



**ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF UNETHICAL PRO-  
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIORS IN PAKISTAN'S RETAIL SECTOR**

**By**

**INAM ANEEQ**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra  
Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy**

**January 2022**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in  
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**January 2022**

**Chair : Professor Ho Jo Ann, PhD**  
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Employees in a highly competitive corporate setting may engage in unethical behavior such as lying, providing inaccurate information to stakeholders, or concealing information from customers to benefit the organization. Such actions are known as unethical pro-organizational behaviors (UPB). These actions have resulted in penalties, product withdrawals, and company bankruptcies. Despite these negative effects, the reasons employees engage in such behavior and the outcomes remain under-explored. Thus, the objective of this study was to examine the antecedents and outcomes of UPB.

This study adopted a quantitative research paradigm in which the data was collected in two waves from 450 employees working in the marketing or sales departments of the retail sector in Pakistan. The sample of this study was chosen based on quota sampling in which quota was allocated for the most populated cities of Punjab, Pakistan. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed the prominent influence of peer's ethicality which was found to have a negative influence on UPB.

Other antecedents such as relative leader-member exchange, job embeddedness, and moral disengagement were also reported to be positively related to UPB. Moreover, the significant mediating result of guilt indicated that UPB induced guilt which then led to turnover intention and decreased job satisfaction. However, the positive relationship between moral disengagement and UPB was strengthened when the leader's bottom-line mentality was low but weakened when leader's bottom-line mentality was high. The result also demonstrated that UPB induced more guilt when the employees were more morally aware.

The limitation of this study is based on studying the phenomenon of UPB in the context of retail stores in Punjab province in Pakistan and the use of quota sampling due to the unavailability of the sampling frame. Despite the limitations, the findings extend the understanding of the reasons and outcomes of UPB and offer theoretical and practical implications.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**ANTESEDEN DAN HASIL TINGKAH LAKU PRO-ORGANISASI YANG  
TIDAK BERETIKA DI SEKTOR PERUNCITAN DI PAKISTAN**

Oleh

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**Januari 2022**

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Pekerja dalam persekitaran korporat yang berdaya saing tinggi mungkin terlibat dalam tingkah laku yang tidak beretika seperti berbohong, memberi maklumat yang tidak tepat kepada pihak berkepentingan, atau menyembunyikan maklumat daripada pelanggan untuk memberi manfaat kepada organisasi. Tindakan sedemikian dikenali sebagai tingkah laku pro-organisasi (UPB) yang tidak beretika. Tindakan ini telah mengakibatkan penalti, penarikan balik produk dan kebangkrutan syarikat. Walaupun terdapat kesan negatif, alasan pekerja terlibat dalam tingkah laku sedemikian dan hasilnya masih kurang diterokai. Justeru, objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji anteseden dan hasil UPB.

Kajian ini menggunakan paradigma penyelidikan kuantitatif di mana data dikumpul melalui dua peringkat daripada 450 pekerja di bahagian pemasaran atau jualan sektor peruncitan di Pakistan. Sampel kajian ini dipilih berdasarkan persampelan kuota di mana kuota telah ditetapkan untuk bandar yang mempunyai penduduk yang paling ramai di Punjab, Pakistan. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil kajian menunjukkan pengaruh ketara etika rakan sekerja mempunyai pengaruh negatif terhadap UPB.

Anteseden lain seperti pertukaran pemimpin-ahli relatif, keterlibatan kerja, dan pembebasan moral turut dilaporkan mempunyai kaitan positif dengan UPB. Tambahan pula, dapatan pengantaraan rasa bersalah yang signifikan menunjukkan bahawa UPB menyebabkan rasa bersalah yang kemudiannya membawa kepada niat pusing ganti dan penurunan kepuasan kerja. Walaubagaimana pun, hubungan positif antara pembebasan moral dan UPB telah dikukuhkan lagi apabila mentaliti dasar pemimpin adalah rendah tetapi dilemahkan apabila mentaliti dasar pemimpin adalah tinggi. Hasil kajian juga

menunjukkan bahawa UPB menimbulkan lebih banyak rasa bersalah apabila pekerja lebih sedar dari segi moral.

Limitasi kajian ini adalah berdasarkan kajian fenomena UPB dalam konteks kedai runcit di wilayah Punjab di Pakistan dan penggunaan persampelan kuota kerana ketiadaan kerangka persampelan. Walaupun terdapat limitasi, hasil kajian ini meluaskan pemahaman tentang sebab dan hasil UPB dan menawarkan implikasi teori dan praktikal.



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Thank you to those who remain unnamed but remembered

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average Variance Extracted
BCI	Bootstrapped Confidence Interval
CR	Composite Reliability
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
RLMX	Relative Leader-Member Exchange
UPB	Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Introduction

Corporate sustainability is considered a primary goal and a long-term strategy for various industries around the globe (Ioannou and Serafeim, 2019). To achieve it better, the triple-bottom-line approach which consists of three distinct concepts including economic, environmental and social aspects has been considered vital to manage (Hussain et al., 2018). Concentrating specifically on human resource management, employees are considered as the fundamental unit for social sustainability (Najam et al., 2018). Some of the themes based on the employees and organizational sustainability include pro-social behaviors and human resource development (Nawaz & Koç, 2019). To manage them, it is important to be aware of the employees' attitudes and behaviors, embrace their ethical and moral values and care for the stakeholders (Chen et al., 2007; De Cremer and Vandekerckhove, 2017; Ferrell et al., 2019). For several decades, the importance of understanding ethics in management is on the rise. It was thought that behind every unethical decision and behavior, there is a negative intention but recently it was observed that not all unethical behaviors are intentional (Rees et al., 2018).

Employees often behave in a way in which the functioning of the organization may become effective (de Geus et al., 2020). These behaviors include both the task-related actions and the actions which are not in the job description but are done for the betterment of the group and the organization. These behaviors are often classified as ethical or unethical and are encouraged by the supervisors and the organization (Johnson & Umphress, 2019; Umphress et al., 2010). It was initially believed that ethical acts are done for the betterment of the organization and transgressive acts are solely intended to harm the organization (Fehr et al., 2020). However, an overlooked belief known as unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB) asserts that unethical behaviors may be conducted to benefit the organization, implying that people do bad things for good reasons (Umphress et al., 2010). The intentions behind such actions are basically to promote the organization but at the same time, violate moral standards, shared values and laws. It should be noted that UPB is distinct from other unethical behaviors. Unethical behaviors generally were assumed to have self-serving motives (Seuntjens et al., 2019) or have the intention to harm the rivals (Cohen et al., 2013; Kilduff et al., 2016), however, the more practical and contemporary nature of UPB is distinct in a way that it has the primary intention to benefit entities external to oneself i.e., to benefit the interests of one's organization and its members.

Umphress et al. (2010) examined that UPB was positively related to organizational-focused citizenship behaviors, interpersonal deviance and organizational deviance. Thus, this indicates that UPB has two distinct components. The first is unethical behavior which includes acts that are either illegal, immoral, or unacceptable to the larger community (Donaldson & Dunfee, 2011). These unethical acts comprise withholding or giving incorrect information to boost the numbers of targets or sales. The second is pro-organizational behavior which is carried out to benefit the organization and is excluded from the task duties (Umphress et al., 2010).

The actors who participate in UPB are nonetheless employees of the same organization. A survey conducted in Canada and United States on 2000 executive assistants and secretaries revealed that the employees did unethical practices to benefit their bosses or organization (Kleiman, 1996). According to this study, 6.5% of employees wrote misleading or false information in the documents, 10% removed or destroyed damaging information and 5.1% falsified expense accounts or vouchers. Another example is Volkswagen in which a senior production executive developed 'defeat devices' which circumvent fuel emission tests to benefit their organization (Fortune, 2018). Enron Corporation in the United States of America (USA) which despite being considered as America's most innovative company for six consecutive years, faced bankruptcy on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2001, due to deceptive and fraudulent practices from their employees to promote their organizational interests (Sims & Brinkmann, 2003). According to the Times Newsfeed, the media reported that a mother of the four-year-old child made litigation on the makers of Nutella for misrepresenting the information of their product in the advertisements (Hoffman, 2017). In all these instances, employees were not benefited from the act itself rather all these transgressions were aimed to only benefit their organizational interests.

The service sector of Pakistan may also confront threatening consequences in the future due to UPB which requires enrichment of research knowledge (Naseer et al., 2019). According to Section 10 of Pakistan's Company Ordinance (2009), it is prohibited for any organization (both manufacturing and service) to engage in deceptive marketing practices. These practices include misleading information, distribution of false information and missing information (related to price, character, process, properties, relevance to use and quality). The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) found that 40% of medical academic institutions misrepresented their recognition by Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PMDC) on their websites and other online sources to attract potential candidates. Hence, they were imposed a total penalty of around USD 155,000 (CCP, 2019). In Pakistan, many organizations are also engaged in deceptive marketing. For example, according to the Daily Times (2017), ZONG (a telecom company in Pakistan) sent a complaint to the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) against Telenor's deceptive marketing campaign. Telenor claimed to give free 4G services across Pakistan but according to the complaint filed by ZONG, this campaign was misleading. Telenor was issued a notice from CCP for this deceptive marketing campaign. Such incidents reveal that UPB makes the company more exposed to show-cause notices, fines, lawsuits, decreased reputation and potential bankruptcy.

The inquisition concerning UPB has passed only a decade and hence little inferences have been made which made generalization difficult. This handful of research substantiates a need for examining the predicting factors of UPB and especially its cognitive mechanisms in which an employee becomes less satisfied with the job and thinks of leaving the organization. It is from this background that the purpose of this study incorporates antecedents of UPB by considering the reflective-impulsive model (Strack & Deutsch, 2004). Furthermore, its emotional and cognitive consequences are also examined. This empirical examination extends in finding the psychological mechanisms which originate after a person feels guilty about his wrongdoings. This study is conducted on employees working in the marketing and sales department in the retail service sector of Pakistan, the reasons for focusing on them are explained below.

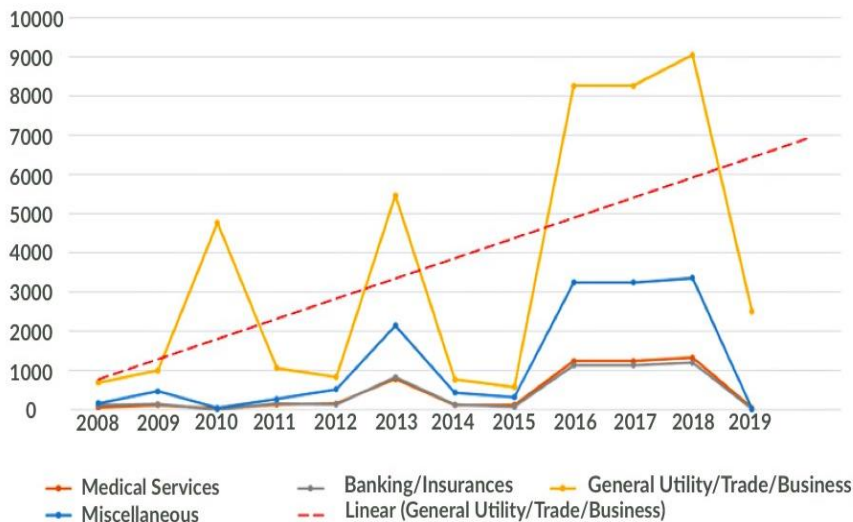
## **1.2. Background of Study**

Retailing as a sub-sector of the service sector is a specialized marketing activity related to the selling of goods or services directly to the consumers for their personal, family use, or non-business use (Durrani & Khalil, 2002; Hameli, 2018). This includes small stores, supermarket chains and shopping malls. The important functions of retailing are to gather the products from the suppliers, to provide information to the consumers, sell the goods and services and make the necessary transactions.

There are around two million retailers in Pakistan, making the retail sector one of the most important sectors for the country (Daily Times, 2020). According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2019), the retail industry employs a sizable workforce, accounting for around 15% of the overall employment. The retail industry is estimated to be valued at USD 32.89 billion, with a large contribution to overall GDP (about 19%). Besides this, the retail sector of Pakistan is essential to change the lives of the growing population of consumers which is around 212.7 million. With the growth of population, the consumers buying preferences are also changing from fewer visits to more planned visits to modern retail stores especially in the urban cities (Faseeh Mangi, 2017). According to Euromonitor International (2019), the retail sector in Pakistan is on a rising trajectory due to rapid urbanization and an increase in consumer spending of the middle-income group.

The retail sector of Pakistan is greatly affected by environmental factors such as the unexpected global issue of the COVID-19 pandemic which adversely affected many sectors including the industrial and service sector. Regarding wholesale and retail trade, a 3.43% decline in growth was seen in the year 2020 (The News International, 2021). According to World Bank (2020), since February 2020, due to the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus, the economic activity has slowed down due to several partial/complete lockdowns which have significantly affected the retail service sector of Pakistan. The government of Pakistan is

trying to overcome economic losses by boosting and substantiating private and foreign investments. During such crises and challenging situations, leaders exert pressure on employees to act unethically for organizational benefit (Babalola et al., 2021; Ivcevic et al., 2020).



**Figure 1.1: District Consumer Court Details for UPB Related Cases**

(Source: Directorate of Consumer Protection Council, Government of Punjab, Pakistan)

Employees commit UPB with the good intention of benefiting the organization's interest (Vardi & Weitz, 2003). UPB is a widespread phenomenon that is rising with the growth of the retail sector of Pakistan. In the retail context of Pakistan, employees who are the faces of the organization, their ethical conduct and values can influence the survival, growth, profit-making and success of the organization (Durrani & Khalil, 2002). In the Punjab province, according to the reports compiled by the Government of Pakistan's Directorate of Consumer Protection Council (2019), many cases were witnessed similar to UPB. These cases were compiled based on the Punjab Consumer Protection Act 2005. According to this act, businesses are not allowed to give false and misleading information. These practices collectively represent UPB. The most prominent sector in all those cases was the service sector in which medical services, banking services and retail stores hide or gave misleading information to the customers. As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the number of cases for the general utility, trades and business are higher than medical, banking and other services. These unethical practices may result in severe penalties and actions as per the consumer court (Punjab Laws, 2005).

Marketing departments of many companies in Pakistan are engaged in deceptive marketing practices to increase their sales, profits and to attain the customer's

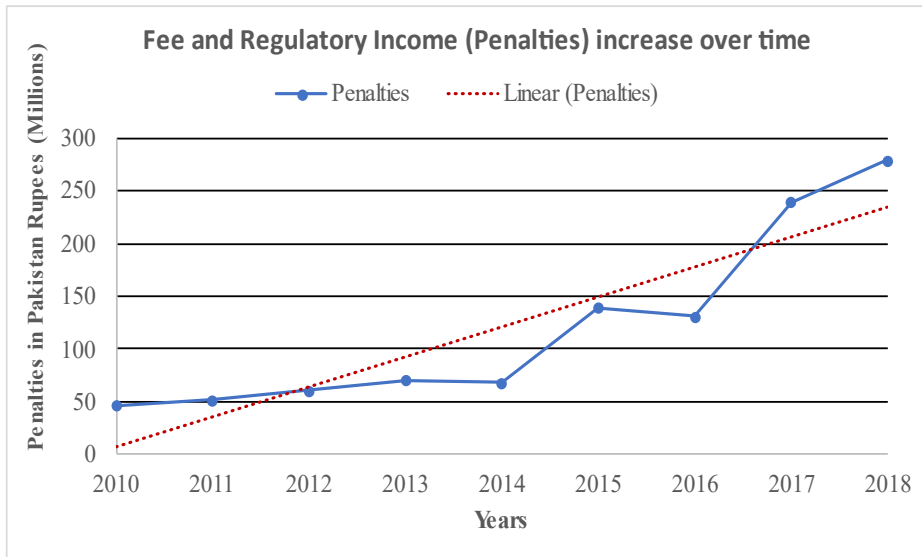
attention in a highly competitive market (Dawn, 2012; Haider, 2019). This increases the potential for distortion, misrepresentations and concealing of facts from potential customers. To fulfill job demands, the employees sometimes undermine the consequences of being unethical and become morally blind in some of their actions (Martin et al., 2014).

UPBs are also seen in other sectors of Pakistan such as banking, beauty, health/fitness and the manufacturing sector (Dawn, 2012). For example, cellular service providers in Pakistan have been seen to provide less information with inexpensive packages to get a lead from their competitors (Khan et al., 2015). According to the Express Tribune (2017), Kaymu.pk which is an online shopping platform for the sellers to sell their goods and services was alleged to violate Section 10 of the competition act due to misleading the customers about the seller's return policy. This act of misleading information from the customers is categorized as UPB (Umphress et al., 2010). The reason behind such a deceiving act may be to attract and provide benefits to the sellers which may ultimately increase the platform's profit. The possible reason behind such unethical behaviors is that the employees are executing marketing and sales activities in complex task environments which involve ethical dilemmas (Ameer & Halinen, 2019).

The urge to make ethical compromises by marketing employees creates an emerging threat for the corporate world and society. The threat includes court charges, financial costs and a multitude of psychological consequences for the consumers, employees and the organization. The report compiled by the Government of Pakistan's Directorate of Consumer Protection Council (2019) shows that the total district court cases similar to UPB in Punjab Province for the years 2018 and 2019 were around 9,000 and 2,500 respectively. According to the Competition Commission of Pakistan, the yearly trend of penalties on deceptive marketing practices is on the rise during the year 2012-2018 which is shown in Figure 1.2.

Organizations face hazardous risks associated with the UPB. UPB negatively influences subordinates' satisfaction and performance (Liu et al., 2018). These behaviors enhance the negative emotions in an employee which creates a threat regarding the personal image and repute (Bonner et al., 2017). Mesdaghinia et al. (2018) surveyed various industries (e.g., accounting, airline, banking, insurance, restaurant and retail) and found that the leader's sole focus on the outcomes may trigger employee's UPB which further increases turnover intention. These withdrawal behaviors are strong for those employees who have a strong moral identity.





**Figure 1.2: Trend of Penalties by Competition Commission of Pakistan**  
(Source: Annual Reports (2012-2018): Competition Commission of Pakistan)

Pakistan's culture may be a likely factor affecting the UPB of the employees because in a similar culture like Mexico which is a collectivist society and has high uncertainty avoidance was marked to have a tendency to commit UPB (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2018). According to Hofstede (2021), the low score (14) in the individualistic dimension shows that Pakistani society is a collectivist society that values social relationships (Hofstede, 2021). In such a society, people make long-term commitments and affiliate themselves as an in-group. The group takes care of its people in exchange for their loyalty. It is due to the collectivistic nature of the society that the employees are likely to affiliate themselves with the group and create an exchange relationship with their leaders and the organization. Correspondingly, relative leader-member exchange (RLMX) might be an enabler of UPB because in RLMX the employees relatively compare the exchanges and affiliation with other peers (Henderson et al., 2008; Vidyarthi et al., 2010) which can enable UPB (Zhang et al., 2017).

Concerning the ongoing issues and causes of UPB especially in the marketing and sales department of the retail service sector of Pakistan, this study examines the antecedents including moral disengagement, peer's ethicality, job embeddedness and RLMX. Additionally, based on the potential cognitive aftermath of UPB, outcomes such as guilt, job satisfaction and turnover intention are examined. Additionally, moral awareness and the leader's bottom-line mentality as moderators are also considered.

### 1.3. Problem Statement

Rising corporate scandals about UPB since the 21<sup>st</sup>-century have taken the business landscape by storm (Mishra et al., 2021). In the last decade, several incidents in the world which are mentioned in section 1.1 brought the attention of many researchers to ponder on investigating and avoiding the potential consequences of such transgressive acts (Dietz & Gillespie, 2012; Mishra et al., 2021; Umphress et al., 2010). According to Gurchiek (2006), around 19% were found to be lying to employees, customers, suppliers and the general public. In India, 42 out of 58 informants in the retail sector were subjected to unethical pro-organizational practices such as selling lookalike products (products with packaging that is similar to branded items in terms of brand name, color, size and shape), selling the products at high prices, deceiving customers by withholding promotional offers and selling outdated products (Gupta & Srivastav, 2016). These tactics allow businesses to avoid the transaction costs of returning unsold products to the company's distributor or any intermediary and to prevent any financial loss associated with disposing of obsolete inventory (Gupta & Srivastav, 2016). The employees do such behaviors to increase their organizational profits.

More specifically, in the Pakistan service sector, due to the rising competition and to attract the target audiences, misleading information is being given to society (Khan et al., 2015). As mentioned earlier, the total district court cases similar to UPB in Punjab Province for the years 2018 and 2019 were around 9,000 and 2,500 respectively as compiled by the Government of Pakistan's Directorate of Consumer Protection Council (2019). The government of Pakistan feels that such misleading activities should be curtailed since some medical retail businesses in Pakistan use unethical practices to increase sales, which are often disregarded by parent organizations to keep the company functioning (Dawn, 2011). Such behaviors have caused a surge in the prices of medical products, despite them being subsidized by the government through public money.

Comprehending the problem regarding UPB in the retail service sector of Pakistan initially requires explaining UPB. UPBs are those unethical actions that are directed for the betterment of the organization (Umphress et al., 2010). Theorists have investigated UPB (Nguyen et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021; Umphress et al., 2010) but due to the limited investigations, theoretical developments are needed in building research models that can examine the antecedents and clarify the consequences of UPB (Liu and Qiu, 2015; Tsiavia, 2016; Mishra et al., 2021). In practical settings, behaviors such as UPB are not easily recognized (Mishra et al., 2021). Thus, to understand more deeply about UPB, this research assists in narrowing the science-practitioner gap within behavioral ethics.

UPB has just recently become the focus of researchers, leaving room for further studies to fill the gaps regarding antecedents and outcomes (Mishra et al., 2021; Tsiavia, 2016). The initial body of knowledge in predicting UPB relates to

employee's identification with the organization (Lee et al., 2019; Naseer et al., 2020; Umphress et al., 2010), high-performance work practices (Xu & Lv, 2018), mindfulness (Kong, 2016), knowledge sharing (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2018) and leader-member exchange (Bryant & Merritt, 2021). Some of the studies explored UPB in the context of leadership such as transactional versus transformational leadership (Graham et al., 2013), authoritarian leadership (Kang-Hwa et al., 2018) and ethical leadership (Miao et al., 2013). In all these studies, relatively more consideration was given in examining the reasons behind UPB, but the outcomes of UPB were relatively under-studied (Tsiavia, 2016) except the work on cognitive dissonance, guilt and shame (Tang et al., 2020; Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Wang et al., 2021) especially in the context of the service sector of Pakistan (Naseer et al., 2020). Following is the explanation of the research problems which are outlined in this study.

The research on the antecedents of UPB falls remarkably short and is not given much attention especially on developing a comprehensive framework including psychological and organizational precursors of UPB (Babalola et al., 2021; Mishra et al., 2021). For instance, scholars in the field of business ethics put forth the psychological concept of identification which serves as the precursor of UPB (Fulmore & Fulmore, 2021; Johnson & Umphress, 2019; Schuh et al., 2021). Besides, a study conducted by Belausteguigoitia and Clercq (2018) identified that both psychological and organizational factors such as resistance to change and perceived organizational politics respectively make UPB more desirable. Despite the existing studies on the antecedents of UPB, studies have called upon investigating antecedents at psychological and organizational levels (Babalola et al., 2021; Mishra et al., 2021; Tsiavia, 2016). After the scrutiny, it was found that the literature requires conclusive empirical examinations on psychological and organizational factors of UPB by the underexplored reflective – impulsive model from social and cognitive psychology into the organizational context.

Scholars have examined several psychological precursors of UPB such as identification (Fulmore & Fulmore, 2021; Schuh et al., 2021; Umphress & Bingham, 2011), leadership (Gigol, 2021a; Inam et al., 2021; Shaw & Liao, 2021), psychological entitlement (Lee et al., 2015; Allan Lee et al., 2019; Naseer et al., 2020) and high-performance work system (Xu & Lv, 2018). Still, the research on psychological antecedents is not conclusive and requires more investigations (Babalola et al., 2021; Mishra et al., 2021; Tsiavia, 2016). The individual-level psychological factors (i.e., job embeddedness and moral disengagement) are unclear and require empirical examinations. As a psychological construct, the uniqueness of job embeddedness is that it includes factors that hold the employee with the organization (Mitchell & Lee, 2001). Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between job embeddedness and UPB. Another individual factor, moral disengagement, being the cognitive justification that makes an employee engage in unethical behaviors (Bandura et al., 1996), is likely to explain UPB.

As an organizational construct, the role of social exchanges between leaders and subordinates (i.e. RLMX) needs to be understood more in the context of how



it makes the employees commit undesirable behavior (Bryant & Merritt, 2021; Inam et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2019). Previously, Bryant and Merritt (2021) examined social exchanges concerning UPB which was determined by generally examining the absolute standing of leader-member exchange (LMX). The weakness of just measuring the absolute LMX is that it only gives insights about the absolute LMX, rather than the relative standing of the individuals within the group (Epitropaki & Martin, 2013). Thus, RLMX was considered a better approach in the organizational setting because it comparatively oversees LMX in a group and the reciprocal relationship rather than simply measuring an individual's LMX (Epitropaki & Martin, 2013; Johns, 2006; Vidyarthi et al., 2010). In this regard, Zhang et al. (2017) emphasized that social comparison among the employees may predict UPB. Therefore, based on the lack of evidence regarding the impact of RLMX with UPB, there exists a theoretical gap. Hence, this study examines RLMX and its influence on UPB to assess the central premise of LMX theory which imbues more meaning to relative social exchanges.

Another organizational factor is peer's ethicality which is the perception of an individual about coworker's ethical behaviors (Wiltermuth et al., 2013). Johnson et al. (2018) recommended assessing the phenomenon in which managers in the business context use or withhold information for their strategic decision-making. Previously, it has been found that unethical perceptions of other employees may enhance the observer's unethical acts (O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2012). Understanding the impact of peer's ethicality on UPB will assist managers in fostering the ethical culture for future ethical conduct. Therefore, this study examines the peer's ethical perception as an organizational construct and its influence on the unethical use of the information which is referred to as UPB. In sum, the investigations along these lines seek to advance the knowledge with the inclusion of two types of antecedents in the exploration of UPB which include organizational and psychological factors.

The problem regarding limited understanding about the individual level psychological outcomes needs to be understood (Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). The existing literature discussed the positive outcomes of UPB such as organizational citizenship behavior and employee customer service behaviors (Chen & Chen, 2018), leaving behind the negative psychological consequences to be examined (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). To explain the consequences of UPB more clearly, the novel approach of self-concept discrepancy theory is deemed appropriate because it explains the phenomenon in which the conflict between the ideal self and the ought-to self may engender the feeling of guilt which further reduce satisfaction and create the feeling of humiliation and unworthiness (Higgins et al., 1985; Higgins & Lurie, 1983). Therefore, delving into the self-concept discrepancy theory will clearly explain the outcomes of UPB.

The literature pointed out the effects of unethical behaviors on the above-mentioned outcomes through emotions. Therefore, these direct effects of UPB require in-depth understanding. Studies show that positive emotions result in many favorable organizational outcomes such as work achievement, job enrichment and effective exchange relationships (Staw et al., 1994). Whereas,

negative emotions such as guilt may increase the threat to personal reputation and image which may lead an employee to perform withdrawal behaviors (Bonner et al., 2017; Petriglieri, 2011). In view of the pressing concerns about UPB, it is suggested to find the possible individual consequences when the employee experiences negative emotions after behaving unethically (Bonner et al., 2017). Concerning this, it is prominent to consider the individual's cognitive aftereffects such as the intention to leave and job satisfaction (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2018; Bonner et al., 2017; Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Concerning these gaps, this research advances the understanding of the individual-level cognitive aftereffects of UPB and examines how an employee after committing UPB results in increasing turnover intention and reduction in employee satisfaction with the job based on the self-concept discrepancy theory.

The mediating effects of how UPB is self-appraised as unethical in the form of guilt and its potential emotional consequences in light of the comparison between stimuli and stable self-representation still need to be investigated (Tang et al., 2020). In this regard, the outcome of UPB induced guilt such as job satisfaction and turnover intention is unclear. For example, Liu et al. (2018) have found a negative indirect effect of UPB on job satisfaction through trust in their leader. However, since guilt is a negative emotion, its negative psychological impact is still unclear which requires more investigation. The argument behind the negative effects of guilt is based on the self-concept discrepancy theory (Higgins et al., 1985). Self-concept discrepancy theory discusses that the individual compares his actual self with the internalized standards or the ought-to/ideal self (Higgins et al., 1985). This discrepancy makes the individuals believe that their accomplishments and attributes do not match with the aspirations, hopes and goals which results in negative emotions, dissatisfaction, disappointment and become afraid of the possibility of any recurring failures (Higgins et al., 1985). In this regard, Petriglieri (2011) explains that after committing wrongdoings either an employee will engage in identity protection response or identity restructuring response. Literature on UPB has pondered upon the positive side of guilt in which the employees do compensatory and discretionary behaviors to benefit the organization (Chen & Chen, 2018; Ghosh, 2017; Zhang et al., 2017). Whereas the negative side of UPB induced guilt still needs to be investigated. Petriglieri (2011) explains that the individual may lead to withdrawal behavior after feeling guilty to avoid reoccurrence of the failures and later consider that wrongdoing as a threat to their identity. Therefore, based on the above argument and using the theoretical lens of self-concept discrepancy theory, guilt may potentially mediate the relationship between UPB and outcome variables (i.e., turnover intention and job satisfaction). Hence, this study examines the mediating role of guilt in the relationship between UPB and outcome variables (i.e., turnover intention and job satisfaction).

Finally, the moderating effects of a leader's bottom-line mentality and moral awareness have not been given much attention despite their importance in especially in the studies regarding ethics and organizational behaviors (Bonner et al., 2017; Farasat & Azam, 2020; Javaid et al., 2020). Moderator variables are deemed important for this study because they can alter the strength of the causal relationships which allows us to explain the conditions at which the causal

relationships are strengthened or weakened (Frazier et al., 2004). Some evidence regarding the relationship between moral disengagement and UPB exists (Zhang et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021). For example, Lee et al. (2019) found organizational identification and Welsh et al. (2015) reported employee regulatory focus to be positively moderating the relationship between moral disengagement and UPB. Despite a few available studies, the research on examining the situational condition at which this relationship is strengthened still needs to be discussed (Newman et al., 2019). Therefore, a leader's bottom-line mentality is taken as a moderator in the relationship between moral disengagement and UPB. Moreover, few studies have highlighted the positive relationship between UPB and guilt (Gigol, 2021b; Shah et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021) but still, the condition at which this relationship is strengthened or weakened still need to be investigated (Tang et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Therefore, moral awareness is taken as a moderator in the UPB-guilt relationship.

#### **1.4. Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study are divided into general and specific which are as follows:

##### **1.4.1. General Objectives**

This study aims to examine the antecedents and outcomes of UPB among marketing and sales employees in the retail service sector of Pakistan.

##### **1.4.2. Specific Objectives**

More specifically, the current study aims to:

- a) examine peer's ethicality, relative leader-member exchange, job embeddedness and moral disengagement as the antecedents of unethical pro-organizational behaviors.
- b) investigate whether guilt mediates the relationship between unethical pro-organizational behavior and outcome variables (turnover intention and job satisfaction).
- c) test if the leader's bottom-line mentality moderates the relationship between moral disengagement and unethical pro-organizational behavior.
- d) examine if moral awareness moderates the relationship between unethical pro-organizational behavior and guilt.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

After aligning all the objectives, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- a) Are peer's ethicality, relative leader-member exchange, job embeddedness and moral disengagement antecedents of unethical pro-organizational behaviors?
- b) Does guilt mediate the relationship between unethical pro-organizational behavior and outcome variables (turnover intention and job satisfaction)?
- c) Does the leader's bottom-line mentality moderate the relationship between moral disengagement and unethical pro-organizational behavior?
- d) Does moral awareness moderate in the relationship between unethical pro-organizational behavior and guilt?

### **1.6. Scope of Research**

This study sets out its scope to understand the organizational and psychological causes of UPB and its outcomes which are specifically concerned with the individual's cognitive outcomes. First, this study focuses on the service sector. Specifically, the retail sub-sector. According to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2019), there are six sub-sectors of the service industry which include: wholesale and retail trade, transport, storage and communication, finance and insurance, housing services, general government services and other private government services. The statistics obtained from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2019) revealed that the services sector contributed 61.2% in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018-2019. Among the six sub-sectors, the highest GDP contributor in the retail trade (18.9%) with a worth of around USD 32.89 billion and estimated growth of around 8.2% during 2016-2021. Therefore, with this growing trend, rising awareness about deceptive marketing practices and the actions taken by the competition commission of Pakistan (CCP) to stop such practices, the underline phenomenon of UPB be studied in the retail service sector of Pakistan.

Second, the exclusive target of this study was marketing and sales employees working in the lower and middle-level hierarchy of authority. In general, the marketing department is the most conspicuous department to the public at large (Murphy & Lacznik, 1981). The employees in this department directly interact with the customers and clients and have a visible role in ethical conduct (Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Ferrell et al., 2019). In the marketing department, ethical dilemmas are more prominent in the sales arena. Indeed, the unethical behaviors of the salesperson are found directly related to sales performance (Howe et al., 1994).

Thirdly, the selected geographical region for this study is the province named 'Punjab' which according to the Population Welfare Department (2017), covers around 53% of the total population and according to Emerging Pakistan (2019) cities in Punjab is where most of the retail service stores are found and have the potential for significant growth in future. Concerning this, the highly populated cities in Punjab are selected which include Lahore, Multan, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi. This is assumed to appropriately test the theoretical foundation of the model and to generalize the findings.

Lastly, this study revolved around based on several theories that are used to explain the results. As an underpinning theory, the findings are based on the reflective-impulsive model (Strack & Deutsch, 2004). This model is used to explain that the behaviors are the result of the interplay between the reflective and impulsive systems. As cognitive reasoning is the major element in the reflective process, therefore, both psychological (job embeddedness and moral disengagement) and organizational factors (RLMX and peer's ethicality) are considered in influencing UPB. The reflective-impulsive model also explains the emotional consequence of the reflective-impulsive system and how it may lead to avoidance behavior. Also, this study considered guilt as the emotional response and how it led towards lower job satisfaction and increasing the turnover intention based on self-concept discrepancy theory. Thus, the research framework revolves around the above-mentioned theories.

## **1.7. Significance of Study**

Having an in-depth review of the theoretical and practical aspects of the research issues/problems as diagnosed in Section 1.3, it is essential to anticipate the potential contributions of the research. Therefore, this section provides specific rationales for conducting this study and discusses why the aim of examining the antecedents and outcomes of UPB in the presence of mediating mechanisms and interaction factors. This study is significant for several reasons; in general, these can be described into two main dimensions which are as follows.

### **1.7.1. Theoretical Significance**

This research is significant because of the much-needed research efforts to identify the individual and organizational antecedents of UPB as they may likely play a prevailing role in the work outcomes (Chen et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2019; Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). The significance of this study also entails that both individual and organizational factors of UPB could be explained and understood in the context of Pakistan by considering the underexplored theoretical viewpoint of the reflective – impulsive model to explain the dual nature of UPB (i.e., being unethical and having pro-organizational motives). Regarding the psychological constructs, studies on job embeddedness discussed positive behaviors such as in-role and extra-role service behavior (Park et al., 2021; Wang and Yang, 2021).



However, not much is known about the dark side of job embeddedness that how too much job embeddedness can increase deviant behaviors such as UPB which have the positive intention to benefit the organization or its members (Ghosh, 2017). Moreover, the significance of examining moral disengagement as the second psychological construct is based on its promising plausible explanation in explaining why an employee will commit UPB (Yan et al., 2021). Besides, it has been suggested to examine it based on the different theoretical perspectives (Newman et al., 2019).

Concerning the organizational factors (RLMX and peer's ethicality) as antecedents of UPB, studies have highlighted that the leader-member exchange relationships influence UPB (Bryant & Merritt, 2021; Inam et al., 2021; Zhan & Liu, 2021). However, the relative difference in the leader-member exchange relationships was not examined (Zhang et al., 2017) which is discussed as a better approach than simply predicting LMX because it views LMX based on how employees compare themselves with the high performing others (Johns, 2006). Additionally, according to the knowledge of the researcher, the relationship between peer ethicality and UPB was not examined and it was suggested to test the influence of peer's ethicality with unethical behaviors (Johnson et al., 2018). Based on the suggestion to investigate the effect of the exchange relationship between leader and member (Bryant & Merritt, 2021; Johnson & Umphress, 2019; Zhang et al., 2017) and peer ethicality (Deshpande & Joseph, 2009; Johnson et al., 2018; Miao et al., 2013), this study is deemed significant to establish the relationship between organizational factors and UPB.

UPB as an emerging construct to employee's psychological outcomes could probably enlighten several factor-outcome relationships (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Examining the outcomes of UPB by using the theoretical lens of self-concept discrepancy theory is of great significance because it can add knowledge regarding the negative self-appraisal of committing UPB. Prior studies have exploited mainly the identification-related antecedents of UPB (Kong, 2016; Naseer et al., 2019) but the potential cognitive outcomes about UPB have been left out (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2018; Tsiavia, 2016). Earlier studies highlighted the importance of guilt as an emotional consequence that can affect job satisfaction and can encourage withdrawal behaviors (Chen & Chen, 2018; Lunardo & Saintives, 2018; Moore et al., 2012). In service organizations, the turnover intention is significant to understand because it might also act as a catalyst in creating the actual turnover (Cho & Lewis, 2012). Limited research on UPB has advocated counterproductive behaviors in contrast to UPB (Lee et al., 2019; Naseer et al., 2020) and describes guilt and cognitive dissonance as the potential outcomes (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). Thus, the influence of UPB on guilt, turnover intention and job satisfaction has not been addressed appropriately (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2018; Bonner et al., 2017; Umphress & Bingham, 2011) and can enrich UPB literature.

Understanding mediation is also vital for developing and explaining the theory and explaining why the relationship between the variable exists (MacKinnon et al., 2007). Two mediating effects of guilt are significant in explaining the

relationship between UPB-outcome (job satisfaction and turnover intention) relationships. This increases the understanding of how negative self-appraisal of UPB in the form of guilt results in psychological consequences such as reducing job satisfaction and increasing turnover intention. A few studies highlighted the mediating role of guilt in leading to positive outcomes such as in increasing prohibitive and promotive voice (Wang et al., 2021) and customer service and organizational citizenship behaviors (Chen & Chen, 2018). However, studies have been called upon to further explain the outcome of UPB induced guilt (Chen & Chen, 2018; Inam et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021). Thus, examining these relationships would lend evidence to support and explain the negative emotional aftermath of UPB. In this way, the cognitive reasoning behind those psychological outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction and turnover intention) would further be consolidated (Lee et al., 2019; Umphress & Bingham, 2011).

The focus of the limited studies on UPB discussed perceptions, personality attributes and moral identity as moderators and highlights the need for individual-level moderating mechanisms in explaining UPB (Castille et al., 2016; Naseer et al., 2020; Xu & Lv, 2018). UPB literature still lacked the testing of the vital interaction mechanism of the leader's bottom-line mentality and moral awareness. First, the role of a leader's bottom-line mentality which is based on the power and influence literature (Mesdaghinia et al., 2019), will help in understanding how such mentality translates into UPB. Literature has argued that the supervisors who are high in bottom-line mentality elevate task performance (Babalola et al., 2021), UPB (Zhang et al., 2020) and unethical pro-leader behavior (Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). However, still, it was required to investigate how the productivity obsession of high bottom-line mentality leaders will create an obligation that can lead towards UPB (Babalola et al., 2021; Bryant & Merritt, 2021; Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). Therefore, this study will extend the theoretical understandings of the UPB-guilt relationship and the relationship between moral disengagement and UPB by introducing moral awareness and leader's bottom-line mentality as moderators respectively.

Second, the moderating effect of moral awareness is significant in understanding more deeply the condition at which guilt occurs. Previous studies have investigated that UPB can induce the feeling of guilt (Gigol, 2021b; Shah et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021) and have pointed out the significance of moral awareness in the process of feeling guilt of the past UPB (Umphress & Bingham, 2011). However, the condition at which the UPB-guilt relationship is strengthened or weakened especially in the view of negative self-appraisal using the theoretical lens of self-concept discrepancy theory was not examined. Therefore, examining the boundary condition of moral awareness in the UPB – guilt relationship will advance the theoretical perspective of self-concept discrepancy theory in the context of the retail sector of Pakistan and increase the academic knowledge of emotional outcomes of UPB.

Lastly, this study extends the literature based on the context of the retail sector of a developing country like Pakistan where the culture of more collectivists and people avoid future uncertainty (Hofstede Insights, 2021). The theoretical

explanation based on this context may give insights for countries that have similar cultural dimensions. Previous studies have extensively investigated the phenomenon of UPB in developed countries like the United States of America (Johnson & Umphress, 2019; Kong, 2016; Lee et al., 2019) and China (Xu & Lv, 2018; Zhang, 2020). However, the context of developing countries like Pakistan was neglected. Therefore, the theoretical contribution lies in understanding the underexplored reflective and impulsive process which influences UPB in the context of the retail sector of Pakistan. This study not only advances the theoretical perspectives regarding the vital precursors but also extends the theory in explaining that the UPB can result in the emotional aftermath which further can result in lowering satisfaction level and increasing turnover intentions. As retailing is a specialized marketing activity, therefore, the contribution to the literature will add more meaning to the context of the marketing and sales domain (Durrani & Khalil, 2002; Hameli, 2018) where employees often face pressure to boost their sales and to do so, they sometimes use unethical means (Dubinsky et al., 1992). Furthermore, the unique context (Pakistan) enriched our understanding of theories in the context of organizational behavior in developing countries.

### **1.7.2. Managerial Significance**

By uncovering the antecedents and outcomes of UPB, this research forms an empirical basis for the design and operation of human resource practices about employees' workplace behaviors. Specifically, it would add more insights into whether peer's ethicality, relative leader-member exchange, job embeddedness and moral disengagement would execute UPB. For example, by examining that the antecedents will lead towards UPB and subsequently lead towards negative outcomes like withdrawal behavior and lower job satisfaction via guilt by the intervention of leader's bottom-line mentality and moral awareness, the managers could try not only to focus on profitable outcomes but also consider the morality in decisions making.

The managers can promote moral values and ethical practices to protect their employees in getting engaged in such unethical practices by ensuring that the ethical content of the policies and procedures reflect goals and values of the organization and by tracking the progress of moral issues (Chen et al., 2007; Johnson, 2018). The manager could also tackle UPB by preventing such behaviors to happen in the first place and reducing it by changing the focus of concern from "only profits" to both "profits and ethics". The findings of this study will enhance the consideration to inhibit these unethical behaviors in the retail sector through various managerial interventions and strategies which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

First, addressing issues regarding UPB is critical for decision-makers because the consequences might be very costly both for the management representatives and the organization (Cialdini et al., 2004; Dunlop & Lee, 2004). More specifically, using the results of this study in the context of the Pakistan service



sector, the consequence of UPB might be heavy penalties and show-cause notices. Moreover, they can also focus on a situational element such as moral awareness that can inhibit future unethicity in employee behaviors. By doing this, they can make UPB more detectable and less rewarding (Demirtas and Akdogan, 2015; De Cremer and Vandekerckhove, 2017). Additionally, the findings of this study would be beneficial to the retail owners and managers in integrating ethics into the core values of the organization. Jha (2015) identified that in countries like Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, sectors with high customer interaction such as the retail sector is more prone to unethical practices. Therefore, the managers need to promote ethical language in the organization so that the organizational culture, objectives and performance appraisal reflect ethical values.

Second, this study contributes to suggesting practical actions that may focus more on the transformative approach. Currently, in Pakistan, the practitioners focus on the transitional approach of justice in which legal measures are being made by the legal and governmental authorities like the Competition Commission of Pakistan to undermine deceptive marketing practices. However, as explained in section 1.2, the increasing trend can be seen in the penalties given to the organization which shows the inefficiency of solely using the transitional approach of justice which can help increase satisfaction at the job and can utilize their positive intention by retaining them.

Third, intra-organizational awareness activities could be designed and implemented in the organization to assist the corporate executives in sensitizing and embracing the ethical training programs in the organization. Literature argued that training develops social skills that are necessary for building a strong exchange relationship (Ferris et al., 2001). These programs could include awareness regarding laws such as 'The Competition Act, 2010' related to deceptive marketing issues which should be conducted by the legal experts, briefing the companies' position on ethical issues and training activities (behavioral and situational) which allow the employees to face realistic dilemmas regarding UPB. Their ethical decisions will then be evaluated by well-trained business ethics personnel. Afterward, awareness regarding morality and ethics would be given to UPB high-risk group. These awareness programs could be significant especially for the marketing employees who have extensive interactions with the customers and have a higher probability of engaging in such acts (Jha, 2015). These programs could be guided by the findings of this study in such a way that moral awareness is given to the employees before employees engage in UPB. Therefore, managers should not only understand the significance of understanding ethical behaviors but also the merits and demerits of the diverse mechanisms of UPB (Tsiavia, 2016; Zhang et al., 2020; Zhan and Liu, 2021).

Fourth, the findings of this study may assist in making relevant policies and selecting the appropriate personnel for the job by evaluating ethical, relational and identification factors. Considering these factors will allow the organization to employ those individuals who are identified with the organization and make

productive organizational decisions based on the moral compass. Moreover, the findings may assist in policymaking related to sanctioning systems that will control the unethical behaviors in the organization. These policies may not include directly sanctioning the employees who do unethical conduct but rather explicitly stating that the performance of the team will be measured by how ethically they behave and that they will collectively be held accountable if they misrepresent, withhold and misstate the information. This will undermine and discourage unwelcoming behaviors.

In sum, the findings of this study will contribute to benefiting society and considering that unethical behaviors play a vital role in shaping the future of the organization today. The greater demand for ethical concerns at the workplace justifies the need for a greater understanding of employees' unethical behaviors. Thus, the results derived from this study will assist in understanding the phenomenon of UPB. The retail owners and the managers will be guided on what should be emphasized by them in the organization to sustain ethical conduct, manage the emotional response, improve job satisfaction and decrease the turnover intention of the organization.

#### 1.8. Definition of Terms

To undergo this study, the following variables are used. The operational definitions of all the variables are as follows:

**Guilt** is defined as the development of pathogenic beliefs that are linked to the attainment of an individual's well-being and the pursuit of healthy, realistic goals, with anxiety and fear of losing and hurting the important associations (Gazzillo et al., 2018). In this study context, guilt is the arching feeling that arises after realizing that some unethical wrongdoing has been occurred by oneself.

**Job embeddedness** relates to the extent to which a working individual is deeply entangled with on-the-job (organization) and off-the-job (community) factors (Mitchell et al., 2001). Both the two categories i.e., organization and community are further divided into three subcategories. The three subcategories include fit, link and sacrifice. This study discusses job embeddedness as the factor which makes the employee enmeshed and identified with the organization.

**Job satisfaction** refers to the employee's contentedness with different characteristics of the job such as supervision, working for environment and associations with colleagues and the organization (MacDonald & MacIntyre, 1997). In this study, job satisfaction is the extent to which an employee is self-motivated and satisfied with different facets of the job such as the working environment and the management.

**Leader's bottom-line mentality** is referred to as the one-dimensional thinking of the leader which revolves around securing bottom-line outcomes while neglecting other competing priorities (Mesdaghinia et al., 2019). The bottom-line

mentality was originally explained by (Greenbaum et al., 2012). In this study, the leader's bottom-line mentality is referred to as the leader's primary focus on the outcomes while neglecting other important concerns.

**Moral awareness** is referred to as the widespread approach within the societal structure of the organization in which possible alternatives to moral actions are envisioned (Arnaud, 2010). In this study, moral awareness refers to the extent to which many employees in the organization are sensitive and aware of the ethical issues and moral dilemmas in the organization.

**Moral disengagement** refers to the self-regulatory mechanisms that disable the cognitive links between transgressive behavior and the self-sanctioning that could prevent these behaviors (Moore et al., 2012). In this study, moral disengagement is the extent to which an employee disengages from moral values and ignores moral self-sanctions.

**Peer's ethicality** is described as the individual's interpretation of the coworker's attitudes and behaviors concerning the explicit and implicit ethical standards (Johnson et al., 2018). In this study, a peer's ethicality is described as the employee's perceptual judgment about the unethical attitudes and behaviors of the peers regarding the ethical standards (both implicit and explicit).

**Turnover Intention** is defined by Tett & Meyer (1993, p. 262) as "the conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization". In this study, turnover intention refers to the extent to which an employee wants to withdraw from the organization.

**Relative leader-member exchange (RLMX)** is based on the concept of leader-member exchange (LMX). It represents the individual LMX in contrast with the average LMX in the workgroup (Vidyarthi et al., 2010). Therefore, RLMX is operationalized as the person's LMX minus the group mean for LMX (Henderson et al., 2008). In this study context, RLMX refers to the relative extent of the exchange relationship between the leader and members working under him.

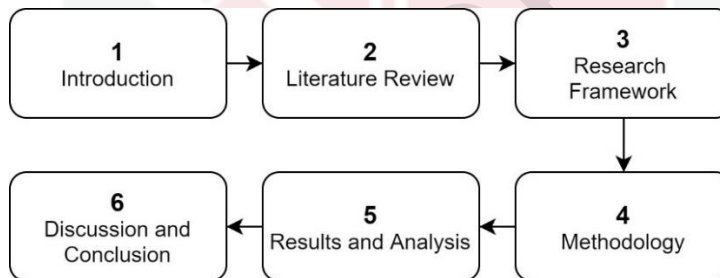
**Unethical pro-organizational behavior (UPB)** are the behaviors that are executed to promote the effective functioning of the organization or its members but during this process, the fundamental standards based on laws, moral conduct and societal norms are violated (Umphress et al., 2010). For example, the acts of inflating the numbers to show higher analyst projections and stock values and the act of withholding the information about the products from customers in the pharmaceutical industry). In this study, UPB is the unethical act that is performed to inflate the assigned targets and to promote organizational effective functioning.

### 1.9. Organization of Thesis

The thesis will consist of six chapters. Chapter one will provide explanations about the background, problem statement, research questions, research

objectives, scope, significance, brief definition about the variables including Guilt, Job Embeddedness, Job Satisfaction, Leader's Bottom-line Mentality, Moral Awareness, Moral Disengagement, Job Satisfaction, Peer's Ethicality, Turnover Intention, RLMX and Unethical Pro-Organizational Behavior. After this, the organization of the thesis is discussed. Chapter two will draw attention to previous and recent studies relating to these constructs along with the theoretical foundation of the study.

Further, chapter three will go over the conceptual framework of the study which arises from the thorough review of the literature. Moreover, the proposed hypotheses have been developed along with detailed arguments about the relationships between the constructs. Chapter four will discuss the research methodology, research setting, study population and sample, data collection method and data analysis procedures. Chapter five will illustrate the detailed analysis and findings based on the proposed hypotheses which include a descriptive analysis of the respondents for this study, empirical results, key findings and test of hypotheses of the study. Finally, chapter six will provide discussions of findings, implications, limitations, future directions and conclusion.



**Figure 1.3: Structure of the thesis**

### 1.10. Summary

This chapter illustrates the contemporary significance of understanding UPB in human resource management. The core purpose of this study is to establish a comprehensive model illuminating the connection among the antecedents, UPB and its potential psychological and behavioral outcomes i.e., job satisfaction and withdrawal behavior (turnover intention) by using mediating and moderating mechanisms. Specifically, some of the objectives are to examine the mediating mechanism of guilt in the relationships between UPB and the outcomes such as employee's job satisfaction and turnover intention. Additionally, the objectives also include examining the moderating mechanisms of a leader's bottom-line mentality in the relationship between moral disengagement and UPB and the moderating impact of moral awareness in the relationship between UPB and guilt. These interaction effects were considered to understand their contribution to the research framework.

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