

Two Sides of the Same Coin: The Association between Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) through the lens of social identity theory. It further distinguishes between OCB directed toward individuals (OCBI) and the organization (OCBO) to explore their differential associations with UPB. Data were collected via a questionnaire survey of procurement professionals in Taiwan to test the proposed hypotheses. The results reveal a significant positive relationship between OCB and UPB, suggesting that employees' strong identification with their organization may motivate behaviors that, while intended to benefit the organization, violate ethical standards. Moreover, OCBO exhibits a stronger positive association with UPB than OCBI, indicating that organization-focused discretionary behaviors are more likely to translate into ethically questionable actions. These findings contribute to the literature on extra-role behaviors by highlighting the potential dark side of OCB and offering nuanced insights into its distinct dimensions.

JEL classification numbers: M10, M12, M14.

Keywords: Extra-role behavior, Organizational citizenship behavior, Unethical pro-organizational behavior, Organizational identification.

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1. Introduction

It is likely that some employees not only complete the tasks assigned to them but go beyond their job requirements to benefit the organization. Such behavior, called extra-role behavior, has been considered a significant predictor of organizational effectiveness. Organizations may expect employees to engage in behavior that benefits the organizations, especially behavior that is additional to formal job requirements (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997; Stoner et al., 2011). Initially, some researchers presented extra-role behavior as a synonym for organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Borman, 2004; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998), which encompasses many ethical behaviors (Organ, 1988); for example, following the rules conscientiously, helping others, and going to great lengths to protect other employees and organizational property. These behaviors reflect personal ethics and are necessary for effective organization (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

One might say that extra-role behavior is just ethical behavior; however, extra-role behavior is a reward to the organization rather than an intention to benefit the greatest number of people (Schanke, 1991; Turnipseed, 2002). Some behaviors benefiting the organization may be unethical for external stakeholders (Umphress et al., 2010; Vardi & Weitz, 2004). For example, in the procurement context, some procurement managers may exaggerate supplier problems, allowing personalities to influence purchase transactions, distorting factual information to enhance an organization's image, or unfairly obtaining competitive information to achieve an organization's desired outcome (Foraker & Janson, 1990). Such behavior is called unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Although UPB is an unethical practice, it differs from many other forms in that it is voluntary and extra-role, designed to be beneficial rather than harmful to the organization.

When organizations expect employees to conduct behavior that benefits the organization, especially behavior that is additional to formal job requirements, employees sometimes comply with the expectations of social and ethical norms, such as OCB. However, sometimes, they violate social and ethical norms, such as UPB. OCB and UPB are pro-organizational extra-role behaviors. However, their impacts on the organization are somewhat different. UPB is assumed to damage organizational long-term benefits (Umphress et al., 2010), whereas OCB is expected to promote organizational long-term benefits (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Several studies indicated that employees may exhibit both ethical and unethical extra-role behaviors in the workplace (Cheng et al., 2022; Tang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2023). For example, salespeople may exaggerate the true nature of their company's products to customers and defend their company when others criticize it. Ethical and unethical behaviors may coexist in the real world (Cheng et al., 2022). It is worthwhile to understand the relationship between these two extra-role behaviors of employees; that is, whether employees will be likely to engage in UPB when they are expected to engage in OCB.

While numerous studies have examined OCB and UPB, there has been limited research focusing on the potential link between OCB and unethical behavior (Bolino & Klotz, 2015). Only a handful of studies (Cheng et al., 2022; Jiang et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2023; Zhang & Du, 2023) have specifically explored the association between OCB and UPB. However, inconsistent results were found according to the relationships between UPB and OCB presented in previous studies. Some studies have indicated a non-significant negative relationship between OCB and UPB (e.g., Cheng et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023), while others have identified a significant positive association between the two (e.g., Zhang & Du, 2023). This inconsistency underscores the necessity for further research to determine whether employees who engage in OCB are also inclined to partake in UPB.

According to the goal of the behavior, OCB can be categorized into behavior aimed at helping organizational members (OCBI) and behavior aimed at helping organizations (OCBO) (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Previous research on the relationship between UPB and OCB has largely overlooked the differences between OCB directed toward individuals (OCBI) and OCB directed at the organization as a whole (OCBO). Evidence suggests that OCBI and OCBO may have varying impacts on organizational outcomes (Bolino et al., 2013; Spitzmuller et al., 2008). Thus, further investigation is warranted to explore the distinct potential consequences of OCBI and OCBO (De Geus et al., 2020; Geiger et al., 2019; Spitzmuller et al., 2008). Accordingly, this study will not only examine the association between OCB and UPB but will also analyze how UPB relates to both OCBI and OCBO.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between OCB and UPB through the lens of social identity theory. This theory is frequently employed to understand the motivations behind employees' engagement in extra-role behaviors (Shaw & Liao, 2021). According to social identity theory, a stronger identification with the organization facilitates employees' willingness to engage in extra-role behaviors, which may include both OCB and UPB. The pro-organizational motivation arising from organizational identification may be the common and essential antecedent of OCB and UPB. While existing research has demonstrated that organizational identification can foster both OCB (e.g., Van Dick et al., 2006) and UPB (e.g., Chen et al., 2016), there has been limited exploration of the relationship between OCB and UPB through the lens of social identity theory.

In summary, this study aims to explore the relationship between OCB and UPB from the perspective of social identity theory. This research contributes to the literature by elucidating the connections between these two extra-role behaviors, OCB and UPB, and by examining the relationships between UPB and different types of OCB (i.e., OCBI and OCBO). Additionally, this study seeks to validate the critical role of social identity theory in analyzing the OCB-UPB relationship.

The following section provides an overview of extra-role behavior and formulates the research hypotheses. Subsequently, the methodology employed for the questionnaire survey and data analysis is detailed in the third section. The fourth section presents the research findings, while the fifth section discusses the

implications and suggests directions for future research. Finally, the concluding section summarizes the study's key points.

2. Research Hypotheses

To examine employee behavior in an organization, some researchers specified two kinds of role behavior: in-role behavior and extra-role behavior (Organ, 1988). In-role behavior is defined as the compulsive behavior expected from an employee for the successful accomplishment of assigned tasks. On the other hand, extra-role behavior is behavior that is displayed beyond the formal lines of job requirements and is targeted toward benefiting the organization. Extra-role behavior is considered voluntary behavior grounded on the willingness of employees and is not considered an ingredient of job appraisals or recognition. Many companies expect extra-role behavior from their employees (Srivastava & Dhar, 2015; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

Extra-role behavior has two primary connotations: voluntary behavior, which is not a work norm, and the other is beneficial to the organization. A salient example of extra-role behavior is organizational citizenship behavior, characterized by voluntary actions undertaken by employees to enhance the social and psychological conditions that foster effective task performance (Organ, 1997). However, while employees may undertake voluntary actions that benefit the organization, these actions do not necessarily serve the interests of external stakeholders and can sometimes be detrimental to them, as illustrated by unethical pro-organizational behavior. UPB encompasses actions intended to improve organizational effectiveness but which contravene fundamental social values, norms, laws, or standards of acceptable conduct (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). OCB encompasses many ethical behaviors that reflect personal ethics and are necessary for effective organization (Organ, 1988). In contrast, UPB is designed to promote organizational interests, often at the expense of ethical principles (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Whereas OCB is known as ethical extra-role behavior (Organ, 1997), UPB has been considered as unethical extra-role behavior.

OCB refers to autonomous behavior that is not explicitly and directly recognized by the formal job description and reward system, but that overall contributes to the operation of the organization (Organ, 1988). Supporting the logic, UPB can be regarded as a variant of OCB (Zhang & Du, 2023) because it also seeks to benefit organizations but leads employees to disregard ethical norms (Chen et al., 2023; Mo et al., 2023). OCB and UPB constitute two interconnected dimensions of pro-organizational behaviors in the workplace. These two inconsistent behaviors may not always be opposed to each other in the workplace but may even co-exist and have a causal relationship with each other (Mishra et al., 2022). However, despite the critical literature examining UPB and OCB, respectively, there has been much less work devoted to the association between UPB and OCB.

Tang et al. (2020) suggested that UPB indirectly contributes to increased OCB through daily pride. Their study reported a non-significant negative correlation

between OCB and UPB ($r = -0.03, p > 0.1$). Similarly, Cheng et al. (2022) also found a non-significant negative relationship between OCB and UPB ($r = -0.06, p > 0.1$). Yang et al. (2022) posited that UPB indirectly results in decreased OCB through the internalization of moral identity, revealing a non-significant negative association ($r = -0.05, p > 0.1$). In contrast, Zhang and Du (2023) argued that guilt mediates the positive indirect effect of UPB on OCB in the context of social charity, reporting a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.17, p < 0.01$). Jiang et al. (2023) suggested that moral deficit mediates the positive indirect effect of UPB on OCB, finding a significant negative association ($r = -0.13, p < 0.05$). Wang et al. (2023) proposed that empowering leadership positively influences both UPB and OCB through employee workplace status, yet their study showed a non-significant negative relationship between OCB and UPB ($r = -0.00, p > 0.1$). Overall, the literature indicates that most studies report a non-significant negative relationship between OCB and UPB, with only Zhang and Du (2023) identifying a significant positive association.

According to social identity theory, a strong sense of belonging and identification with an organization encourages behaviors that benefit the organization's interests. Individuals with a high level of organizational identification are more invested in the success or failure of their organization. This identification is expected to promote extra-role behaviors, which subsequently enhance organizational operations and performance (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between OCB and UPB through the lens of social identity theory.

Social identity theory posits that a sense of belonging to an organization fosters behaviors that enhance organizational well-being. Individuals who identify with their organizations are invested in the success or failure of the groups to which they belong (Podsakoff et al., 2009; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Grounded in social identity theory, organizational identification reflects the integration of an individual's self-concept with their perception of the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998). Employees who strongly identify with their organization are more likely to feel a vested interest in its success or failure. This sense of belonging and oneness to an organization is thought to lead to extra-role behaviors that have positive effects on organizational performance (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Organizational identification encompasses more than just an individual's attitude toward the organization; it represents the integration of the organization's identity with the individual's self-concept. It is an attitude of voluntary commitment based on an individual's evaluation of the degree of overlap between his or her sense of self and that of the organization to which he or she belongs (Ashforth et al., 2008; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Galvin et al., 2015). This suggests that employees are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviors that benefit their organization (i.e., OCB or UPB) when they internalize their organizational identity (Kane et al., 2012). Those who define themselves by membership in an organization and take pride in this identification will engage in behaviors that are not necessary and informally rewarded to benefit the organization. An employee is more likely to engage in OCB

and UPB when he or she has higher organizational identification. Several studies postulate that organizational identification is linked to organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Evans & Davis, 2014; Liu et al., 2011; Shen, 2019) and unethical pro-organizational behavior (Chen et al., 2016; Effelsberg et al., 2014; Liu & Qiu, 2015; Umphress & Bingham, 2011).

As a result, based on the social identity theory, this study argues that employees who strongly identify with the organization are more willing to seek and adopt all necessary means, including organizational citizenship behavior or unethical pro-organizational behavior, to meet the competitive needs of the organization. It is expected that there is a positive relationship between OCB and UPB. In addition, according to the goal of the behavior, OCB can be categorized into behavior aimed at helping organizational members (OCBI) and behavior aimed at helping organizations (OCBO) (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Both OCBI and OCBO are OCBs and are also expected to have positive relationships with UPB. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: *There is a positive relationship between OCB and UPB.*

H1a: *There is a positive relationship between OCBI and UPB.*

H1b: *There is a positive relationship between OCBO and UPB.*

Although both OCBI and OCBO are OCBs, the extent to which they benefit organizations is different. OCBI encompasses actions that directly benefit fellow organizational members and indirectly support the organization as a whole, such as assisting colleagues with heavy workloads and caring for the well-being of others. In contrast, OCBO involves actions that primarily benefit the organization itself, such as adhering to informal organizational norms and taking steps to protect the organization's reputation. OCBI and OCBO may have different impacts on organizational outcomes (Bolino et al., 2013; Spitzmuller et al., 2008). While both OCBI and OCBO are expected to have positive relationships with UPB, the strength of the relationship should be different from that of each other. Given that both OCBO and UPB prioritize the interests of the organization as a whole, while OCBI focuses on supporting individual organizational members, it is anticipated, based on social identity theory, that the positive relationship between OCBO and UPB will be stronger than that between OCBI and UPB. Consequently, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: *The positive OCBO-UPB relationship is stronger than the positive OCBI-UPB relationship.*

3. Methodology

3.1 Data collection

To test the research hypotheses, we conducted a questionnaire survey targeting procurement professionals from various industries in Taiwan. Due to the challenge of obtaining a comprehensive list of procurement professionals in Taiwan, we enlisted the help of several procurement professionals and procurement associations for the study. We invited a sample of 1,000 procurement professionals selected based on their involvement in their organization's procurement activities to participate. The researchers reached out to these professionals via email and phone to secure their cooperation in the study.

A confidentiality statement was integrated into the questionnaire to ensure that participants' responses remained anonymous and could not be individually identified. Participants were informed that there were no correct or incorrect answers to the questions and that their responses would be treated with strict confidentiality. Nonetheless, the study may have been constrained by the self-report format, which often leads to concerns regarding the honesty of responses. To address these concerns, we assured participants that their answers would remain confidential and would be analyzed only in aggregate form. Additionally, there is a possibility that the study was affected by responses that reflect societal expectations rather than actual behaviors. However, the anonymous and voluntary nature of the survey may have helped to mitigate this issue.

In the questionnaire survey, a total of 1,000 questionnaires were initially distributed and 436 responses were obtained. After deducting the questionnaires that were filled out randomly or missing data, the number of valid samples was 398. The recovery rate of valid questionnaires was 39.8%. Table 1 shows the demographics of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Total	398
Age	
29 or less	70 (17.6%)
30 to 39	88 (22.1%)
40 to 49	147 (36.9%)
50 or more	93 (23.4%)
Gender	
Female	165 (41.5%)
Male	233 (58.5%)
Educational Level	
High school	111 (27.9%)
College/University	223 (56.0%)
Graduate School	64 (16.1%)
Procurement Experience	
Less than 2 years	43 (10.8%)
2 to 5 years	91 (22.9%)
6 to 10 years	117 (29.4%)
11 to 20 years	84 (21.1%)
More than 20 years	63 (15.8%)

3.2 Measurements

This study employed the 16-item OCB scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002) to assess the OCB of procurement professionals, comprising 8 items for OCBI and 8 items for OCBO. To evaluate UPB among procurement professionals, we utilized the 7-item scale developed by Umphress et al. (2010). Organizational identification (OI) was assessed with a 6-item scale proposed by Mael and Ashforth (1992). All the tools use a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Demographic variables, including age, gender, education level, and work experience, will serve as control variables for the study.

The measurement items were translated from English to Chinese and then back-translated to verify the accuracy of the translation. A group of procurement professionals was invited to review the questionnaire content and participate in a pre-test of the survey. Based on the feedback and suggestions from these experts and pre-test participants, several modifications were made to the questionnaire.

3.3 Data analysis

This study utilized Harman's one-factor test (Harman, 1976) to examine potential common method bias in self-reported cross-sectional data. This approach suggests that exploratory factor analysis can be effective in assessing common method bias across all variables. Common method bias is indicated if a single factor accounts for 50% or more of the variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results of the exploratory factor analysis revealed that the first extracted factor explained only 29.73% of the variance. Therefore, this study did not encounter issues related to common method bias.

Reliability and validity analyses were conducted to confirm the adequacy of the sample data for testing the research hypotheses. This study assessed reliability using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, as presented in Table 2. The results demonstrated that all Cronbach's alpha values fell between 0.891 and 0.922, while composite reliability values ranged from 0.897 to 0.924. All metrics surpassed the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, the study indicates no concerns regarding reliability.

Convergent validity evaluates the extent to which measurement items accurately represent the corresponding variable. This study employed factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) to assess convergent validity. As indicated in Table 2, the factor loadings ranged from 0.728 to 0.898, all exceeding the critical threshold of 0.7. Additionally, the AVE values ranged from 0.704 to 0.735, all surpassing the acceptable minimum of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, the findings suggest that this study possesses adequate convergent validity.

Table 2: Reliability statistics of measurements

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
OCBI	.891	.897	.704
OCBO	.914	.917	.728
UPB	.922	.924	.735
OI	.908	.912	.713

Discriminant validity evaluates the extent to which one variable can be distinctly identified from another. Measurement items for different variables should ideally exhibit minimal correlation. This study utilized the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). The CFA results demonstrated that the goodness-of-fit for the baseline six-factor model was significantly superior to that of alternative models, as indicated by the following fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 1.228$, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.921, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.974, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.965, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.964, normed fit index (NFI) = 0.923, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.026.

4. Results and discussions

4.1 Association between OCB and UPB

To test the research hypothesis *H1* about the association between UPB and OCB, Table 3 presents the regression results of the relationships between UPB and OCB. Model 1 indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between UPB and OCB ($\beta = 0.13, p < 0.05$), thereby providing support for hypothesis *H1*. Model 2 showed that a non-significantly negative relationship existed between UPB and OCBI ($\beta = -0.08, p > 0.05$), which indicated that hypothesis *H1a* was not supported. Model 3 showed that UPB was positively related to OCBO ($\beta = 0.23, p < 0.01$), which indicated that hypothesis *H1b* was supported. To test research hypothesis *H2*, Model 4 showed that the positive OCBO-UPB relationship was more substantial than the OCBI-UPB relationship ($\beta = 0.19, p < 0.01$ for OCBO; $\beta = -0.03, p > 0.1$ for OCBI), which indicated that hypothesis *H2* was supported. These findings indicate a significant positive association between unethical pro-organizational behavior and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, employees' citizenship behavior directed toward the organization (OCBO) and their citizenship behavior aimed at assisting others (OCBI) exhibit distinct relationships with UPB.

Table 3: Regression results for the OCB-UPB relationship

	UPB			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	0.08	0.06	0.08	0.07
Gender	0.03	0.03	-0.02	0.02
Education level	-0.04	0.03	-0.04	-0.02
Experience	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.09
OCB ^a	0.13*			
OCBI		-0.08		-0.03
OCBO			0.23**	0.19**
R ²	0.12	0.08	0.14	0.17
F	10.69**	6.82**	12.76**	13.35**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

^a OCB includes OCBI and OCBO

4.2 Does social identity theory matter?

Grounded in social identity theory, this study posited that OCB has a positive relationship with UPB. Employees who have a strong identification with their organization are more inclined to engage in extra-role behaviors that address the organization's competitive demands, encompassing both OCB and UPB. In order to further verify the applicability of social identity theory in inferring the relationship between OCB and UPB, this study further analyzed the differences in the relationship between OCB and UPB for employees with different levels of organizational identification. Organizational identification implies the integration of an employee's self-awareness with his or her awareness of the organization and is an essential measure in the social identity theory (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998).

Table 4 shows a comparison of the OCB-UPB relationships in different conditions of organizational identification. When respondents had a high level of organizational identification (+1 standard deviation above the mean OI), the positive relationship between UPB and OCB ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$) was more substantial than the relationship for total respondents ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < 0.05$). However, UPB was negatively related to OCB ($\beta = -0.15$, $p < 0.05$) when organizational identification was low (-1 standard deviation below the mean OI). Similar results were found for the OCBI-UPB relationship and OCBO-UPB relationship. When employees' organizational identification was higher, the positive relationship strength was also higher ($\beta = 0.09$, $p > 0.05$ for OCBI; $\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.01$ for OCBO). When the employees' organizational identification was low, both OCBI-UPB and OCBO-UPB became negative relationships ($\beta = -0.18$, $p < 0.01$ for OCBI; $\beta = -0.14$, $p < 0.05$ for OCBO). In other words, when employees had a stronger identification with the organization, they were more inclined to engage in extra-role behaviors that serve the interests of the organization, including both OCB and UPB. This tendency to participate in both OCB and UPB contributes to a positive relationship

between the two extra-role behaviors.

Table 4 substantiates the relevance of social identity theory in examining the relationship between OCB and UPB. Conversely, when employees exhibited low identification with the organization, they were less inclined to engage in extra-role behaviors. In such cases, the ethical distinctions and social norms that differentiate OCB from UPB may play a crucial role in influencing employee behavior. Social identity theory plays a vital role in explaining employees' extra-role behavior.

Table 4: OCB-UPB relationships in different OI conditions

	UPB					
	Total		High OI		Low OI	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Age	0.08	0.07	0.10	0.09	0.05	0.06
Gender	0.03	0.02	-0.04	-0.02	0.02	0.05
Education level	-0.04	-0.02	-0.05	-0.03	0.06	0.03
Procurement experience	0.11	0.09	0.14*	0.10	0.06	0.08
OCB ^a	0.13*		0.23**		-0.15**	
OCBI		-0.03		0.09		-0.18**
OCBO		0.19**		0.26**		-0.14*
R^2	0.12	0.17	0.23	0.28	0.19	0.26
F	10.69**	13.35**	5.62**	6.03**	4.41**	5.45**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

^aOCB includes OCBI and OCBO

High OI: +1 standard deviation above the mean OI

Low OI: -1 standard deviation below the mean OI

4.3 Discussions

Both OCB and UPB are extra-role behaviors. This paper mainly discusses the relationship between these two behaviors from the perspective of social identity theory. According to the results of the questionnaire survey, research hypotheses *H1* and *H1b* were supported, but research hypothesis *H1a* was not supported. A significantly positive relationship existed between OCB and UPB. OCBO was significantly positively associated with UPB, but OCBI was non-significantly negatively associated with UPB. Research hypothesis *H2* was supported; that is, the positive relationship between OCBO and UPB was more substantial than the OCBI-UPB relationship. This study also verified the essential role of social identity theory in explaining the two sides of employees' extra-role behavior.

This study contributes to the academic literature by elucidating the relationship between two forms of extra-role behavior, OCB and UPB. When a company expects employees to engage in OCB, will these employees also engage in UPB? Alternatively, when employees engage in OCB, they are less likely to engage in UPB. Although there have been many studies exploring the issues of OCB and UPB,

only a few studies explored the relationship between them. However, inconsistent results were found based on the relationships between UPB and OCB presented in these studies. For example, the results of Zhang and Du (2023) showed that UPB has a positive relationship with OCB, although other studies (Cheng et al., 2022; Jiang et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2022) showed that OCB has a non-significant negative relationship with UPB. Based on the results of this study, it was observed that UPB is positively associated with OCB; specifically, when employees engage in OCB, they are also likely to participate in UPB. However, the strength of this positive relationship diminishes as employees' moral attentiveness increases. By elucidating the association between UPB and OCB, our findings indicate that, despite OCB being considered a form of ethical behavior, it may indeed be positively associated with UPB. This observation aligns with previous research suggesting that ethical and unethical behaviors can coexist (Tang et al., 2020; Yam et al., 2017).

Research results revealed that the association between OCB and UPB depended on employees' organizational identification. The strength of the positive relationship between UPB and OCB was higher when an employee's organizational identification was higher. This implies that at this time when employees decided whether to conduct OCB or UPB, they may even think that as long as the behavior is beneficial to the organization, it is a manifestation of loyalty and ethical behavior (Hildreth et al., 2016; Uys & Senekal, 2008). This study verifies the application of social identity theory in analyzing extra-role behavior and exploring the relationship between OCB and UPB. Both UPB and OCB are common extra-role behaviors. While some prior studies have examined the relationship between OCB and UPB, they primarily focused on the mediating effects of various variables, such as pride, moral identity internalization, moral deficit, and guilt, in this relationship. Although social identity theory is one of the foundational frameworks for understanding extra-role behaviors (Blader et al., 2017; Shaw & Liao, 2021), further efforts are needed to analyze the relationship between OCB and UPB from this theoretical perspective. This study confirmed that social identity theory is instrumental in analyzing the relationship between OCB and UPB. Both behaviors are driven by employees' identification with the organization and their willingness to engage in extra-role behaviors on its behalf, even though OCB is classified as ethical behavior, while UPB is considered unethical.

Another research contribution of this study is to explore the relationships between UPB and different types of OCB. Since OCB can be divided into OCB for the organization as a whole (OCBO) and OCB for individuals within the organization (OCBI), this study hypothesized that UPB has different relationships with these two types of OCB. Previous studies on the relationship between UPB and OCB did not analyze the differences in the relationships between UPB and OCB for the organization as a whole and OCB for individuals within the organization. The research results of this study showed that OCBO had a significantly positive relationship with UPB, whereas OCBI had a non-significantly negative relationship with UPB. This study echoes some scholars' suggestions (De Geus et al., 2020;

Geiger et al., 2019; Spitzmuller et al., 2008) that more efforts are needed to explore the different possible consequences of OCBI and OCBO.

5. Conclusion

Extra-role behavior is typically regarded as a desirable employee trait in the workplace. However, the potential “dark side” of such behavior has received insufficient attention. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and unethical pro-organizational behavior raises a compelling question: When employees are encouraged to engage in OCB, do they also tend to engage in UPB? This study aims to address this question through the lens of social identity theory. The findings indicate a positive relationship between OCB and UPB. These results contribute significantly to the academic literature.

This study offers a foundation for understanding employees’ perceptions of OCB and UPB. The research findings indicate a positive relationship between UPB and OCB. This suggests that when organizations promote OCB among their employees, they should be aware that such behaviors may also be associated with an increase in UPB. Although the intention behind UPB is to benefit the organization, it remains unethical in the eyes of external stakeholders. This can lead to detrimental consequences over time, including the potential for reputational damage. Organizations should be mindful that not all extra-role behaviors align with their true long-term interests.

Several limitations of this study may provide valuable avenues for future research. This study only focused on exploring the direct association between the bright and dark sides of extra-role behaviors, UPB and OCB. In addition to OCB and UPB, there are other types of extra-role behavior, such as whistle-blowing and principal organizational dissonance (Miceli & Near, 2013). This study did not consider these behaviors. Future research can also consider the relationships among these extra-role behaviors.

This study only takes Taiwanese procurement professionals as the research sample. A limitation of this study is the limited external validity because the sample frame is limited to procurement professionals in Taiwan. Without additional research, it may be inappropriate to generalize the findings regarding the association between OCB and UPB to other countries or diverse employee groups. Future studies should aim to extend and replicate this research across a broader range of countries and employee types.

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