, although prior research has highlighted the role of leadership styles as a precursor to UPB behavior (e.g., Effelsberg et al., 2014; Miao et al., 2013), little is known about how leadership might impact the subsequent emotional and/or behavioral consequences of that UPB. For example, a recent study by Fehr et al. (2019) reveals that, surprisingly, certain leaders might even reward UPBs, or at least, might reward the immediate behavioral consequences that we identified (i.e., citizenship behavior). This makes clear that leaders could be (albeit, unknowingly), encouraging employees to enact UPB. Thus, it is clear that the role of leadership in the UPB process is critical, and so we call for more research along these lines.

Appendix A

See Tables A1 and A2.

Table A1  
Items for all scales in Study 1.

| Scales                                | Instructions and items   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Daily Survey                          |  |
| Positive Affect                       | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings <b>now</b> :<br>1. Inspired<br>2. Alert<br>3. Excited<br>4. Enthusiastic<br>5. Determined  |
| Negative Affect                       | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings <b>now</b> :<br>1. Afraid<br>2. Upset<br>3. Nervous<br>4. Scared<br>5. Distressed  |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your behavior <b>today</b> :<br>1. Today, I misrepresented the truth to make my organization look good<br>2. Today, I exaggerated the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients<br>3. Today, I withheld negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients<br>4. Today, I concealed information from the public that could be damaging to my organization |
| Pride                                 | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings during your interactions with customers <b>today</b> :<br>1. Accomplished<br>2. Achieving<br>3. Confident  |

10.4. Conclusion

Drawing upon appraisal theories of emotion and the literature of self-conscious emotion, we conducted two multi-source ESM studies to understand why and how UPB simultaneously elicits the ambivalent emotions of guilt and pride, and how these emotions translate into target-specific behavioral outcomes (organization- and customer-directed OCB). Furthermore, we have identified guilt proneness as an important emotional trait that regulates the emotional appraisal processes. Taken together, we hope our work can spark additional research in adopting a within-person lens in understanding the intrapsychic dynamics of UPB and its consequences.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

**Pok Man Tang:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data curation, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing, Visualization, Project administration, Funding acquisition. **Kai Chi Yam:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Resources, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing, Supervision, Project administration, Funding acquisition. **Joel Koopman:** Methodology, Software, Validation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Writing - review & editing, Visualization, Supervision.

Reference Data

Additional study materials can be found online at <https://osf.io/a98st>.

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Table A1 (continued)

| Scales  | Instructions and items  |
|---|---|
| Guilt   | 4. Fulfilled<br>5. Productive<br>6. Self-worthy<br>7. Successful<br>Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings during your interactions with customers <b>today</b> :<br>1. Guilty<br>2. Blameworthy<br>3. Repentant   |
| Shame   | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings during your interactions with customers <b>today</b> :<br>1. I felt small<br>2. I felt like I am a bad person<br>3. I felt humiliated, disgraced  |
| Organization-focused citizenship behavior ( <i>Coworker-rated</i> ) | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your coworker's behavior <b>today</b> :<br><br>Today, (name of focal employee)...<br><br>1. Took undeserved work breaks. (R)<br>2. Spent a great deal of time with personal phone conversations. (R)<br>3. Complained about insignificant things at work. (R)<br>4. Conserved and protected organizational property.<br>5. Adhered to informal rules devised to maintain order.   |
| Customer-focused citizenship behavior                               | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your behavior during interactions with customers <b>today</b> :<br>1. Today, I voluntarily assisted customers even if it means going beyond job requirements<br>2. Today, I helped customers with problems beyond what is expected required<br>3. Today, I often went above and beyond the call of duty when serving customers<br>4. Today, I willingly went out of my way to make a customer satisfied<br>5. Today, I frequently went out the way to help a customer |

Table A2  
Items for all scales in Study 2.

| Scales   | Instructions and items   |
|--|--|
| <b>Daily Survey</b>  |  |
| Positive Affect  | Same as Study 1  |
| Negative Affect  | Same as Study 1  |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior                                | Same as Study 1  |
| Pride  | Same as Study 1  |
| Guilt  | Same as Study 1  |
| Self-esteem  | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings about yourself during your interactions with customers <b>today</b> :<br>1. I liked myself<br>2. I was a failure (R)<br>3. I was ashamed of myself (R)   |
| Organizational identification  | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your feelings about your company <b>today</b> :<br>1. when someone criticized my company, it felt like a personal insult<br>2. I was very interested in what others think about my company.<br>3. when I talked about my company, I usually said 'we' rather than 'they'<br>4. I felt that my company's successes are my successes<br>5. When someone praised my company, it felt like a personal compliment |
| Organization-focused citizenship behaviour ( <i>Coworker-rated</i> ) | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes your coworker's behavior <b>today</b> :<br><br>Today, (name of focal employee)...<br><br>1. spoke highly about the organization to others<br>2. defended organizational policies<br>3. volunteered for additional work tasks<br>4. went above and beyond what was required for work tasks  |
| Customer-focused citizenship behaviour ( <i>Customer-rated</i> )     | Please indicate your agreement with how each of the following items describes the behavior of the financial service agent during your interaction with him/her <b>today</b> :<br><br>Today, (name of focal employee)...<br><br>1. helped me with problems beyond what I expected<br>2. went above and beyond the call of duty when serving me<br>3. went out of his/her way to make sure I was satisfied   |
| <b>Baseline Survey</b>   |  |
| Guilt Proneness  | Instructions: In this questionnaire you will read about situations that people are likely to encounter in day-to-day life, followed by common reactions to those situations. As you read each scenario, try to imagine yourself in that situation. Then indicate the likelihood that you would react in the way described.   |

(continued on next page)

**Table A2** (continued)

| Scales                        | Instructions and items  |
|-------------------------------|---|
|                               | 1. You secretly commit a felony. What is the likelihood that you would feel remorse about breaking the law?<br>2. At a coworker's housewarming party, you spill red wine on their new cream-colored carpet. You cover the stain with a chair so that nobody notices your mess. What is the likelihood that you would feel that the way you acted was pathetic?<br>3. You lie to people but they never find out about it. What is the likelihood that you would feel terrible about the lies you told? |
| Service Role Identity         | To what extent do you agree with the following statements?<br>1. I often think about being a financial service agent<br>2. I have a clear concept of myself as a financial service agent<br>3. To be a financial service agent is an important part of my identity  |
| Organizational Identification | To what extent do you agree with the following statements?<br>1. When someone criticizes my company, it feels like a personal insult<br>2. I am very interested in what others think about my company<br>3. When I talk about my company, I usually say 'we' rather than 'they'<br>4. My company's successes are my successes<br>5. When someone praises my company, it feels like a personal compliment  |

**Appendix B**

See [Tables B1 and B2](#).

**Table B1**

Results of multilevel path analysis of Study 1 – no controls.

| Variables                             | Pride    |      | Guilt    |      | OCBC                           |      | OCBO                           |      |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|----------|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
|                                       | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   |
| Intercept                             | 3.77*    | 0.05 | 3.16*    | 0.06 | 3.13*                          | 0.06 | 3.82*                          | 0.06 |
| <i>Independent Variable</i>           |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior | 0.25*    | 0.04 | 0.31*    | 0.05 | 0.17*                          | 0.06 | −0.04                          | 0.03 |
| <i>Mediators</i>                      |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Pride                                 | –        | –    | –        | –    | −0.10                          | 0.07 | 0.10*                          | 0.04 |
| Guilt                                 | –        | –    | –        | –    | 0.43*                          | 0.05 | −0.01                          | 0.04 |
| <i>Mediation</i>                      |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Indirect Effect                       | –        |      | –        |      | <b>0.135</b><br>(0.084, 0.199) |      | <b>0.024</b><br>(0.006, 0.049) |      |

Note. Level 1 N = 732. Level 2 N = 91. Full results from multilevel path analyses are provided. OCBC represents customer-focused citizenship behavior and OCBO represents organizational citizenship behavior. Indirect effects for mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.

**Table B2**

Results of multilevel path analysis of Study 2 – no controls.

| Variables                                   | Pride    |      | Guilt    |      | OCBC                           |      | OCBO                           |      |
|---|----------|------|----------|------|--------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|
|   | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$ | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   | $\gamma$                       | SE   |
| Intercept                                   | 4.79*    | 0.05 | 2.13*    | 0.05 | 2.27*                          | 0.07 | 5.05*                          | 0.06 |
| <i>Independent Variable</i>                 |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Unethical Pro-organizational behavior (UPB) | 0.28*    | 0.04 | 0.13*    | 0.04 | 0.20*                          | 0.06 | 0.10                           | 0.06 |
| <i>Moderator</i>                            |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Guilt-proneness (GP)                        | −0.02    | 0.04 | 0.00     | 0.03 | –                              | –    | –                              | –    |
| Interactions (UPB × GP)                     | −0.09*   | 0.04 | 0.05     | 0.03 | –                              | –    | –                              | –    |
| <i>Mediators</i>                            |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Pride (T2)                                  | –        | –    | –        | –    | −0.07                          | 0.07 | 0.34*                          | 0.07 |
| Guilt (T2)                                  | –        | –    | –        | –    | 0.40*                          | 0.05 | 0.00                           | 0.05 |
| <i>Mediation &amp; Moderated Mediation</i>  |          |      |          |      |                                |      |                                |      |
| Indirect Effect                             | –        |      | –        |      | <b>0.053</b><br>(0.020, 0.095) |      | <b>0.096</b><br>(0.054, 0.149) |      |
| Indirect Effect (low)                       | –        |      | –        |      | 0.028<br>(−0.026, 0.088)       |      | <b>0.134</b><br>(0.076, 0.214) |      |
| Indirect Effect (high)                      | –        |      | –        |      | <b>0.077</b><br>(0.038, 0.128) |      | <b>0.058</b><br>(0.020, 0.113) |      |
| Indirect effect (difference)                | –        |      | –        |      | 0.019<br>(−0.005, 0.047)       |      | −0.029<br>(−0.062, −0.006)     |      |

Note. Level 1 N = 584. Level 2 N = 78. Full results from multilevel path analyses are provided. OCBC represents customer-focused citizenship behavior and OCBO represents organizational citizenship behavior. Indirect effects for mediation and moderated mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.



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