






FEATURE ARTICLE

Work ethic and organizational commitment as conditions of unethical pro-organizational behavior: Do engaged workers break the ethical rules?

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Abstract

Unethical pro-organizational behaviors (UPB) are actions that break rules or established standards, but are undertaken for the purposes of helping the organization or coworkers. Although research has already examined the role of work ethic and organizational commitment in shaping employee behaviors, little is known about the reason for and antecedents of employees undertaking UPB. In a sample of 425 working adults from multiple industries, we tested whether work ethic and organizational commitment dimensions predict the readiness to undertake UPB. The time-lagged study showed that the work ethics dimension “hard work,” and normative and affective organizational commitment, are positive predictors of UPB. The ethics dimensions “morality/ethics,” “delay of gratification,” “centrality of work” and “anti-leisure attitudes” are negative predictors of UPB.

KEYWORDS

centrality of work, organizational commitment, organizational identification, unethical pro-organizational behavior, work ethic

1 | INTRODUCTION

A growing number of studies show increasing scholarly interest in the concept of unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) (Tsiavia, 2016), since the first publication of the original article by Umphress, Bingham, and Mitchell (2010). Because it is common and costly for organizations, the subject is of interest to practitioners and scholars alike (Matherne, III & Litchfield, 2012). To date, there is empirical evidence that confirms relations between UPB and identification with the leader or organization (Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014; Kong, 2016). Yet, there is a gap between work ethic (Weber, 1958) and organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and the study of UPB. The present research fills this gap and provides new evidence on the antecedents of UPBs.

Recently, much attention has been paid to unethical behaviors that are not addressed to harm an organization or coworkers, but to

benefit them. Thus, an interesting question is why workers who are good, loyal, and strongly identified with the organization, decide to break the rules and moral standards? Therefore, the present study investigated relations between work ethic dimensions and organizational commitment, and employee willingness to undertake unethical behaviors. Specifically, we ask two research questions. First, do the dimensions of work ethic and organizational commitment predict individual's willingness to engage in UPB? And if so, to what extent is each dimension a predictor. Second, is work ethic or commitment a stronger predictor of UPB?

1.1 | Unethical pro-social behavior

UPB by Umphress et al. (2010), Umphress and Bingham (2011), refers to an employee engaging in unethical behavior at work for the purpose of benefitting the organization and/or that organization's

members. UPB concerns behavioral acts (of commission or omission) that violate the law, social standards, or generally accepted principles (Jones, 1991; Umphress et al., 2010). They are pro-organizational behaviors neither specified in formal role/job descriptions nor ordered by supervisors, but carried out to help the organization (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). An example of such behavior is a salesperson consciously misleading a customer to buy faulty products in order to increase the sales rates.

UPB is intentional and therefore, "differs from work-related actions involving errors, mistakes, or unconscious negligence" (Umphress et al., 2010, p. 770). It is also conceptually unique from the construct counterproductive work behavior (e.g., sabotage, theft, aggression toward coworkers) which is "intended to hurt the organization or other members of the organization" (Spector & Fox, 2002, p. 271). UPB is more similar to organizational citizenship behaviors which are extra-role behaviors undertaken by employees at their own initiative to support their organization or coworkers (Bell & Mengüç, 2002; Borman, Penner, Allen, & Motowidlo, 2001; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Organ, 1988, 1997; Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). Hence, UPB and organizational citizenship behaviors are related concepts because both originate with the employees' intention of benefiting the company/coworkers. However, citizenship behaviors produce positive organizational outcomes whereas UPB may produce unbeneficial and even destructive outcomes, especially in the long term. Therefore, to better understand the mechanisms that lead to UPB, we turn our attention to two potential antecedents of UPB: organizational commitment and work ethic.

1.2 | Organizational commitment

The essential component of organizational commitment is identification with the organization (Kacmar, Carlson, & Brymer, 1999). Organizational identification, as part of an individual's self-concept, is derived from one's membership within social groups, and provides the social context for how people behave (Tajfel, 1982; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Individuals who strongly identify themselves with their organization internalize the organization's success and failure as their own (Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) defined commitment as a force that binds an individual to a target. This force can be characterized by three distinct dimensions: desire (affective commitment), obligation (normative commitment), and perceived cost (continuance commitment), which can have different implications for behavior.

Although many positive outcomes are associated with organizational identification, some scientists point out the dark side of strong identification (Dukerich, Kramer, & McLean Parks, 1998). The authors explain that such identification may influence "illegal or unethical acts that have been sanctioned by the organization both obliquely and intentionally" (Dukerich et al., 1998, p. 253; Umphress et al., 2010, p. 770). Additionally, research shows that employees' identification with the organization affects extra-role behaviors

(Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Van Knippenberg, 2000). Indeed, Umphress et al. (2010) suggested that strong identification with the organization, connected with the belief that the latter should be repaid for certain actions, may lead to the undertaking of UPB. However, to date, there is insufficient empirical evidence on relationships between organizational commitment and UPB.

1.3 | Work ethic

Studies of unethical behavior in the workplace have pointed to many factors determining employee conduct. Some theorists and researchers have noted the role of ethical climate, and individual difference variables like personality qualities (Cullen, Joyce, Hassall, & Broadbent, 2003). For example, moral values are related to an individual's ability to resist unethical temptations (Chudzicka-Czupala, 2013; Forsyth, 1992). It has been found that moral identity (internalizing morality as part of one's self-concept) is connected to UPB (Matherne & Litchfield, 2012). Work ethic is an important system of values related to work itself that has not been investigated with respect to UPB. Kong (2016) showed that work passion is strongly connected with both UPB and organizational identification (Kong, 2016). Kong's findings demonstrated that obsessive passion fosters UPB. Because work ethic is a very similar construct to work passion, this finding encourages exploration of the relationship between work ethic and UPB.

Miller, Woehr, and Hudspeth (2002, p. 464; cf., Furnham, 1990a, 1990b) presented seven components of work ethic: (a) Centrality of work—treating work as a central part of life, (b) Self-reliance/Independence—striving for independence in one's daily work, (c) Hard work—belief in the virtues of hard work, (d) Leisure—disapproval of leisure activities, (e) Morality/Ethics—believing in justice and that people should be fair in their moral existence, (f) Delay of gratification—orientation toward the future, the postponement of rewards, and (g) Unwillingness to waste time—beliefs reflecting active and productive use of time.

Considering work ethic as a system of beliefs, one may assume that these beliefs—mostly centrality of work, belief in the virtues of hard work, and unwillingness to waste time—are attitudes of commitment to one's organization, for which one is ready to break the ethical rules. Similarly, self-reliance, which gives a sense of independence, might subsequently lead to the willingness to undertake UPB. That is why such dimensions of work ethic as hard work, centrality of work, disaffection for wasting time, and self-reliance should relate to UPB (Chrupala-Pniak & Grabowski, 2016; Umphress et al., 2010). The other dimensions of work ethic—the delay of gratification, unwillingness to have leisure time, and morality/ethics (belief in moral values) may decrease willingness to undertake UPB (Chrupala-Pniak & Grabowski, 2016). In particular, morality/ethics might be a negative predictor of UPB as there are numerous studies demonstrating that individual ethical philosophy and integrity (strong beliefs that it is worthy to be honest) are significant predictors of ethical decision making and that it influences ethical behavior (Chudzicka-Czupala, 2013; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Trevino, 2010). The fundamental

aim of this research was to identify the relations between work ethic dimensions, organizational commitment, and the UPB of employees. Although unethical behaviors for the benefit of an organization have recently been a subject of interest, still very little is known about the sources of such behaviors and their relationship with work ethic and organizational commitment.

2 | METHOD

2.1 | Study sample and procedure

A sample composed of 425 Polish employees was studied. The sample was composed of people working for small-, medium-, and large-sized enterprises from various industries and organizations located in one of the most industrialized regions of Poland—Silesia. Participants represented a variety of occupations (e.g., administrative support, accounting/financial, technology, health/safety) and different organizations (hospitals, banks, stores). All respondents worked for over 2 years in their organizations. The same criterion was given to self-employed people. Participants' average age was 34.04 years (SD 10.58), approximately 60% were women. Almost half of the sample members (48%) had secondary education, the others had higher education (44.5%) and vocational education (7.5%).

In the study, work ethic dimensions and organizational commitment dimensions were assumed to be predictors of UPB. Referring to research on predictive validity of measures (Bechtoldt, 1959), organizational commitment and work ethic dimensions were measured first and then, after 5 weeks, UPB was measured.

2.2 | Measures

To test this set of hypotheses, the Polish version of the *Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior Scale* (UPB scale) created by Umphress et al. (2010) was applied, translated, and adapted into Polish in a back-translation process (Brislin, 1986). Three Polish native speakers with advanced English proficiency (an English translator and two university lecturers) independently translated the questionnaire into Polish. As a result, two versions of the measure were made. In the next step, six psychology students, also with a good command of English, cooperated with the lecturers in two independent groups to compare the two versions and chose the best statements. In this way, two primary Polish versions of the measure were made. The methods devised in this manner were back-translated into English by two experienced translators. Then the researchers together with the students compared the translation with the original, analyzed, corrected it, and chose the best-sounding statements (Chudzicka-Czupala, Cozma, Grabowski, & Woehr, 2012). In consequence, the scale consists of six statements (items) presented in Table 2. The items assessed respondents' agreement of their willingness to perform UPB on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The information on reliability of the UPB-PL scale is given below, in the Preliminary Results section.

The other tool was the Polish version of *Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile* (MWEP-PL), an abridged version of the MWEP questionnaire created by Miller et al. (2002), adapted by Grabowski and Chudzicka-Czupala (2015) and Chudzicka-Czupala et al. (2012), and abridged by Grabowski (2014). The questionnaire is composed of 35 items and 7 scales (with 5 items in each scale), which correspond with 7 dimensions of work ethic:

1. Hard work—belief in the virtues of hard work, conviction that such work leads to success and makes it possible to cope with difficulties in life ($\alpha = 0.86$);
2. Centrality of work—treating work as the central value in life, bringing satisfaction and fulfillment when performed ($\alpha = 0.78$);
3. Wasting time—belief in the value of productive use of time ($\alpha = 0.70$);
4. Anti-leisure sentiment—disapproval of leisure activities ($\alpha = 0.78$);
5. Delay of gratification—belief in the value of rewards which are postponed ($\alpha = 0.82$);
6. Morality/Ethics—readiness to act honestly toward others ($\alpha = 0.63$);
7. Self-reliance—belief that one should count on oneself at work ($\alpha = 0.80$).

Participants indicated their attitudes toward statements using a 1 (I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree) scale.

The Polish version of *Organizational Commitment Scale* (OCS-PL) by Meyer and Allen (1991), adapted by Bańka, Wołowska, and Bazińska (2002), was another tool used in the study. The questionnaire is composed of 18 statements and 3 subscales (with 6 items in each subscale): affective commitment (AC, $\alpha = 0.84$), continuance commitment (CC, $\alpha = 0.66$), and normative commitment (NC, $\alpha = 0.87$), corresponding with the three components of organizational commitment described by Meyer and Allen (1991). Participants indicated their attitudes toward statements using a 1 (I strongly disagree) to 7 (I strongly agree) scale.

3 | RESULTS

3.1 | Preliminary analyses. Psychometric characteristics of the Polish version of UPB-PL scale

The reliability of the UPB-PL scale was evaluated by calculating Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The value of that coefficient was $\alpha = 0.89$. The adjusted item-scale correlation coefficients assumed values ranging from 0.64 (item 4) to 0.78 (item 3).

The first step was a one-dimensional test consisting of a confirmatory factor analysis checking the fit between a one-factor model and the data. Fit estimation was based on the following fit statistics: the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and non-normed fit index (NNFI, also known as the Tucker-Lewis index—TLI) (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003).

Table 1 shows values of fit statistics, coefficient ω and completely standardized λ -X loadings for the individual six statements. Assuming the value of SRMR (of less than 0.08) (see Hattie, 1985; Song, Singh, & Singer, 1994) to be the criterion for the scale's one-dimensionality, as well as the CFI, NNFI, and also coefficient ω values (McDonald, 1985), pointing to a satisfactory fit, it can be asserted that UPB is a one-dimensional scale.

3.1.1 | Correlations and regression analyses

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlations (intercorrelations) between UPB and work ethic dimensions, as well as organizational commitment dimensions. As results from the table, UPB correlates positively with organizational commitment and with the belief in the value of hard work. Negative correlations were recorded between UPB and morality/ethics.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was carried out (see Table 3) to investigate the research questions regarding work ethic and organizational commitment dimensions as antecedents of UPB. First, model variables describing traits and personal characteristics (work ethic) were introduced (first block) and next variables describing states and attitudes (organizational commitment) were added (second block). Multiple regression analysis with only organizational commitment dimensions as independent variables was also conducted. Regression analyses demonstrated that the work ethic dimensions of belief one should act morally and honestly (morality/ethics), inclination toward delaying gratification, anti-leisure sentiment, and centrality of work, reduced employees' readiness to undertake UPB. On the other hand, the belief that hard work is valuable and leads to success (hard work dimension) contributed positively to UPB. Organizational commitment dimensions (most strongly, normative and affective commitment) increased readiness to demonstrate UPB. As results from Table 3 show, introducing further independent variables in the regression analysis resulted in an increase in R^2 . The

highest increase was caused by the inclusion of work ethic dimensions in the regression equation. Work ethic dimensions account for about 14% of UPB variance, while organizational commitment dimensions account for about 10% of that variance. However, anti-leisure sentiment, centrality of work, and delay of gratification are very weak predictors of UPB that show values of zero-order correlations (see also Table 2).

3.2 | Post hoc analyses

Due to substantial correlations (exceeding 0.4) between the individual MWEF scales and the organizational commitment scales (see Table 2) included in the regression analysis, and the related difficulties in interpreting the results of that analysis, as well as to the wish to avoid relying on false regression analysis results (Christopher, Zabel, & Jones, 2008), the next analytical step was to carry out a dominance analysis in order to find the most significant explanatory variable or predictor of UPB (Azen & Budescu, 2003; Budescu, 1993; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003).

The respective analysis was carried out on MWEF and organizational commitment scales (see Table 3). The process was as follows: first, a regression model was constructed with a single variable (R^2 alone), and subsequently the remaining nine ones were included in the model, with a calculation of the additional R^2 (after other predictors were entered), as well as of the mean R^2 which demonstrates the significance of the respective independent variable in accounting for the dependent variable. As results from Table 3 show, the most significant variables in the regression models accounting for UPB are the morality/ethics and hard work dimensions of work ethic, and all three organizational commitment dimensions (normative, affective, and continuance).

A clearly dominant predictor was the morality/ethics dimension, that is, the belief that one should act morally and honestly at work. Among the organizational commitment dimensions, the dimension that dominated was normative commitment, but affective

TABLE 1 Confirmatory factor analysis of one-factor model for unethical pro-organizational behavior scale ($N = 425$)

$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	RMSEA	RMSEA 90%— confidence interval	CFI	NNFI (TLI)	SRMR	McDonald's ω
94.7 (9) [*]	10.52	0.15	[0.12, 0.18]	0.96	0.94	0.04	0.89
Item							Factor loading (λ -X)
1	If it would help my organization, I would misrepresent the truth to make my organization look good						0.74
2	If it would help my organization, I would exaggerate the truth about my company's products or services to customers and clients						0.81
3	If it would benefit my organization, I would withhold negative information about my company or its products from customers and clients						0.84
4	If my organization needed me to, I would give a good recommendation on the behalf of an incompetent employee in the hope that the person will become another organization's problem instead of my own						0.72
5	If my organization needed me to, I would withhold issuing a refund to a customer or client accidentally overcharged						0.72
6	If needed, I would conceal information from the public that could be damaging to my organization						0.73

Note. Unethical pro-organizational behavior scale—Polish version (UPB). Items and factor loadings λ -X (λ -X—completely standardized solution).

^{*} $p < 0.001$.

TABLE 2 Descriptive statistics, correlations and intercorrelations between unethical pro-organizational behavior and dimensions of work ethic, dimensions of organizational commitment

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Hard work	17.24	4.37	—											
2. Centrality of work	18.57	3.98	0.49***	—										
3. Wasted time	18.35	3.46	0.41***	0.43***	—									
4. Anti-leisure	13.05	3.70	0.13**	0.32***	0.14*	—								
5. Delay of gratification	17.31	4.23	0.50***	0.38***	0.25***	0.05	—							
6. Self-reliance	20.52	3.08	0.20***	0.20***	0.34***	−0.13	0.24***	—						
7. Morality/Ethics	21.80	3.05	0.20***	0.30***	0.25***	−0.04	0.16***	0.31***	—					
8. MWEP	126.84	15.57	0.74***	0.77***	0.66***	0.36***	0.65***	0.47***	0.48***	—				
9. Affective commitment	24.01	8.42	0.23***	0.38***	0.21***	0.18***	0.17***	0.01	0.06	0.31***	—			
10. Continuance Commitment	25.17	7.15	0.11*	0.18***	0.13**	−0.05	0.13**	0.05	0.11*	0.16***	0.61***	—		
11. Normative commitment	21.82	8.61	0.27***	0.34***	0.17***	0.18***	0.21***	−0.02	−0.01	0.29***	0.86***	0.56***	—	
12. OCS	71.01	21.50	0.23***	0.35***	0.19***	0.13**	0.19***	0.01	0.06	0.29***	0.94***	0.79***	0.92***	—
13. UPB	18.16	7.83	0.14**	−0.04	−0.00	−0.08	−0.00	−0.04	−0.30***	−0.06	0.29***	0.22***	0.32***	0.32**

Note. MWEP—multidimensional work ethic profile (Total Score—the sum of the seven work ethic subscales; $\alpha = 0.70$); OCS—organizational commitment scale (Total Score—the sum of the three organizational commitment subscales; $\alpha = 0.86$); UPB—unethical pro-organizational behavior.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

TABLE 3 Multiple hierarchical regression, multiple regression, and dominance analyses on unethical pro-organizational behavior

INDV (blocks):	1. β	1. β	2. β	Zero-order correlation	3. R^2 Alone	3. Additional R^2	3. Mean R^2
1. Work ethic (MWEP):							
Hard work	0.26***	0.24***	–	0.14**	0.019**	0.0330	0.0260
Centrality of work	–0.01	–0.12*	–	–0.04	0.002	0.0070	0.0045
Wasted time	0.02	–0.01	–	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.0000
Anti-leisure	–0.12*	–0.13**	–	–0.08	0.006	0.013	0.0095
Delay of gratification	–0.08	–0.11*	–	–0.00	0.000	0.007	0.0035
Self-reliance	0.01	0.04	–	–0.04	0.002	0.001	0.0015
Morality/Ethics	–0.35***	–0.33***	–	–0.30***	0.091***	0.089	0.0900
2. Organizational commitment (OCS):							
Affective commitment	–	0.17**	0.05	0.29***	0.084***	0.006	0.0450
Continuance commitment	–	0.07	0.05	0.22***	0.048***	0.002	0.0250
Normative commitment	–	0.15**	0.25***	0.32***	0.100***	0.005	0.0525
<i>F</i>	10.54***	14.49***	16.43***				
R^2	0.15	0.26	0.11				
Adjusted R^2 (AR^2)	0.14	0.24	0.10				
ΔR^2	0.15***	0.11***	0.11***				

Note. β —standardized regression coefficients.

1. β —multiple hierarchical regression (two blocks).

2. β —multiple regression (only dimensions of organizational commitment as independent variables).

3. – dominance analyses.

3. R^2 Alone—value of R^2 —the amount of variability accounted for by each predictor (e.g., hard work in first row) with no other predictors (other dimensions of work ethic and organizational commitment) in the regression equation.

3. Additional R^2 (after other predictors entered)—the amount of variability accounted for by each predictor after all nine other predictors were entered on the previous step.

3. Mean $R^2 = R^2$ Alone + Additional R^2 / 2—averaged the two amounts of variability accounted for by each predictor.

INDV—two blocks of independent variables: 1. Dimensions of work ethic (MWEP); 2. Dimensions of organizational commitment (OCS).

DV: UPB—unethical pro-organizational behavior.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

commitment was also a high predictor of UPB. It should be noted that all dimensions of organizational commitment (especially affective and normative) are strongly correlated.

3.3 | Discussion

Results show that some dimensions of work ethic and all dimensions of organizational commitment are significant predictors of UPB. The hard work dimension of work ethic is a positive predictor of UPB and anti-leisure sentiment, centrality of work, delay of gratification, and morality/ethics dimensions are negative predictors of UPB. It should be noted that anti-leisure sentiment, centrality of work, delay of gratification are very weak predictors of UPB. Additionally, organizational commitment (mainly the normative and affective dimensions) are positive predictors of employees' willingness to enact UPB.

The research confirmed that correlations between the UPB and anti-leisure sentiment, delay of gratification, and morality/ethics are

negative. Research shows that individuals with high moral standards, who place work at the center of life, disapprove of leisure time, and who simultaneously have the tendency to accept delayed gratification, use UPB less frequently. On the other hand, the employees with low moral standards having a positive attitude to leisure time, and without the ability to delay gratification, more frequently attend to easy and fast outcomes, which could be logically related with UPB. Moreover, the readiness to undertake UPB correlates positively with the belief that hard work leads to success (and other organizational outcomes).

The negative relationships between the belief in the need to act morally and honestly (morality/ethics) and the readiness to undertake UPB mirror the results of past research. Matherne and Litchfield (2012) obtained similar results confirming the negative relationship between strong moral identification with the UPB (moral identification weakens the readiness to undertake UPB). Similar results can be found when referred to research carried out in a broader context of pro-social behaviors. Assuming that pro-organizational

behaviors constitute a subcategory of pro-social behaviors at work (see Boundenhan, Desrumaux, Leoni, & Nicolas, 2012), it can be confirmed based on the analyses carried out so far that they are accounted for by affective factors and organizational commitment.

In the identification with organization aspect of our research, organizational commitment, especially in its normative and affective dimensions, is positively related with UPB. Employees with strong affective commitment also feel positive emotions related to their organization and they experience positive organizational support. Affective commitment and normative commitment based on loyalty and moral obligation could explain why people who are organizationally committed and engaged undertake UPB. Additionally, the results show that people with low morality/ethics attitude are more likely to break the rules and undertake UPB. That confirmed the results of research by Umphress et al. (2010), in which identification with the organization and the belief that one should repay the organization increase the inclination toward UPB.

The following portrait can therefore be proposed of a person inclined to engage in UPB: it is someone who strives for and values hard work, success, leisure, and instant gratification, but is at the same time committed to the organization, feels gratitude toward it, as well as the need to repay it loyally. The mechanism of occurrence of UPB is connected with the individual's attitude toward values such as loyalty toward people with whom they are in a close relationship and honesty toward the general public.

Neither organizational reward systems nor leadership influence were controlled for in the present study, but it is assumed that satisfied employees who are strongly affectively committed may view organizational rewards as linked with their UPB. Organizational learning processes which affect this behavior and support organizational commitment may be observed in the future. We would like to emphasize that the strongest correlations with the readiness to undertake unethical behaviors are represented by the following dimensions of work ethic: readiness to act honestly (negative correlation), and the belief that hard work is valuable and leads to success (positive correlations). The positive relationship of the readiness to undertake UPB with hard work can be referred to the positive relationship of this readiness with an interest in one's own career and success, which is a similar pattern of results obtained in the studies of Umphress and Bingham (2011).

3.4 | Limitations of the study and future research directions

This study has some limitations to acknowledge. The main constraint is the fact that it was carried out on Polish employees only. Thus, a question arises whether the result received is typical of the Polish culture or does it also apply to other countries? To answer this question, more extended cross-cultural research comprising other countries should be conducted. It is possible that in the Polish, more particularistic culture than universalistic American culture (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997), relations between organizational commitment and UPB are more visible, which can be suggested in research

of Umphress and colleagues (2010). Connections between organizational commitment and UPB are stronger in our research than relations between organizational identification and willingness to engage in UPB in the research of Umphress and colleagues (2010). It should be highlighted that UPB underlines a perspective of particularism, where people are more focused on relationships (organizational aims) than on rules, because inner morality of organization allowing UPB becomes more important than universalistic morality of the social system forbidding UPB.

Another limitation of our study is using a self-descriptive method and the fact that the study was correlational in its nature, though it should be underlined that predictors were measured prior to UPB. It is possible that participants do not self-report their own behavior accurately due to a desire to maintain a positive self-concept in ethical matters (Aquino & Reed, 2002). To solve the problem of the possible influence of the participants' self-esteem, such experiments should be organized in the future that would minimize the use of self-report. Future studies should utilize alternative measurement methods, like an experimental design, to test the conditions of UPB. We can imagine an experiment in which the supervisor encourages the shop assistant to sell a damaged violin. The customer does not know about the fault and it is not visible for him/her (e.g., a glued crack in upper part of the resonance box). Experimental manipulation could refer to the supervisor's behavior toward the shop assistant. In the first version of experiment, the supervisor encourages the employee (shop assistant) to perform the unethical behavior or stays indifferent toward his/her action. In the second version of experiment, the supervisor focuses or does not focus on the employees' organizational commitment ("I know you are devoted to our company, you did your best for us. I have a hard task for you: sell this damaged violin").

Though such conclusions need more empirical evidence, the results presented here may suggest that Polish companies more often encourage than discourage to UPB. Filek (2001) claims that an ethical image of the business in Poland is often created in order to "sell it well," and that this kind of a public image has little to do with reality. Poland opened itself to international trade and to the exchange of labor force, for instance within the European Union, that is why it is important to understand Polish workers' views on ethics and ethical practices, as it may be different or similar in different countries. There is evidence it happens similarly in American firms (Umphress et al., 2010). However, it can be noticed that Polish companies, which operate in more particularistic culture, favor UPB more than American firms and are more universalistic. In our research, the relationships between UPB and the leader's style of management or the degree of identification with the leader were left out, so further research in that area would be necessary using the Polish sample. Additional explanation for the mechanism of occurrence of unethical behaviors, however, to bring benefits to the organization and to its members can be sought in employee-leader relationships. Leaders' behaviors and traits constitute, in fact, an extremely significant predictor of their followers' conduct: ethical leaders are significant occupational role models, setting an example most effectively (by their

own actions) and thus are capable of encouraging followers to adopt a specific system of moral values to follow (Avolio, 2005; Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the research carried out by Miao, Newman, Yu, and Xu (2013) on a sample of Chinese employees, results were obtained confirming an inverted u-shaped (curvilinear) relationship between an ethical management style and employees' UPB. The more ethical the leader's management style (i.e., the higher the manager's work ethic) was, the less ready the employees seemed to get engaged in unethical behaviors. On the other hand, the less ethical the leader's management style was and the stronger the degree of the employees' identification with the leader, the readier they were to undertake unethical behaviors.

Other conditions which could be taken into consideration in future research of UPB are organizational culture, market situation, style of management (Miao et al., 2013), perception of fairness in the company, and motivation of employees (Kong, 2016). These conditions may decrease UPB or increase the willingness to commit these behaviors. Organizational culture that focuses on ethical behaviors and high fairness in the company will decrease UPB (cf., Miao et al., 2013). In this situation, we may predict that organizational commitment should decrease UPB not increase it.

Other research has shown that the moral judgment of unethical behaviors depended on their consequences (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014). In case of positive and favorable pro-social effects, unethical behaviors were judged as morally justified, which can be explained in an analogous manner in the case of pro-organizational behaviors and their consequences for the employees and for the organization. In a situation of intrapersonal conflict of values experienced by the employee and related to the need to choose between loyalty toward the organization and coworkers (normative commitment), and universal honesty, it turns out that the standards of kindness and loyalty (i.e., repayment), supported at the same time by the belief in the value of hard work and in the importance of success, are more significant than the honesty rule.

The main aim of our studies was to investigate whether engaged workers break the ethical rules and what is the role of work ethic and organizational commitment for undertaking UPB. The results confirmed that normative and affective organizational commitment and the belief in hard work, are positive predictors of UPB, and showed that morality/ethics, delay of gratification, centrality of work, and anti-leisure attitudes are negatively connected with UPB. These results should be considered preliminary, but they represent a step forward in understanding what leads to UPB.

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