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Admired and disgusted? Third parties' paradoxical emotional reactions and behavioral consequences towards others' unethical pro-organizational behavior

Pok Man Tang[1] | Kai Chi Yam[2] | Joel Koopman[1] | Remus Ilies[2]

[1] Department of Management, College Station, Texas A&M University, United States

[2] Department of Management and Organization, National University of Singapore, Singapore

Correspondence
Pok Man Tang,Department of Management, College Station, Texas A&M University, United States.
Email: pokmantang620@gmail.com

Abstract

Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) is often visible to co-workers; however, reactions to UPB are rarely considered in empirical research in spite of their importance to the social dynamics in the workplace. Drawing upon appraisal theory of emotion and the behavioral ethics literature, we predict that observing UPB would lead third parties to experience admiration due to the *pro-organizational* nature of UPB; these third parties would in turn be motivated to display more helping behavior towards the UPB actor. Conversely, we predict that observing UPB would lead third parties to experience disgust due to the *unethical* nature of UPB; these third parties would dis-identify themselves from the UPB actor by instigating incivility. Meanwhile, they would disengage themselves from the UPB actor by avoiding them in subsequent interactions. In addition, the observing employees might also engage in action-oriented behavior such as whistle-blowing behavior to sanction the UPB actor. Across an experience-sampling study with three daily assessments as well as an experimental study, we find support for these predictions. Furthermore, we find that third parties' moral attentiveness moderates the link between observed UPB and disgust, such that observed UPB leads to heightened feelings of disgust only when third parties have high levels of moral attentiveness. We conclude by

discussing the theoretical and practical implications of our work.

KEYWORDS
admiration, disgust, moral attentiveness, unethical pro-organizational behavior

1 | INTRODUCTION

Conventional wisdom in the behavioral ethics literature holds that unethical behavior does not occur in a vacuum. Accordingly, scholars have long been interested in understanding how observers (i.e., third-parties) react to unethical behaviors by their coworkers (e.g., O'Reilly & Aquino, 2011; Reich & Hershcovis, 2015; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). Within this research tradition, the broad consensus is that, because unethical behavior is often seen as primarily driven by self-interested motives, third-parties generally react negatively to this behavior (e.g., Folger, 2001; Skarlicki & Kulik, 2004). For instance, dishonesty reflects "personally rewarding" unethical conduct (Grover, 1993, p. 491), and cheating is seen as a way to "enhance the benefits for the actor" (e.g., Mitchell, Baer, et al., 2018, p. 54).

However, not all unethical behaviors are solely driven by self-interest. As Umphress and Bingham (2011, p. 622) note in their introduction of unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB)—"actions that are intended to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members (e.g., leaders) and violate core societal values, mores, laws, or standards of proper conduct"—some unethical behaviors may actually have a dual nature. That is, despite violating moral standards and being driven in part by self-interest (similar to other unethical behaviors), inherent within this behavior is a parallel drive to benefit the organization. Consider a recent scandal at Wells Fargo that typifies UPB, wherein customer service agents opened unauthorized accounts in their customers' names (Glazer, 2016; McGrath, 2016). This behavior was unethical and certainly benefitted those agents, but it was intended to benefit the organization as well (Chen et al., 2016). Returning to our previous discussion of how third-parties might react upon observing unethical behavior, an open question remains. Will observers view UPB as unethical, and react in a manner that follows the established pattern in the behavioral ethics literature? Or, might observers consider the pro-organizational aspect of UPB, and react in a manner that upends the established patterns in this literature?

We suspect both of these questions can be answered in the affirmative—that is, given the dual nature of UPB, observers might similarly experience a dual (i.e., ambivalent) reaction. Our purpose is to pursue this line of inquiry, and in so doing shift the established consensus in the behavioral ethics literature regarding third-party universal negative reactions to unethical behavior. To this end, we draw from theory on emotion appraisal (e.g., Roseman & Smith, 2001; Scherer et al., 2001) to ground our expectation that UPB's dual nature may lead employees to experience an ambivalent affective reaction upon observing a coworker enacting this behavior. Theory on emotion appraisal posits that the nature of appraised behaviors may generate *either* positive *or* negative affective reactions within observers (Bain, 1859; Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Russell & Carroll, 1999). However, the complexity of UPB suggests the resulting emotional appraisal may be similarly complex; indeed, Rothman et al. (2017, p. 38) note that when a stimulus contains both "positive and negative elements," individuals may simultaneously experience *both* positive *and* negative reactions.

On the one hand, as UPB is favorable for the organization, observers may appraise this behavior positively as something that could be good for the company and its members (e.g., closing a deal that generates significant profit; Chen et al., 2016; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). As UPB benefits the organization, and those who work for the organization, the observer may vicariously benefit as well (Umphress et al., 2010), resulting in a positive emotional appraisal. Particularly, we expect observers to feel admiration, as this reflects one's feelings of approval towards another (Van de Ven, 2017). Since feelings of admiration tend to promote behavior directed at promoting a relationship with the

admired individual (e.g., Brewer & Alexander, 2002; Mackie & Smith, 2002), we expect observers to enact higher levels of helping behavior towards the UPB actor (Onu et al., 2016).

Yet on the other hand, observing a coworker's UPB could be appraised unfavorably as behavior that violates social and moral norms (i.e., being unfair, and causing harm, to customers; Chen et al., 2016). Indeed, UPB can "produce unbeneficial and even destructive outcomes" to the work environment, and more broadly, to the company as a whole (Umphress et al., 2010, p. 770). For this reason, observing it may lead to a negative emotional appraisal. Specifically, its unethical nature may lead this behavior to be seen as impure and tainted, and thus promote feelings of disgust in observers (Skarlicki et al., 2013). Disgust, in turn, may promote a complex series of subsequent acts. For one, observers may seek to dis-identify with the UPB actor, leading to a mild form of antisocial behavior towards that person (i.e., incivility) (e.g., Cameira & Ribeiro, 2014; Gutierrez & Giner-Sorolla, 2007). Along similar lines, disgust can also prompt avoidant acts (e.g., Tybur et al., 2013), which may lead observers to avoid interactions with the UPB actor. Finally, disgust can also prompt more action-oriented behaviors as a way of actively sanctioning the UPB actor (e.g., Pizarro et al., 2011), which may lead instead to whistle-blowing behavior.

To this point, our focus has been on the fact that UPB's dual nature creates the potential for observers to simultaneously appraise it as positive and negative, which may then elicit an ambivalent affective reaction with subsequent behavioral consequences. However, appraisal theories further posit that individuals may be differentially sensitive to particular aspects of a stimulus (e.g., Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989; Lazarus, 1991). This should lead those individuals to assign greater meaning or significance to aspects of a stimulus to which they have heightened sensitivity (Moors et al., 2013). In our case, this suggests that greater attention paid to either UPBs' positive or negative nature may lead to a stronger corresponding affective reaction. Given our focus on UPB, we examine an employee characteristic that may make employees more attentive to the (im)moral nature of this behavior. Accordingly, we look to employee moral attentiveness, defined as a tendency to perceive and consider morality in their daily experience (Reynolds, 2008). As we discuss later, we focus specifically on the perceptual dimension of moral attentiveness because it is more outwardly-focused (compared to the reflectiveness dimension, which is more inwardly-focused; Liao et al., 2018; Reynolds, 2008). This enables us to capture an employee's propensity to automatically screen for, and focus on, daily events and experiences at work via a moral lens (Reynolds, 2008). We thus expect perceptual moral attentiveness to act as an interpretive filter through which they observe another's UPB (Zhu et al., 2016), leading those higher in perceptual moral attentiveness to feel lower levels of admiration and higher levels of disgust upon observing this behavior, along with corresponding weaker (helping) and stronger (interaction avoidance, instigated incivility, and whistle-blowing) behavioral reactions.

In light of the recently articulated dynamic nature of UPB (e.g., Mitchell, Greenbaum, et al., 2018; Umphress et al., 2020), we first report an experience-sampling study (Study 1) conducted with corporate sales agents. This study provides evidence for the ambivalent affective reactions that stem from UPB, tests for moderation, and examines a limited set of behavioral outcomes (helping via admiration, and incivility via disgust). Following this, we report results from an experimental study (Study 2), which constructively replicates our findings from Study 1, and extend the scope of outcomes that may result from disgust (adding interaction avoidance and whistle-blowing). Our model is displayed in Figure as we 1.

By examining our hypotheses in two studies with different methodologies (i.e., field and experimental studies), we make three contributions to behavioral ethics research. First, we diverge from extant UPB research, which has tended to take an actor-centric perspective (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Umphress et al., 2010, 2020). Instead, we articulate a third-party perspective to explore the paradoxical reactions that occur in response to observing UPB. To this end, and as we unpack further below, we demonstrate that observers exhibit a more varied response to UPB than they do other unethical behaviors. Thus, our research shines further light on the complex nature of UPB (e.g., Tang et al., 2020).

Second, and following from above, we heed calls from scholars to consider "a broader range of third party reactions" (Mitchell et al., 2015, p. 1041). As prior research has focused on studying third-party reactions to traditional unethical behavior (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017; Shao et al., 2016, 2018), scholars have shown observers' negative emotional and behavioral reactions towards the perpetrators (e.g., O'Reilly et al., 2016; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). We show

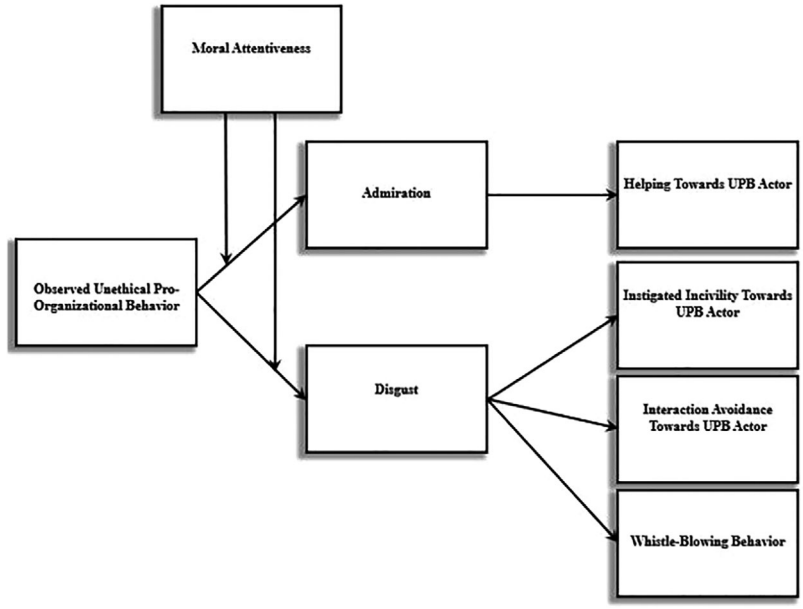

FIGURE 1 Hypothesized model

this as well, and extend this work by considering a wider range of negative behavioral reactions (incivility, interaction avoidance, and whistle-blowing). Yet beyond this, we also demonstrate a positive reaction as well (helping). In doing so, our research opens a new avenue of third-party research by showing the importance of considering a variety of both the positive and negative reactions to unethical behavior.

Finally, drawing from appraisal theories (Roseman & Smith, 2001; Scherer et al., 2001), we identify moral attentiveness as a stable individual difference that influences whether third-parties are likely to react positively or negatively to others' UPB. By theorizing that moral attentiveness is an individual characteristic that would affect third-party employees' appraisal processes followed by observing UPB, our research further advances scholars' understanding regarding *which* third-party employee is more likely to endorse or disapprove the notion of "do[ing] bad things for good reasons" (Umphress & Bingham, 2011, p. 621). Overall, our research helps enrich the nomological net of UPB in the behavioral ethics literature.

2 | THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 | UPB and observer reactions

Greenberg (1997) noted that the underlying motive for workplace unethical behavior is often complex. Yet, despite behavioral ethics scholars long theorizing that employees may engage in unethical behavior for the benefit of their organizations (e.g., Ashforth & Anand, 2003), the conventional wisdom has, for many years, been that unethical behavior is largely driven by self-interest (e.g., Lewicki, 1983). This changed, however, with the development of the UPB construct (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2010). Specially, these scholars expressly noted that "some unethical behaviors may be carried out with pro-organizational intentions" (Umphress & Bingham, 2011, p. 622). This work led to a significant recalibration of unethical workplace behavior, and prompted a torrent of work devoted to understanding both why employees engage in this behavior, as well the consequences of this behavior (Fehr et al., 2019; Umphress et al., 2010, 2020).

This exclusive focus on UPB actors, however, comes at the expense of understanding the broader social consequences of UPB at work. That is, while it was important to develop the nomological network of this construct, equally important is keeping in mind that the behavioral ethics literature writ large holds that unethical behavior does not occur in vacuum (Dang et al., 2017; Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019). There is a rich tradition in this literature examining how individuals react to observing unethical acts (e.g., Shao et al., 2018; Skarlicki et al., 2013; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). A commonality in this work is that, because unethical behaviors are often driven by self-interest, observers can appraise this behavior negatively and retaliate. Reich and Hershcovis (2015), for example, showed that individuals experienced negative affect upon observing uncivil work behavior, and responded by assigning the perpetrator more work. In another study, Hershcovis et al. (2017) found that observers of mistreatment may directly confront the perpetrator. Thus, the consensus in this literature is that observing unethical behavior tends to trigger negative appraisals and corresponding negative retaliatory behavior (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017; Skarlicki & Kulik, 2004).

With this said, it is unlikely the lessons learned from the research reviewed above can be directly applied to explaining how employees will react to observing coworkers engaged in UPB. UPB is inherently unethical, as it violates "a specific set of social benchmarks" that could harm the company and organizational members (Umphress & Bingham, 2011, p. 622). Following the aforementioned consensus in this research, one might then expect observers to appraise UPB negatively, and react accordingly (e.g., Skarlicki & Kulik, 2004). Such a prediction would likely be accurate, but incomplete, as it omits from consideration that UPB is also pro-organizational (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2010). In this way, UPB goes "beyond the hostile and self-focused views of unethical behavior" (Umphress et al., 2010, p. 770), and as such cannot be viewed through quite the same lens as other workplace unethical behaviors.

Instead, we submit that employees might observe coworkers engaged in UPB, yet appraise this positively. This could occur because, although admittedly unethical, UPB has the potential to "promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members" (Umphress & Bingham, 2011, p. 622). To this point, prior research has shown that observers react favorably to behaviors appraised in this way (e.g., Ford et al., 2018; Onkila, 2015). UPB's dual nature (i.e., unethical, but pro-organizational; Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Umphress et al., 2010) thus makes it possible observers might react both negatively (as predicted by extant theory in this literature), and positively (which would somewhat change the dominant conversation in this literature). To unpack the theoretical basis for our predictions on the mixed consequences of observing UPB, we turn now to theory and research on emotion appraisal.

2.2 | Observing UPB and third-party's mixed appraisals

A long tradition of theory (encompassing writings by philosophers and scholars such as Aristotle, Darwin, James, and Sartre, and formalized in the 1960s by Lazarus and others; Moors et al., 2013) holds that individuals are attentive to events in their environment, and that these events may instantiate affective reactions in that observer. The rationale, these scholars argue, is that individuals are sensitive to the potential self-relevant implications of these events, and react accordingly (e.g., Frijda, 1986). Traditionally, appraisal research has presumed that the event in question has a singular nature that will lead to a corresponding state (i.e., stimuli appraised positively [negatively] trigger positive [negative] affective reactions; Russell & Carroll, 1999; Smith & Lazarus, 1993). Yet, regarding observed UPB, could its dual nature lead observers to experience a corresponding dual affective reaction?

Extant theory on emotions suggests the answer is yes. That is, not only has seminal work on emotional appraisal highlighted that "similar events [or behaviors] can provoke different emotions" (Ellsworth, 2013, p. 125), but also emotion theorists posit that reactions to dual-natured behaviors may result in *mixed* emotional appraisals (i.e., emotional ambivalence; Larsen & McGraw, 2011; Larsen et al., 2001; Scherer, 1998). Emotional ambivalence refers to the "simultaneous existence of strong, polar opposite feelings…towards a given event" (Rothman et al., 2017, p. 35). As Schneider and Schwarz (2017) further remarked, "people [can] experience different discrete emotions simultaneously" after encountering a stimulus with mixed nature (p. 39). For example, McGraw and Warren (2010) showed that watching

video clips with mixed content can lead to the experience of amusement and disgust concurrently, and graduation can elicit both happy and sad emotions simultaneously (Larsen & McGraw, 2011).

In sum, there are reasons to think UPB's dual nature (pro-organizational, yet unethical) may elicit a more complex emotional reaction than that elicited by other unethical behaviors. As we discuss further below, observers may then appraise UPB as both potentially beneficial, but also potentially threatening, which should lead to correspondingly divergent affective states (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003). We turn now to developing specific hypotheses along these lines.

2.3 | UPB and third-party employees' admiration

On one hand, and different from other unethical behaviors, UPB has a pro-organizational component (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). This behavior can directly benefit the organization, and indirectly benefit others as well (Umphress et al., 2010). Employee observers may recognize this pro-organizational aspect of a coworker's UPB, and thus appraise this behavior positively. To this point, Belschak and Den Hartog (2010) have shown third-party observers do form positive appraisals of pro-organizational behaviors from a coworker. For example, employees view their leaders more positive when leaders engage in proactive behavior that benefits the organizations rather than just themselves (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010). Thus, UPB may function as what Ellsworth and Scherer (2003; see also Ellsworth, 2013) call "positive appraisal triggers"—favorably-appraised behaviors that contribute to positive affective reactions.

Specifically, we anticipate that third-party observers of UPB may feel admiration following their positive appraisal of this behavior. Emotion theorists have posited that admiration is elicited by some behavior that provides wide-ranging benefits (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Onu et al., 2016), and uniquely contributes to the group or institution (Keltner & Haidt, 1999). More directly on point, prior research has shown that individuals often experience admiration upon observing another's excellence (Immordino-Yang et al., 2009; Ortony et al., 1990) or significant accomplishment (Onu et al., 2016; Schindler et al., 2013). For example, Cegarra-Navarro and Martínez-Martínez (2009), as well as He et al. (2019), have found that various pro-organizational behaviors such as engaging in socially responsibility activities can elicit admiration in observers (employees). Because UPB can benefit the organization, and by extension other organizational members, we expect observers of this behavior to experience higher levels of admiration. We thus hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: Observed UPB is positively related to the feelings of admiration in the third-party employees.

2.4 | UPB and third-party employees' disgust

Yet on the other hand, and in alignment with other unethical behaviors, UPB violates social and moral norms (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Thus, this behavior may not only harm external stakeholders (e.g., customers who were the target of UPB), but also there is the potential for significant, indirect consequences as well. That is, if exposed, UPB could be an existential threat to the organization's reputation and possibly survival (Umphress et al., 2010). In this way, UPB can cause problems that extend beyond targets of the behavior. Umphress et al. (2010) speak directly to this point, highlighting that UPB has a potential negative spillover effect by "caus[ing] harm" to the surrounding organizational members, including third-party employees (p. 770). Employee observers may recognize these more unseemly and threatening aspects of UPB and thus appraise this behavior negatively. Indeed, research has shown that norm-violating behaviors do indeed elicit negative appraisals from observers (Skarlicki et al., 2013). As such, UPB may also function as "negative appraisal triggers"—unfavorably-appraised behaviors that contribute to negative affective reactions (Ellsworth, 2013; Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003).

Specifically, we anticipate that third-party observers of UPB may feel disgust following their negative appraisal of this behavior. Emotion theorists have posited that disgust is elicited by behavior that gives rise to "moral

considerations and informs moral judgements" (Russell & Giner-Sorolla, 2013, p. 329). More specifically, disgust is generally triggered by behavior that violates moral norms and standards (e.g., Chapman et al., 2009; Marzillier & Davey, 2004), and indeed Jones and Fitness (2008, p. 613) highlight that there is a "convergent body of evidence suggesting that moral offenses and offenders do produce disgust in observers." For example, both Skarlicki et al. (2013) and Tybur et al. (2009) have shown that various unethical workplace behaviors such as injustice or deception during business transactions elicit disgust in observers. Because UPB violates moral norms, and can harm the organization, and by extension other organizational members, we expect that observers of this behavior may experience higher levels of disgust. We thus hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2: Observed UPB is positively related to the feelings of disgust in the third-party employees.

3 | DOWNSTREAM CONSEQUENCES OF OBSERVING UPB

The above hypotheses detail our expectation that employees may experience ambivalent affective reactions (i.e., admiration, but also disgust) upon observing UPB. As a function of appraisal processes is to provide information about social situations and guide behavior in response to these situations (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991; Moors et al., 2013), we further expect these processes to lead to differential behavioral outcomes directed towards UPB actors.

3.1 | Admiration and helping directed towards the UPB actor

Stemming from a positive appraisal, we expect admiration will lead observers to desire further connection with the actor (e.g., Fredrickson, 1998), which should lead these individuals to move towards the UPB actor through increased levels of helping behavior. As we mentioned, appraisal theories suggest that individuals are more likely to enact positive, affiliative behaviors toward those individuals for whom they feel positive emotions (Smith & Lazarus, 1990, 1993). In the case of admiration, UPB actors may be seen as having facilitated the company's success, and indirectly benefitted the observer (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). In return, we expect those observers to engage in behaviors that move them closer to those admired targets, as doing so may allow these individuals to make their own positive contributions as well (Onu et al., 2016).

Specifically, Henrich and Gil-White's (2001) study demonstrated that admiration drives observers to seek a closer relationship with the admired person (i.e., UPB actor). Similarly, Algoe and Haidt (2009) found that individuals were more willing to recognize the performance of an admired target, and devote further efforts toward helping that individual. In addition, Brewer and Alexander (2002) argued that admiration should further prompt the observers to see UPB actors as allies at work, which should lead to greater levels of cooperation. Taken together, we expect admiration to prompt helping behavior toward the UPB actor, thus providing a linkage between observing UPB and this subsequent behavior. We thus hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Admiration mediates the effect of observed UPB and helping behavior towards UPB actors.

3.2 | Disgust and subsequent behavior towards the UPB actor

Reactions from a negative appraisal, in contrast, are likely more complicated (e.g., Arnold, 1960; Lazarus, 1966). That is, prior research on disgust has identified that observers may seek to both dis-identify with, and distance oneself from, the source of negative appraisal (Chapman & Anderson, 2013)—which we expect will lead respectively to both enacted incivility toward, and interaction avoidance with, the UPB actor. Going further, the inherent unethical nature of UPB may further lead disgusted observers to actively seek to sanction the negative behavior (e.g., Keltner & Haidt, 1999;

Pizarro et al., 2011). We thus further examine whether observers may engage in whistle-blowing toward the UPB actor.

3.2.1 | Instigated incivility and interaction avoidance

Unlike positive affective states such as admiration, a negative state like disgust may be associated with a varied set of behavioral reactions. To this point, prior disgust research has identified both dis-identifying and avoidant behavioral reactions from disgusted individuals. Disgust is a functional affective state, in that one of its core purposes is to prevent individuals from becoming contaminated by some impure or tainted stimulus (Rozin & Fallon, 1987). In a social context, this should translate into acts that enable employees to "maintain their moral cleanliness" (Chapman & Anderson, 2013, p. 313).

Along these lines, one potential employee reaction may be instigated incivility toward the UPB actor. Incivility is defined as "low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target" (Andersson & Pearson, 1999, p. 457). By acting condescendingly toward UPB actors, or otherwise ignoring or paying little attention to them during the day (e.g., Cameira & Ribeiro, 2014; Gutierrez & Giner-Sorolla, 2007), incivility may permit employees to disassociate from the unethical acts they have observed (Hutcherson & Gross, 2011). In this way, an observer can create psychological distance between themselves and UPB, and cleanse themselves of its consequences (e.g., Horberg et al., 2009; Rozin & Fallon, 1987). This aligns with theory from Molho et al. (2017), who argue disgust motivates covert forms of negative behavior as a means of dis-identifying from a moral offender (see also Chapman & Anderson, 2013). Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4a: Disgust mediates the effect of observed UPB on incivility towards UPB actors.

Going one step further, observers may try to create physical distance between themselves and the UPB actor; indeed, disgust should create a "reluctance to come into contact with" the source of moral contamination in observers (Hutcherson & Gross, 2011, p. 721). Therefore, we also expect disgust may lead observers to engage in interaction avoidance, defined as the intention to minimize interactions and other forms of social contact with a particular (group) of coworkers (Nifadkar et al., 2012). To this point, research across disciplines has identified a tendency for disgust to drive individuals to avoid its source (e.g., Rozin & Fallon, 1987; Shook et al., 2019). Along these lines, emotion theorists have specifically suggested that disgust might help the individuals to neutralize the potential threats by propelling them to engage in "social distancing" from the source of disgust (Molho et al., 2017, p. 610). In their recent review, Chapman and Anderson (2013) have also highlighted that disgust is often "associated with more passive withdrawal or avoidance," suggesting that disgust serves important evolutionary functions by driving individuals away from the source of disgust in their subsequent social interactions. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4b: Disgust mediates the effect of observed UPB on interactional avoidance towards UPB actors.

3.2.2 | Whistle-blowing

Beyond the dis-identifying and avoidant actions we predicted above, it is also possible that disgusted employees may seek to sanction the UPB actor in some way as well (e.g., Pizarro et al., 2011). To this point, disgust has the potential to intensify the perceptions of moral violation that initially triggered this affective state (e.g., Schnall et al., 2008; Wheatley & Haidt, 2005)—indeed, Pizarro et al. (2011), p. 268) directly note that disgust serves as "an amplifier of moral judgement," which may increase the desire of observers to punish the UPB actor (see also Case et al., 2012).

One way in which observers could accomplish this is through unethical conduct reporting mechanisms with an organization (i.e., whistle-blowing; Culiberg & Mihelič, 2017). Whistle-blowing behavior is defined as the internal reporting of "illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices" from organizational members to superior others in the company (Near, 1989; Near & Miceli, 1985, p. 4). While we are unaware of prior research directly linking disgust and whistle-blowing,

these separate strands of research dovetail in the context of observing UPB. That is, whistle-blowing is expected in situations wherein unethical behavior has potential far-reaching negative consequences for either observers, or more, society (e.g., Andrade, 2015; Chiu, 2003; Near & Miceli, 1996). As discussed above, UPB directly fits that description (Umphress et al., 2010). As a result, the potential for harm may lead disgusted observers to formally report their observation of UPB, in an effort to make things right (e.g., Jubb, 1999; Miceli & Near, 1992; Near & Miceli, 1985). We thus hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 4c: Disgust mediates the effect of observed UPB on whistle-blowing behavior.

3.3 | The influence of moral attentiveness on third parties' mixed appraisals of UPB

Thus far, we have discussed how UPB's dual nature may lead third-parties to mixed emotional appraisals (admiration, but also disgust) upon observing a coworker enacting this behavior. Yet despite this dual nature, appraisal theories suggest employees may be predisposed to focus more or less on particular aspects of UPB's dual nature. To this point, appraisal theories recognize that people may react differently to the same stimulus (Frijda, 1986, 2009; Smith & Lazarus, 1990). Specifically, Moors et al. (2013), p. 121) note that personal concerns may influence how people interpret the information encapsulated by a stimulus, as "one person might appraise the event as furthering those concerns, while the other may see it as obstructing them."

Given UPB's morally-tinged nature, we focus on a trait that should capture the extent to which people are attentive to the moral aspects of this behavior. In line with appraisal theories of emotion, we submit that people for whom the moral aspects of daily life are particularly salient should be more likely to focus on the (un)ethical nature of UPB (Smith & Lazarus, 1990). This maps onto moral attentiveness—an individual's tendency to perceive and consider morality in his or her daily experience (Reynolds, 2008). Of note, moral attentiveness itself is comprised of two dimensions—perceptual and reflective[1]—of which we focus on the perceptual dimension (which is outwardly-focused, as employees higher on this dimension tend to automatically screen for, focus on, and view information encountered in the environment through a moral lens), given our interests in identifying those individuals who might be more or less attentive to particular aspects of their coworker's UPB. We submit that perceptual moral attentiveness (hereafter: moral attentiveness) should act as an interpretive filter for third-party employees to read and interpret the (im)moral implications of their coworkers' UPB (Reynolds, 2008; Zhu et al., 2016).

Drawing from research on moral attentiveness, and in line with behavioral ethics research broadly, we expect employees with higher moral attentiveness will tend to "screen for and focus on" the moral aspects of stimuli in the environment (Reynolds, 2008, p. 1029; Reynolds et al., 2012; van Gils et al., 2015). Importantly, we expect this to include observing a coworker's UPB. While UPB has a pro-organizational nature that can benefit the observing employee, these individuals should be pre-disposed to "interpret incoming information" via a moral lens (Zhu et al., 2016, p. 99). As such, this should lead employees to not to focus on UPB's dual nature, but rather to see another's UPB as a moral violation that can harm both customers and the company. Thus, these employees should emphasize the unethical nature of this behavior in their evaluation, and thus be more likely to appraise a coworker's UPB as negative (and less likely to appraise it as positive).

Employees with lower levels of moral attentiveness, in contrast, should be less sensitive to the (im)moral implications of UPB (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). As a result, they should be less likely to "screen and consider" a coworker's UPB to be unethical (Reynolds, 2008, p. 1028). For this reason, we expect instead that these employees will tend to give greater weight to the pro-organizational element of this behavior, leaving them more likely to appraise it as positive (and, correspondingly less likely to appraise it as negative). Integrating this with our prior theorizing leads us to the following moderation hypotheses.

Hypothesis 5a: Employee's moral attentiveness interacts with observed UPB such that the positive effect of observed UPB on admiration is weaker when moral attentiveness is high compared to when moral attentiveness is low.

Hypothesis 5b: Employee's moral attentiveness interacts with observed UPB such that the positive effect of observed UPB on disgust is stronger when moral attentiveness is high compared to when moral attentiveness is low.

Integrating our theoretical arguments presented in Hypotheses 1–5, we posit the following moderated mediation hypotheses (see Figure 1).

Hypothesis 6: The indirect effect of observed UPB on helping behavior towards UPB actor via admiration is moderated by moral attentiveness, such that the indirect effect will be stronger when moral attentiveness is low compared to when moral attentiveness is high.

Hypothesis 7a: The indirect effect of observed UPB on instigated incivility towards UPB actor via disgust is moderated by moral attentiveness, such that the indirect effect will be stronger when moral attentiveness is high compared to when moral attentiveness is low.

Hypothesis 7b: The indirect effect of observed UPB on interactional avoidance towards UPB actor via disgust is moderated by moral attentiveness, such that the indirect effect will be stronger when moral attentiveness is high compared to when moral attentiveness is low.

Hypothesis 7c: The indirect effect of observed UPB on whistle-blowing behavior via disgust is moderated by moral attentiveness, such that the indirect effect will be stronger when moral attentiveness is high compared to when moral attentiveness is low.

4 | OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

We test our hypotheses in a series of two studies. Our approach to this follows what Chatman and Flynn (2005) term as a "full cycle research approach," wherein we first examined our phenomenon of interest in a field study, and then followed up with an experimental study to constructively replicate and extend our findings. Because unethical behavior in general, and UPB in particular, have been argued to be dynamic behaviors that may occur on a daily basis (e.g., Mitchell, Greenbaum, et al., 2018; Umphress et al., 2020), we first conducted an experience sampling study (i.e., a within-person study) with three daily assessments across 10 consecutive working days with a group of corporate sales agents in Hong Kong (i.e., Study 1). The field setting of Study 1 provides an effective setting for our examination, because sales employees have been identified as a sample wherein UPB is particularly likely to occur (e.g., Chen et al., 2016). Study 1 tests our hypotheses involving whether observing UPB may simultaneously elicit both admiration and disgust in observers. Further, this study examines both the moderating effect of moral attentiveness on these relationships, as well as the downstream behavioral consequences to helping and instigated incivility (i.e., Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4a, 5, 6, and 7a).

After conducting this field test, we followed it up with a between-individual experimental study with working adults in the United States to further enhance the validity and robustness of our findings (Study 2). Specifically, Study 2 is intended to constructively replicate our findings from Study 1, and also to extend them by providing further evidence for the causal direction of our effects, testing additional outcomes of disgust (interaction avoidance and whistle-blowing), and ruling out alternative explanations. In Study 2, we used an enriching medium to manipulate observed UPB by following recommendations to record a video with a hired actor (Podsakoff et al., 2013). Thus, by following recommendations to examine our hypothesized model via both within- and between-person lens across Studies 1 and 2, we can establish convergence for our theory across levels of analysis (e.g., Voelkle et al., 2014). Overall, our studies employ different combinations of field and lab settings, cultural contexts, and manipulations.

5 | STUDY 1 METHODS[2]

5.1 | Sample and procedure

In spring of 2019, we collected data from one of the largest market research companies in Hong Kong. This organization provides strategic market research services to an array of multi-national clients. The chief executive officer

allowed us to conduct the current study with sales agents whose major responsibilities include responding to clients' requests, handling real-time complaints, making cold calls, and providing after-sales service. This is a useful sample to test our model, as sales employees exhibit dynamic changes in emotions and behaviors (e.g., Liu et al., 2017; Song et al., 2018). Further, these employees work in close proximity, making it possible to observe UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016). The HR department distributed a study announcement, and we sent interested employees an email containing details about the study (e.g., the daily nature of our study, confidentiality, and compensation). We contacted 148 sales agents, 120 of whom agreed to participate in our study and provided daily reports.

We collected data over 3 weeks. In the first week, participants completed an initial survey wherein they reported their moral attentiveness and demographics. In the second and third weeks, we sent three surveys each day (before-work, midday, and end-of-day) for 10 consecutive workdays. We sent the before-work survey at 9 a.m. (average completion time: 9:38 a.m.). This survey contained baseline measures of joviality and sadness, which we included as controls. We sent the midday survey, which contained measures of daily observed UPB, admiration, and disgust, at 2 p.m. (average completion time: 2:40 p.m.). Finally, we sent the end-of-day survey, in which employees rated their own helping and incivility directed towards actors of UPB to employees, at 6 p.m. (average completion time: 6:39 p.m.). We compensated participants with a raffle for cash prizes (10 prizes of $40 each). The final sample consisted of 120 sales agents who provided 794 day-level responses. A total of 71 sales agents identified as female (59%). On average, participants were 31.5 years old, ($SD = 6.5$) and had worked for the organization for 3.7 years ($SD = 3.3$). A total of 43% of participants possessed at least an undergraduate degree.

5.2 | Measures

We translated the measures from English to Chinese following Brislin's (1980) back-translation procedure. Following the recommendations from Beal (2015), we used shortened versions of scales to limit the length of the surveys, and used the same anchors (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) for our measures (e.g., Sherf et al., 2019).

5.3 | Baseline survey

5.3.1 | Moral attentiveness

We measured the focal employee's moral attentiveness with five items from the perceptual dimension (Reynolds, 2008). Participants rated the extent to which each statement described their perceptions of moral issues. Sample items are "In a typical day, I face several ethical dilemmas," and "I regularly face decisions that have significant ethical implications," "My life has been filled with one moral predicament after another," and " Many of the decisions that I make have ethical dimensions to them." Coefficient $\alpha = .78$.

5.4 | Start of day survey (controls)

5.4.1 | Joviality and sadness

We measured joviality and sadness at the start of the participants' workday using eight and five items, respectively (Watson & Clark, 1999). Participants indicated the extent to which each statement described their feelings at the moment. Sample items for joviality are "Happy" and "Joyful." Sample items for sadness are "Sad" and "Downhearted." Coefficient $\alpha = .80$ for joviality and $\alpha = .86$ for sadness.

5.5 | Midday survey

5.5.1 | Observed UPB

We measured observed UPB using four items from the scale developed by Umphress et al. (2010), where this shortened version has been used in recent organizational studies (e.g., Tang et al., 2020). We selected these items because they are prevalent in the customer service industry and likely to be observed by others. Focal participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the items about their colleagues' behavior today. Sample items are "Today, one or more colleagues misrepresented the truth to make my organization look good" and "Today, one or more colleagues exaggerated the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients." Coefficient $\alpha = .88$.

5.5.2 | Admiration

We measured admiration using a three-item scale (Algoe & Haidt, 2009). Participants rated to what extent they agree that each item described their feelings at the moment. The items are "Admiration," "Awe," and "Inspired." Coefficient $\alpha = .82$.

5.5.3 | Disgust

We measured disgust using a three-item scale (Russell & Giner-Sorolla, 2011). Participants rated to what extent they agree that each item described their feelings at the moment. The items are "Disgusted," "Repulsed," and "Sickened." Coefficient $\alpha = .85$.

5.6 | End of day survey

5.6.1 | Helping behavior towards UPB actors

We measured participant's helping behavior directed specifically towards UPB actors using three items from Bettencourt and Brown (1997). This scale has been recently used in ESM studies to capture one's helping behavior during the day (e.g., Yue et al., 2017). Participants received the following instructions: "Some of your colleagues may or may not have engaged in behaviors today such as withholding information or misrepresenting the truth to customers or to the public. Please focus on how often you engaged in the following behaviors towards those employees today." The items are "Today, I helped them when it is clear their workload was too high," "I lent a helping hand to them when needed," and "I willingly assisted them in meeting their job requirements." Coefficient $\alpha = .85$.

5.6.2 | Instigated incivility towards UPB actors

We measured instigated incivility towards UPB actors using three items from Lim and Cortina (2005). Participants received the same instructions as above, but the reference point was shifted from helping to incivility. The items are "Today, I put them down or acted condescendingly toward them," "Today, I paid little attention to their statements or showed little interest in their opinion," and "Today, I ignored or excluded them from professional camaraderie." Coefficient $\alpha = .84$.

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations for study variables (Study 1)

Variable	*Mean*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Joviality (T1)	4.61	.71	–							
2. Sadness (T1)	1.99	.66	−.05	–						
3. Observed unethical pro-organizational behavior (T2)	4.12	1.28	−.02	.01	–					
4. Admiration (T2)	4.79	1.10	.16*	.07	.16*	–				
5. Disgust (T2)	4.08	1.30	−.02	.01	.20*	−.09*	–			
6. Helping towards UPB actors (T3)	4.84	1.17	.15*	.08*	.18*	.24*	.05	–		
7. Instigated incivility towards UPB actors (T3)	2.30	.97	−.02	−.02	.05	−.01	.14*	.05	–	
8. Moral attentiveness (level 2)	4.49	.96	.15	−.01	−.07	.06	.02	.11	−.01	–

Note. Level 1 $N = 794$. Level 2 $N = 120$. Means, standard deviations, and correlations represent group-mean centered relationships at the within-individual level of analysis. T1, T2, and T3 reflect measures reported by employees during the workday. Moral attentiveness is a between-individual variable, thus correlations with this variable reflect aggregated relationships.
*$p < .05$.

5.7 | Control variables[3]

We controlled for start of day joviality and sadness, as daily baseline affective states that could influence perceptions of discrete emotions and downstream outcomes (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000; George, 1991; Porath & Erez, 2009). Following best practices for experience-sampling research, we also used control variables to rule out sources of artifactual variance (Gabriel et al., 2019). First, we included prior measures for each endogenous construct (our two mediators, as well as both dependent variables).[4] Second, we included a linear term to represent the day of the study (i.e., 1–10) to capture potential measurement reactance (e.g., Beal et al., 2013; Lanaj et al., 2016). Third, we controlled for cyclical variation by including a variable to represent the day of the week, as well as two additional variables that reflect the sine and cosine of the day of the week (Beal & Ghandour, 2011; Trougakos et al., 2014).

5.8 | Analytic strategy

The multilevel nature of our data (daily observations nested in persons) necessitates the use of multilevel analyses, for which we used Mplus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). We first examined the within-person variance and between-person variance of each daily variable to ensure that the multilevel analysis was appropriate. Results suggested within-person variance accounted for a significant proportion of the total variance in all daily focal variables, ranging from 71% to 88%, which justified our use of multilevel modeling as the analytic strategy (e.g., Chong et al., 2020). Following this, we examined the factor structure of our study variables through an eight-factor confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). We modeled seven within-individual variables (daily observed UPB, admiration, disgust, helping, incivility, and the two affective states for which we control) at level 1, and one between-individual moderator (trait moral attentiveness) at level 2. This model fit the data adequately ($\chi^2 = 812.33$, $df = 361$, CFI = .94, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04), and so we proceeded with our analysis.

Following typical practice for multilevel ESM analyses, we group-mean centered our exogenous level 1 predictor (Enders & Tofighi, 2007), while allowing Mplus to latently centered our endogenous mediators (e.g., Baer et al., 2018;

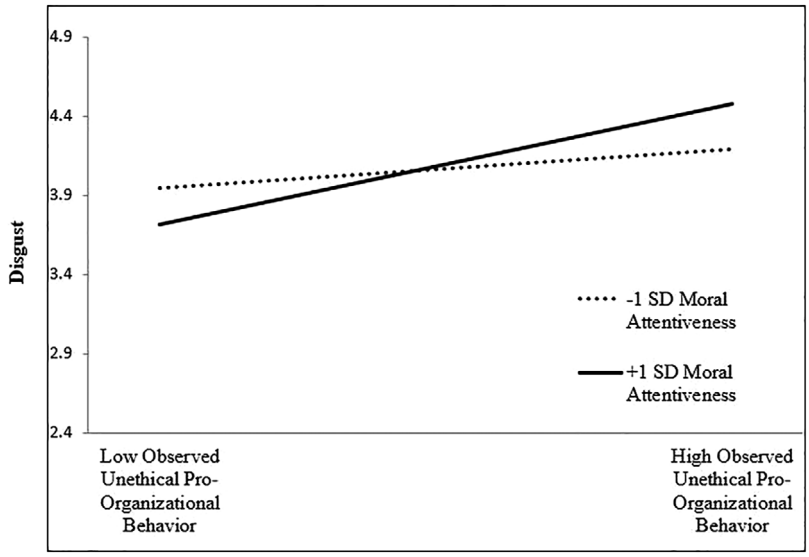

FIGURE 2 Moral attentiveness moderates the relationship between observed unethical pro-organizational behavior and disgust (Study 1)
Note. The interaction pattern corresponds to our predictions, as the relationship between observed UPB and disgust is stronger at high levels of moral attentiveness ($\gamma = .29$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$,) and weaker at low levels ($\gamma = .10$, $SE = .07$, $p = .157$). Specifically, the difference between these two slopes was significant ($\gamma = .20$, $SE = .08$, $p = .018$).

Lanaj et al., in press). We grand-mean centered our level 2 moderator. We included the direct effect of observed UPB on our dependent variables, and also allowed the disturbances between (a) each of our mediators and (b) between our dependent variables to covary (though, removing these paths had no effect on our results). Finally, although we do not expect or hypothesize relationships between admiration and instigated incivility, and also between disgust and both targeted helping, we included these paths. We calculated mediation and moderated mediation by using a parametric bootstrap procedure with 20,000 resamples, as recommended by Preacher et al. (2010). This procedure allows us to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals using the parameter and standard error from the analysis (e.g., Liu et al., 2017).

6 | STUDY 1 RESULTS

Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation), as well as correlations among study variables, are presented in Table 1. Table 2 provides the full results of our analysis. Hypotheses 1 and 2, regarding the main effects of observing UPB on admiration and disgust, were supported. Specifically, observing UPB had a positive effect on both admiration ($\gamma = .12$, $SE = .05$, $p = .012$) and disgust ($\gamma = .19$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 predicted that admiration would mediate the relationship between observing UPB and helping behavior directed towards UPB actors. In support of this hypothesis, the indirect effect was positive (.024; 95% CI = .006, .051). Hypothesis 4a predicted that disgust would mediate the relationship between observing UPB and instigated incivility towards UPB actors. In support of this hypothesis, the indirect effect was positive (.021; 95% CI = .007, .044). The incremental variance explained in admiration, disgust, helping, and instigated incivility were 18%, 15%, 3%, and 5%, respectively.

Hypotheses 5a and 5b predicted that moral attentiveness would moderate the relationships between observing UPB and (a) admiration and (b) disgust.[5] Specifically, we expected the relationship between observed UPB and admiration to be weaker at higher levels of moral attentiveness, compared to lower levels (Hypothesis 5a) and the relationship

TABLE 2 Results of multilevel path analysis (Study 1)

	Admiration (T2)		Disgust (T2)		Helping towards UPB actors (T3)		Instigated incivility towards UPB actors (T3)	
Variables	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE
Intercept	4.79*	.06	4.08*	.07	3.71*	.26	1.96*	.27
Observed UPB (T2)	.12*	.05	.19*	.05	.11*	.04	.01	.04
Moral attentiveness	.03	.06	.01	.07	–	–	–	–
Interaction	−.08	.04	.10*	.04	–	–	–	–
Controls								
Joviality (T1)	.15*	.06	−.02	.06	.17*	.07	−.06	.06
Sadness (T1)	.08	.06	.04	.08	.11	.06	−.04	.08
Lagged controls								
Prior admiration	−.05	.05	–	–	–	–	–	–
Prior disgust	–	–	−.08	.05	–	–	–	–
Prior helping	–	–	–	–	−.07	.06	–	–
Prior instigated incivility	–	–	–	–	–	–	.01	.06
Other controls								
Day of the study	−.06*	.01	.03	.02	−.06*	.02	−.04*	.01
Day of the week	−.06	.05	.01	.06	−.12*	.05	−.03	.05
Sine	−.02	.08	−.09	.10	−.29*	.09	.02	.06
Cosine	.00	.07	.00	.08	.16*	.07	.09	.07
Mediators								
Admiration	–	–	–	–	.20*	.05	−.02	.04
Disgust	–	–	–	–	.04	.04	.11*	.04

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Variables	Admiration (T2)		Disgust (T2)		Helping towards UPB actors (T3)		Instigated incivility towards UPB actors (T3)	
	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE	γ	SE
Mediation and moderated mediation								
Indirect effect	–	–			**.024 (.006, .051)**		**.021 (.007, .044)**	
Indirect effect (low)	–	–			**.038 (.014, .074)**		.010 (–.002, .032)	
Indirect effect (high)	–	–			.009 (–.014, .037)		**.032 (.011, .063)**	
Indirect effect (difference)	–	–			–.015 (–.036, .000)		**.011 (.002, .028)**	

Note. Level 1 $N = 794$. Level 2 $N = 120$. Full results from multilevel path analyses are provided. Indirect effects for mediation and moderated mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.

* $p < .05$.

between observed UPB and disgust to be stronger at higher levels, compared to lower levels (Hypothesis 5b). Hypothesis 5a was not supported ($\gamma = -.08$, $SE = .04$, $p = .058$); however, Hypothesis 5b was supported ($\gamma = .10$, $SE = .04$, $p = .021$; see Figure 2). As expected, the relationship between observed UPB and disgust was stronger at higher levels of moral attentiveness ($\gamma = .29$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$) and weaker at lower levels ($\gamma = .10$, $SE = .07$, $p = .157$). Specifically, the difference between these two slopes was significant ($\gamma = .20$, $SE = .08$, $p = .018$).

Hypothesis 6 predicted the moderated mediation relationship between observing UPB and helping towards UPB actors, through admiration, at low levels of moral attentiveness. We consider this hypothesis to be unsupported; however, we note that the statistical evidence we report below somewhat suggests otherwise. The indirect effect for this relationship was stronger at lower levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = .038; 95% CI = .014, .074), and weaker at higher levels (conditional indirect effect = .009; 95% CI = −.014, .037). However, the difference in these effects was not significant (difference = −.015; 95% CI = −.036, .000). However, as moral attentiveness did not significantly moderate the relationship between observing UPB and admiration, we reiterate that we consider this hypothesis as not supported.

Finally, Hypothesis 7 predicted a moderated mediation relationship between observing UPB and instigated incivility towards UPB actors, through disgust, at high levels of moral attentiveness. This hypothesis was supported, as the indirect effect was stronger at higher levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = .032; 95% CI = .011, .063), and weaker at lower levels (conditional indirect effect = .010; 95% CI = −.002, .032). Further, the difference in these effects was significant (difference = .011; 95% CI = .002, .028).

7 | DISCUSSION OF STUDY 1 FINDINGS

Study 1 provides initial evidence regarding the impact of observing UPB on the elicitation of admiration and disgust. As expected, admiration led to greater levels of helping directed toward the UPB actor, whereas disgust lead to greater levels of incivility directed toward the UPB actor. In other words, this study demonstrates that the dual nature of UPB can indeed trigger a mixed emotional appraisal in the third-party observers. Moreover, observers' trait moral attentiveness moderated the relationship between observing UPB and disgust, such that observers with higher levels of moral attentiveness experienced disgust more strongly.

Although this study has notable strengths (i.e., being conducted in a field setting following best-practice design and methodological recommendations; Gabriel et al., 2019), this study is not without limitations. That we collected our data from sales agents in a collectivist culture can potentially limit the generalizability of these findings, as such employees may tend to highly value behavior that benefits the organization (Chen et al., 1998). Moreover, despite employing temporal separation for our measurements, this research design is somewhat limited in its ability to draw causal inferences. Plus, our hypothesis involving moral attentiveness and admiration was not supported, which necessitates further examination. And finally, there are other potential affective reactions that could stem from observing UPB besides disgust, and thus could constitute possible alternative explanations for our findings. For all of these reasons, and to further expand the range of outcome variables we test to include interaction avoidance and whistleblowing, we conducted Study 2 by creating a video depicting an instance of UPB to provide observers with a more immersive experience (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2013).

8 | STUDY 2 METHODS[6]

8.1 | Sample and procedure

We recruited 200 participants in the US through the Prolific online platform in the spring of 2020 (Peer et al., 2017). To be eligible for the study, participants had to be over the age of 18 and work full time in the customer service industry.

We randomly assigned participants to the observed UPB condition or the control condition. In the observed UPB condition, participants were asked to imagine themselves as a colleague who witnessed a conversation between two financial sales agents documented in a video, which depicted the enactment of UPB by one of the sales agents. In the control condition, participants went through a video documenting a business-as-usual conservation between the two sales agents. In creating the video materials for both the observed UPB and control conditions, we recruited a graduate student from the business school of a university in United States (with prior industrial experience as a financial sales agent in a financial institution) to play the role of the sales agent who engaged in UPB (i.e., observed UPB condition) and maintained a business-as-usual conversation with colleague (i.e., control condition). One of the authors played the role of the other sales agent (heard, but not seen in the video) who maintained a conversation with the UPB actor. The URLs to all videos used in this study are available in the footnote.[7]

After watching the video, participants reported their admiration and disgust toward the UPB actor, moral attentiveness, the dependent variables (helping, instigated incivility, interaction avoidance, and whistle-blowing), and manipulation check items (in this order). This sample (N = 200; 100 in each condition) had an average age of 31.96 years (SD = 10.79), 62% of them are female, and 76% of them are White. Participants were compensated approximately $2.

8.1.1 | Observed UPB condition

As highlighted earlier, the video documenting the enactment of UPB by one of the sales agents served as the manipulation. One of the sales agents (i.e., the actor) shared with a colleague about what did he do (i.e., UPB) to close the deal with a customer. For example, the actor had exaggerated the truth about a company's product. Participants were asked to imagine themselves as a colleague who witnessed this conversation.

8.1.2 | Control condition

In the control condition, participants watched a similar video, though this one depicted a business-as-usual conservation between the two sales agents. Specifically, one of the sales agents (i.e., the actor) shared with a colleague about closing a deal with a customer, which involves no enactment of UPB.

8.2 | Measures

8.2.1 | Admiration and disgust

After watching the video, we asked participants to report their feelings towards *the particular colleague* whom they described. We used the same scales as in Study 1 to measure admiration and disgust. Coefficient α = .94 and .97, respectively.

8.2.2 | Moral attentiveness

Consistent with Study 1, we measured participants' moral attentiveness using the same five items from Reynolds (2008) study. Coefficient α = .73.

8.2.3 | Helping behavior towards the UPB actor

We asked participants to assess their intentions for helping the particular colleague who enacted UPB using an adapted version of the three-item scale of helping behavior from Study 1. The items are "I would help him/her when it is clear his/her workload is too high," "I would lend a helping hand to him/her when needed," and "I would assist him/her in meeting their job requirements." Coefficient $\alpha = .72$.

8.2.4 | Instigated incivility towards the UPB actor

Similarly, participants were asked to respond to questions that assessed their intentions to instigate incivility towards the UPB actor with an adapted version of the three-item scale used in Study 1. The items are "I would put him/her down or act condescendingly toward him/her," "I would pay little attention to him/her statements or show little interest in his/her opinion," and "I would ignore or exclude him/her from professional camaraderie." Coefficient $\alpha = .89$.

8.2.5 | Interaction avoidance towards the UPB actor

Participants were asked to report their intentions to avoid the UPB actor during social interactions. We adapted the five-item scale from Nifadkar et al. (2012) to measure interaction avoidance. The items are "I would avoid speaking with him/her unless absolutely necessary," "I would avoid initiating contact with him/her," "I would stay away from him/her," "I would minimize official interactions with him/her," and "I would only have purely official, businesslike, interaction with him/her." Coefficient $\alpha = .97$.

8.2.6 | Whistle-blowing behavior

Participants were asked to rate their intentions to report such behavior from the particular colleagues to other organizational members (i.e., whistle-blowing behavior) by using three adapted items from the scale developed by Near and Miceli (1986). The items are "I would report his/her behavior to my coworkers," "I would report his/her behavior to my supervisor," and "I would report his/her behavior to someone above my supervisor." Coefficient $\alpha = .84$.

8.2.7 | Manipulation check items

We used the same four items from Study 1 to check whether the participants recalled observing UPB from that particular colleague. Coefficient $\alpha = .93$.

8.3 | Control variables[8]

In this study, we controlled for anger, anxiety, and fear, which are also possible emotional reactions that may stem from observing UPB. First, observing this behavior may elicit anger because it violates moral norms and intentionally exploits victims (Mitchell et al., 2015; Rozin et al., 1999). Second, observing UPB might lead to feelings of anxiety and fear, as this can create uncertainty about potential negative consequences to the organization, and thus might lead to undesirable outcomes (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Kouchaki & Desai, 2015). We measured these emotional states right

after the measures on admiration and disgust. Similarly as above, we asked participants to report their feelings *towards the particular colleague* whom they described.

8.3.1 | Anger

Anger was assessed using a three-item scale from Russell and Giner-Sorolla's (2011) study. A sample item is "angry." Coefficient $\alpha = .89$.

8.3.2 | Anxiety

Anxiety was assessed using the two-item scale from Rodell and Judge's (2009) study. A sample item is "anxious." Coefficient $\alpha = .91$.

8.3.3 | Fear

Fear was assessed using the three-item scale from Kiewitz et al.'s (2016) study. A sample item is "fearful." Coefficient $\alpha = .89$.

8.4 | Analytic strategy

We again first conducted a CFA on the hypothesized variables in our model (admiration, disgust, helping, incivility, interaction avoidance, whistle-blowing, and moral attentiveness). This model fit the data adequately ($\chi^2 = 594.44$, $df = 254$, CFI = .93, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .06), and thus we proceeded with our analysis. We then used the four-item measurement mentioned above as manipulation check for observed UPB and conducted ANOVA to examine the effect of observed UPB manipulation. Supporting our manipulation, responses to this measure differed significantly between the observing UPB condition ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 1.54$) and control condition ($M = 2.07$, $SD = 1.29$; $t[198] = 12.67$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.79$). We performed path analysis in Mplus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015). Here, we included the direct effect of observed UPB on our dependent variables, and also allowed the disturbances between (a) each of our mediators and (b) between our dependent variables to covary (though, their removal did not affect results). We tested mediation and moderated mediation as in Study 1.

8.5 | Study 2 results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among all variables are presented in Table 3. We began by conducting an ANOVA to test Hypotheses 1 and 2. The result revealed that participants in the observed UPB condition felt significantly more admiration ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.66$) towards the targeted colleague than participants in the control condition ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 1.64$), after controlling for anger, anxiety, and fear, $F(1, 195) = 13.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .06$. This analysis further revealed that participants in the observed UPB condition felt significantly more disgusted ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 1.49$) towards the targeted colleague than participants in the control condition ($M = 1.82$, $SD = 1.33$) after controlling for anger, anxiety, and fear, $F(1, 195) = 45.06$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .19$. Overall, the observed UPB condition leads to the experience of both admiration and disgust in the participants, thus supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2.

TABLE 3 Descriptive statistic and correlations for outcome variables in Study 2

	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Observed UPB	.50	.50	–										
2. Admiration	4.90	1.70	.24*	–									
3. Disgust	3.12	1.91	.68*	.06	–								
4. Helping	3.62	1.33	.13	.28*	.11	–							
5. Incivility	2.16	1.29	.52*	.08	.58*	.07	–						
6. Interaction avoidance	2.47	1.60	.49*	.07	.64*	.14	.79*	–					
7. Whistle-blowing	2.27	1.23	.48*	.00	.53*	.06	.78*	.72*	–				
8. Moral attentiveness	5.52	.85	.01	.04	.13	.06	−.02	.02	−.06	–			
9. Anger (control)	2.86	1.53	.60*	.06	.57*	.08	.51*	.45*	.41*	.03	–		
10. Anxiety (control)	3.17	1.83	.44*	.05	.54*	.03	.39*	.47*	.45*	.11	.28*	–	
11. Fear (control)	2.78	1.70	.45*	.05	.52	.09	.48*	.49*	.38*	.13	.83*	.29*	–

Note. $N = 200$.
* $p < .05$.

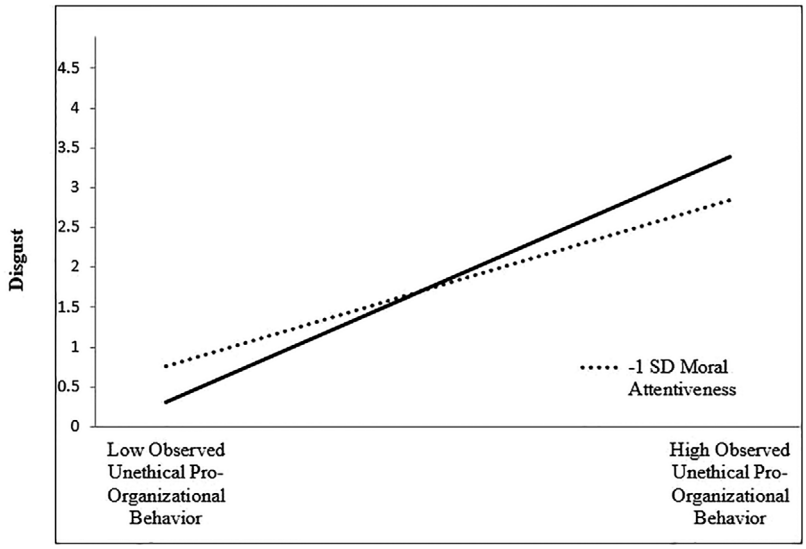

FIGURE 3 Moral attentiveness moderates the relationship between observed unethical pro-organizational behavior and disgust (Study 2)

Note. The interaction pattern corresponds to our predictions. The relationship between observed UPB and disgust was stronger at high levels of moral attentiveness ($B = 3.08$, $SE = .27$, $p < .001$) and weaker at low levels ($B = 2.08$, $SE = .28$, $p < .001$). Specifically, the difference between these two slopes was significant ($B = .99$, $SE = .39$, $p = .011$)

As highlighted, we used Mplus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015) to conduct path analysis and Table 4 provides the full results of such analysis. Aligning with our tests of Hypotheses 1 and 2 above, observed UPB was positively associated with the feeling of admiration and disgust ($B = .80$, $SE = .23$, $p = .001$ and $B = 2.58$, $SE = .19$, $p < .001$, respectively). Regarding Hypothesis 3 on the indirect effect of observing UPB on subsequent helping, admiration was positively related to helping behavior towards UPB actors ($B = .22$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). Supporting Hypothesis 3, the indirect effect was positive (.172; 95% CI = .066, .342).

Hypothesis 4a predicted the indirect effect of observing UPB and instigated incivility towards UPB actors via disgust. Our path analyses revealed that disgust was positively related to instigated incivility towards UPB actors ($B = .19$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). In addition, the indirect effect was positive (.485; 95% CI = .205, .794). Thus, Hypothesis 4a was supported. Hypothesis 4b predicted the indirect effect of observing UPB and interaction avoidance towards UPB actors via disgust. In fact, disgust was also positively related to interaction avoidance towards UPB actors ($B = .35$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect was positive (.898; 95% CI = .557, 1.294). Therefore, Hypothesis 4b was supported. Hypothesis 4c predicted the indirect effect of observing UPB and whistle-blowing behavior via disgust. As Table 4 showed, disgust was positively related to whistle-blowing behavior ($B = .15$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). Supporting Hypothesis 4c, the indirect effect was positive (.386; 95% CI = .102, .686).

Hypotheses 5a predicted that moral attentiveness would moderate the relationships between observed UPB and admiration.[9] As the path analyses revealed, the interaction coefficient was not significant ($B = -.42$, $SE = .27$, $p = .128$). Therefore, Hypothesis 5a was not supported. Hypotheses 5b predicted that moral attentiveness would moderate the relationships between observed UPB and disgust. Similar to Study 1's findings, Hypothesis 5b was supported as the interaction coefficient was significant ($B = .58$, $SE = .23$, $p = .01$), and this relationship is depicted in Figure 3. Specifically, the relationship between observed UPB and disgust was stronger at high levels of moral attentiveness ($B = 3.08$, $SE = .27$, $p < .001$) and weaker at low levels ($B = 2.08$, $SE = .28$, $p < .001$). The difference between these two slopes was also significant ($B = .99$, $SE = .39$, $p = .011$).

TABLE 4 Results of path analysis (Study 2)

	Admiration		Disgust		Helping towards UPB actors		Instigated incivility towards UPB actors		Interaction avoidance UPB actors		Whistle-blowing	
Variables	***B***	**SE**	***B***	**SE**	***B***	**SE**	***B***	**SE**	***B***	**SE**	***B***	**SE**
Intercept	4.50*	.16	1.82*	.14	2.41*	.36	.56*	.28	.32	.33	1.11*	.28
Observed UPB	.80*	.23	2.58*	.19	.05	.28	.43*	.22	.21	.26	.44*	.22
Moral attentiveness	.26	.18	.02	.15	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Interaction	−.42	.27	.58*	.23	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Controls												
Anger	–	–	–	–	−.04	.12	.08	.09	−.10	.11	.02	.09
Anxiety	–	–	–	–	−.04	.06	.07	.05	.15*	.05	.15*	.05
Fear	–	–	–	–	.05	.10	.11	.08	.26*	.09	.07	.08
Mediators												
Admiration	–	–	–	–	.22*	.06	.01	.04	.02	.05	−.05	.04
Disgust	–	–	–	–	.07	.07	.19*	.06	.35*	.07	.15*	.06
Mediation and moderated mediation												
Indirect effect	–	–			**.172 (.066, .342)**		**.485 (.205, .794)**		**.898 (.556, 1.294)**		**.386 (.102, .686)**	
Indirect effect (low)	–	–			**.249 (.095, .490)**		**.392 (.161, .675)**		**.725 (.437, 1.102)**		**.311 (.093, .586)**	
Indirect effect (high)	–	–			**.096 (−.032, .281)**		**.578 (.240, .954)**		**1.070 (.657, 1.550)**		**.460 (.120, .825)**	
Indirect effect (difference)	–	–			−.090 (−.249, .014)		**.109 (.027, .253)**		**.203 (.052, .410)**		**.087 (.017, .218)**	

Note. $N = 200$. Full results from path analyses are provided. Indirect effects for mediation and moderated mediation are provided. Effects that are significant are bolded.
* $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that moral attentiveness would moderate the indirect effect of observing UPB on helping behavior towards UPB actors via admiration. As noted earlier, moral attentiveness did not significantly moderate the relationship of observed UPB on admiration ($B = -.42$, $SE = .28$, $p = .128$). The indirect effect for this relationship was significant at low (conditional indirect effect = .249; 95% CI = .095, .490) but not at high levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = .096; 95% CI = −.032, .281). The difference in these indirect effects was not significant (difference = −.090; 95% CI = −.249, .014), thus we consider Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Hypothesis 7a predicted a moderated mediation relationship between observing UPB and instigated incivility, through disgust, at high levels of moral attentiveness. This hypothesis was supported, as the indirect effect was stronger at higher levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = .578; 95% CI = .240, .954), and weaker at lower levels (conditional indirect effect = .392; 95% CI = .161, .675). Further, the difference in these effects was significant (difference = .109; 95% CI = .027, .253).

Hypothesis 7b predicted a moderated mediation relationship between observing UPB and interaction avoidance, through disgust, at high levels of moral attentiveness. This hypothesis was supported, as the indirect effect was stronger at higher levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = 1.07; 95% CI = .657, 1.550), and weaker at lower levels (conditional indirect effect = .725; 95% CI = .437, 1.102). Further, the difference in these effects was significant (difference = .203; 95% CI = .052, .410).

Hypothesis 7c predicted a moderated mediation relationship between observing UPB and whistle-blowing behavior, through disgust, at high levels of moral attentiveness. This hypothesis was supported, as the indirect effect was stronger at higher levels of moral attentiveness (conditional indirect effect = .460; 95% CI = .120, .825), and weaker at lower levels (conditional indirect effect = .311; 95% CI = .093, .586). Further, the difference in these effects was significant (difference = .087; 95% CI = .017, .218).

9 | DISCUSSION OF STUDY 2 FINDINGS

Study 2 constructively replicated our results from Study 1, while strengthening both internal validity (incorporating an experimental design) and external validity (testing our model with a western sample). Moreover, this study supported our hypotheses involving interaction avoidance and whistle-blowing. As with our Study 1, all hypotheses except those involving the moderating effect of moral attentiveness on the relationship between observing UPB and admiration were supported. In sum, our multi-method, multi-study approach provides strong evidence in support of our arguments that observing UPB can lead employees to experience a mixed affective reaction—admiration, but also disgust—and that disgust is stronger for those employees higher in moral attentiveness. Moreover, we show that admiration leads observers to engage in more helping toward the target, whereas disgust leads observers to engage in more incivility and interaction avoidance toward the target, and further makes whistle-blowing more likely as well. Overall, these findings should provide strong confidence in the theory we develop.

10 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

Drawing upon theories of emotional appraisal and the behavioral ethics literature, we examined the broader social impact of UPB by taking a third-party perspective. Given the dynamic and episodic nature of UPB (e.g., Mitchell, Greenbaum, et al., 2018; Umphress et al., 2020), we first conducted an experience sampling study with three daily contacts. In this study, we found that daily observations of UPB simultaneously elicit feelings of admiration and disgust (with the effect to disgust stronger for employees higher in moral attentiveness), which in turn prompt target-specific helping behavior (via admiration) and incivility (via disgust). We then conducted an experimental study to constructively replicate our findings from Study 1, examine observed UPB in a different cultural setting, and evaluate additional outcomes that may result from disgust (i.e., interaction avoidance and whistle-blowing). Overall, our studies reveal that

third parties react to UPB with mixed emotions, which prompt both negative and positive behaviors towards the UPB actor and that these links are moderated by third-parties' moral attentiveness.

10.1 | Theoretical implications

Our study makes a number of contributions to the behavioral ethics literature, and more specifically to third-party research on unethical behavior (e.g., Dang et al., 2017; Mitchell et al., 2015). First, extant research has predominantly taken an actor-centric approach to the causes and consequences of UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Umphress et al., 2010, 2020). Given the importance of understanding this form of unethical behavior, this progression has been logical. Yet this overlooks a broader truism in the behavioral ethics literature—that unethical behavior does not occur in a vacuum. Indeed, it is known that an employee's unethical behavior can be observed by others, and that this may have broader social consequences in the workplace (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017; Shao et al., 2018; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). Yet UPB's mixed nature (i.e., pro-organizational yet unethical) differs significantly from other unethical behaviors that are mostly driven by self-interest (e.g., Mitchell, Baer, et al., 2018). As such, UPB should trigger mixed emotional appraisal in the observers, thus rendering conventional wisdom regarding third-party employees' responses less able to be directly applied to understanding observers' reactions to UPB (e.g., Reich & Hershcovis, 2015; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). In this way, we more fully integrate research on UPB (which has recently elucidated that actors may experience mixed emotions; Tang et al., 2020) with behavioral ethics research to highlight that UPB observers may similarly experience mixed emotions.

Our second contribution follows from our first, as we respond to calls from scholars to extend the third-party literature through "considering a broader range of third party reactions" (Mitchell et al., 2015, p. 1041). Results across two studies provide strong evidence on this point. As articulated above, a primary emphasis of our research is demonstrating that observing UPB can instantiate positive outcomes in third parties. To this end, we show that observers may feel admiration towards UPB actors, and respond by enacting helping towards that individual. Yet beyond this, UPB is indeed still unethical, and to this end we found that observers may feel disgust upon observing this behavior. The powerful and nuanced nature of disgust allowed us to further respond to the call above by identifying additional outcomes that may stem from this negative state. That is, we demonstrate not only that disgust may prompt observers to both instigate incivility and exhibit interaction avoidance towards this person, but also we extend research further by showing that observers may display whistle-blowing behavior as well. Taken together, our research opens new avenues for third-party research by illuminating a wider range of outcomes that may stem from observing a complex behavior like UPB.

The aforementioned results involving disgust and whistle-blowing specifically necessitate additional discussion. Typically, research has predicted that this state will lead individuals to dis-identify with, and distance from, the object of disgust (which we operationalize as instigated incivility and interaction avoidance, respectively). However, the potential negative ramifications of UPB suggested the potential for a more direct, action-oriented response as well—whistle-blowing (e.g., Culiberg & Mihelič, 2017; Mayer et al., 2013). This finding is not only important as it regards third-party reactions to unethical behavior in general (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2015), but further may contribute to ongoing debates on the social functional value of disgust (i.e., whether disgust leads to avoidance- or approach-oriented behaviors, or both; Hutcherson & Gross, 2011). To this point, it may be that disgust amplifies negative moral judgments of an observed behavior (Pizarro et al., 2011), which would explain our finding regarding whistle-blowing—though, this finding needs further investigation.

Third and finally, our research sheds further light on appraisal processes that occur upon observing phenomena with a dual nature. While our main effects suggest observers of UPB may be attentive to its dual nature in general (feeling admiration and guilt), we demonstrate further—across two studies employing different methodologies—that trait levels of moral attentiveness may direct the focus of this appraisal process. That is, individuals with higher levels of moral attentiveness were more prone to focus on the immoral implications of UPB, and experienced higher levels

of disgust as a result. In line with appraisal theories, employee personality can seemingly help reconcile the otherwise mixed appraisal that results from observing UPB (Smith & Lazarus, 1990). Yet of note, we did not find support for moral attentiveness' moderating effect on the relationship between observed UPB and admiration. Thus, while sensitivity to UPB's negative aspects directed attention toward the unethical component of UPB (i.e., leading to higher levels of guilt), the absence of this sensitivity did not seem to direct attention toward the positive aspects of UPB (i.e., not leading to higher levels of admiration). While there are many ways to interpret null findings, perhaps individuals are more attuned to UPB's negative aspects than they are to its positive aspects (Baumeister et al., 2001).

We further note that across both studies, only moral attentiveness' perceptual dimension (but not reflective dimension) moderated the relationships between observing UPB and disgust. This was in line with our expectations, and is consistent with the conceptualization of moral attentiveness in general (e.g., Reynolds, 2008), but it is notable given that the literature has, thus far, tended to focus on the reflective dimension. To this point, reflective moral attentiveness is more applicable to explaining one's tendency to reflect upon their *own* "past moral experiences," (Liao et al., 2018, p. 1042), whereas the perceptual dimension is more relevant to shaping how people interpret experiences with ethical content in the workplace. This highlights a need for future research to continue developing theory and empirically testing models that help to better understand the nomological network of moral attentiveness' perceptual dimension.

10.2 | Practical implications

Despite the surge of UPB research in the last decade, the focus of this stream of research on actors leaves managers with knowledge of both *why* and *when* employees will enact UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016; Graham et al., 2020; Umphress et al., 2010), but without corresponding information about how UPB can affect the broader social context in the workplace. To that end, our findings reveal that not only do these behaviors ont occur in a vaccuum, but also can potentially trigger a host of affective and behavioral reactions in observers. With this said, we hasten to note that although employees may simultaneously experience both admiration and disgust, it is less likely that those same employees would simultaneously both help a coworker while also avoiding interactions with them. We return to this point below, and for now will emphasize that the results of our model highlight the potentially tricky situation that managers may find themselves in.

To begin, we found that observing UPB lead employees to feel admiration towards the actor, and respond by increasing their helping behavior towards that person. While helping is generally considered as a prosocial behavior that benefits organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997), in this case, it may have the unintended consequence of reinforcing the UPB actor's unethical behavior. To that end, managers should make it clear to employees that UPB is not something to be admired, and can back-fire by causing harm to the company (Umphress et al., 2010). For example, managers should avoid cultivating a competitive climate within the workplace that might encourage UPB and make this behavior seem laudatory (Fehr et al., 2019). Along similar lines, managers should ensure that they are setting an ethical example in reducing the occurrence of employees' UPB at work (e.g., Hsieh et al., 2020).

At the same time, we found that UPB observers were also likely to feel disgusted by the behavior. While this might initially seem good that the UPB was not endorsed, the resulting behavior can actually create other problems. For example, prior organizational research has found that incivility can be costly to organizations by spiraling into other forms of aggressive behaviors (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Estes & Wang, 2008; Rosen et al., 2016). Along similar lines, interaction avoidance may be associated with the reduction of employees' organizational attachment (Venkataramani et al., 2013). Thus, these sanctioning behaviors could ultimately hurt the organization in different ways by impairing employee productivity (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). The same could even be true of whistle-blowing. While managers may want employees to blow the whistle with regards to their coworker's unethical behavior (in so doing, reinforcing ethical norms within the organization; Miceli & Near, 1994), this behavior can simultaneously beget an

array of social issues between colleagues. For example, this can foment mistrust among coworkers (Trevino & Victor, 1992).

Finally, while managers may want to reduce UPB as much as possible, this may not be entirely realistic. Thus, it will be important to manage the negative consequences that could result. For example, managers could implement activities such as mindfulness interventions (e.g., Liang et al., 2018) to mitigate the extent to which negative affective states like disgust translate into subsequent negative behavior. Similarly, to avoid the potential issues that could sweep through a team as a result of whistle-blowing, managers could ensure that the whistle-blowing process is procedurally fair and transparent in order to minimize interpersonal misunderstandings and conflicts among employees (Miethe, 2019). All of this may be magnified to the extent that managers follow recommendations from other scholars to prioritize hiring for personality traits such as moral attentiveness (e.g., Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). On its face, moral attentiveness would seem to be beneficial here, as it increased the extent to which employees saw UPB as unethical. However, absent any of the other interventions we described above, this may have the effect of promoting the sanctioning behavior that we identified and thus creating additional problems. In sum, we reiterate our recommendation that the most direct option available to managers is to prevent and not incentivize UPB from occurring in the first place.

10.3 | Limitations and future research directions

There are a number of limitations to discuss, though our approach to this research (i.e., two studies conducted in both field and experimental settings) should at least somewhat alleviate many potential issues (Hekman et al., 2017). First, we followed best practices for ESM studies by separating the measurement of our variables across three daily timepoints, controlling for a number of variables to reduce artifactual confounds to our results, and mean-centering to reduce various between-person confounds (Gabriel et al., 2019). Yet a limitation of this study relates to our sample of corporate sales agents in Hong Kong—a highly collectivistic city-state. Another limitation of Study 1 is that, although we specified the UPB-actor as the target of the helping and incivility behavior in Study 1, the measurement of disgust and admiration was not contextualized. However, this leaves open the potential for those states to not be felt toward the UPB-actor. We sought to address both issues with Study 2. To alleviate generalizability concerns, we recruited participants from the United States. Further, the episodic nature of the manipulation in Study 2, combined with our specification of the referent for the affective states toward the UPB actor, should alleviate the latter concern we articulate above.

An additional benefit of Study 2 is the experimental approach, which strengthens our inferences regarding the causal order of our model. However, this design did not permit us to measure enacted behaviors—rather, we could only capture the participants' intentions to enact behavior. While this measurement approach is common among experimental studies (e.g., Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Koopman et al., 2015; Yam et al., 2020), and intentions are a precursor to enacted behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977), this is another notable limitation. Thus, what we gain from internal validity, we lose in external validity. Yet these concerns should be alleviated by Study 1 wherein we could capture employee behavior in a field setting. Overall, although each study has limitations, they are largely offset by the design of another study.

Going forward, although we have offered evidence that our model may generalize across cultural contexts (i.e., Hong Kong and the United States), it would be interesting to probe further to examine whether cultural factors influence the strength of the appraisal processes in observers (e.g., Elfenbein, 2007). For example, while we found a main effect of observing UPB to admiration in all two studies, it could still be the case that those from more collectivistic cultures might more strongly appraise this behavior as pro-organizational, given its potential to contribute to company profitability (e.g., Robert & Wasti, 2002), and feel higher levels of admiration as a result. Along these lines, perhaps in a more collectivistic culture, observing UPB could lead to unintended spillover among other employees. In closing, we

invite future research to investigate cultural differences in the appraisal process following the observation of UPB at work.

Following the previous discussion, the potential for observers to enact both approach- and avoidance-oriented behaviors warrants further consideration. Approach and avoidance are generally seen as independent (e.g., Gable, 2006). Thus, from a theoretical standpoint, it may be possible for employees to enact behaviors corresponding to both systems stemming from the same stimulus. Indeed, we note that in both studies, there was no significant association between helping and the more negative, avoidance-oriented behaviors, which aligns with extant theory in implying independence in participant enactment of (Study 1) or intention to enact (Study 2) these behaviors. Yet practically, as we noted above, it is difficult to envision an employee helping a coworker while simultaneously avoiding interactions with that person. Thus, this suggests the potential for situation-specific moderators that influence when a particular type of behavior will be more likely. Consider Study 1, wherein our assessment likely captured multiple such episodes across a day. It may be that even as employees experienced both admiration and disgust, some additional factor dictated which emotional reaction would take primacy in directing the resulting behavioral response. For example, employees with higher status are often granted deference by their coworkers, and so perhaps observers are more likely to enact an approach-response towards higher-status UPB actors (Djurdjevic et al., 2017). This may initially seem at odds with our results in Study 2 given that we examined a single episode, but we note the operationalization of our outcomes as intentions likely plays a role. That is, participants may still have indeed intended to engage in each behavior, but due to the experimental nature of the study, lacked the relevant additional context to choose which specific behavioral response they would enact.

11 | CONCLUSION

Across a field and an experimental study, this research represented an initial empirical investigation of third parties' reactions to UPB. Drawing upon appraisal theory of emotions, we identified why and how observed UPB simultaneously elicits the emotions of admiration and disgust, and how these emotions translate into both positive and negative behaviors, respectively (e.g., helping, instigated incivility, interaction avoidance, and whistle-blowing behavior). Importantly, the strength of the aforementioned processes was contingent on third parties' individual difference of moral attentiveness. To conclude, we hope our work can spark additional research in adopting a third party perspective to examine the impact of UPB and its consequences to the larger social environment at work.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

ORCID

Pok Man Tang https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6782-9575
Kai Chi Yam https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7381-8039
Joel Koopman https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3431-3446

ENDNOTES

[1] Reflective moral attentiveness, in contrast, is more inwardly-focused, as this dimension is less about recognizing the morally-relevant nature of stimuli in the environment, but rather about guiding subsequent behavior in a moral direction (Liao et al., 2018; Reynolds, 2008).

[2] This study was approved by the institutional review board of the National University of Singapore (Approval No. DER-18-0905).

[3] Our final model presented in the following contains all control variables—their removal does not affect our results.

[4] The prior measure is always the preceding day (e.g., the lagged predictor for Monday's mediator would not be the Friday response). This creates some missing data on the lagged control. Within the extant ESM literature (e.g., McGrath et al., 2017; Rosen et al., 2020), the solution to this issue is to conduct the analyses using full information maximum likelihood (FIML; Newman, 2014). This approach is widely preferred over list-wise deletion, which we would otherwise have for all the cases completed on Monday, or the day following a missed survey (Enders, 2010; Newman, 2014).

[5] We conducted two supplementary analyses to further evaluate our argument that reflective moral attentiveness is ill-suited as the moderator for this relationship. First, we swapped reflective moral attentiveness for perceptual moral attentiveness and reran our analyses. As expected, reflective moral attentiveness moderated neither the relationship between observed UPB and admiration ($\gamma = -.03$, $p = .54$) nor the relationship between observed UPB and disgust ($\gamma = .08$, $p = .09$). We then ran our analyses including both dimensions as first-stage moderators, to similar effect. That is, reflective moral attentiveness again moderated neither the relationship between observed UPB and admiration ($\gamma = .02$, $p = .75$) nor the relationship between observed UPB and disgust ($\gamma = .04$, $p = .50$). These results align with our earlier theoretical arguments for why perceptual, and not reflective, moral attentiveness is the more appropriate moderator for this relationship. As the reflective dimension had no significant associations with relationships in our model, in the service of parsimony we retain our original modeling approach for our final analyses.

[6] This study was approved by the institutional review board of Texas A&M University (Approval No. IRB-2020-0445).

[7] Observed UPB Condition: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-INL0JV_Es Control Condition: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5BEAREF5y04

[8] Similar to Study 1, our final model presented below contains all of these control variables; however, their removal does not affect our results.

[9] We conducted the same supplemental analyses with regard to reflective moral attentiveness as in Study 1, with a similar pattern of results. That is, reflective moral attentiveness did not significant moderate the relationships between observing UPB and admiration or disgust, whether modeled on its own ($B = -.17$, $p = .55$; $B = .21$, $p = .38$), or simultaneously alongside perceptual moral attentiveness ($B = .18$, $p = .62$; $B = -.18$, $p = .54$).

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