Abstract

Moral incongruence—a misalignment between professional role expectations and personal moral values—is an important phenomenon in modern organizations. Though scholarly work has provided us with insights into broad forms of role incongruence, much less is known about the distinct characteristics of moral incongruence. Moreover, we lack understanding of how moral incongruence may shape employee attitudes and behaviors. Drawing on deonance theory and socio-cognitive theory, we develop a model explaining the role of moral incongruence in promoting employee prohibitive voice, withdrawal, and unethical role behavior through the mechanisms of moral outrage and moral disengagement. Examining potential boundary conditions, we also consider the roles of moral identity, self-interest, moral intensity, unethical climate, ethical leadership, and organizational identification. Given the ethical implications of moral incongruence and the significance of the phenomenon for organizations, this work has implications for both theory and practice.

Keywords: moral incongruence, moral disengagement, moral outrage, unethical behavior

Should I Do This?

Incongruence in the Face of Conflicting Moral and Role Expectations

1. **Introduction**

Employees may encounter situations at work calling for action that crosses personal

ethical boundaries. When this occurs individuals may experience moral incongruence, which we

define as a misalignment between professional role expectations and personal moral values.

Contemporary organizations are rife with examples of moral incongruence. For instance, Tony

Menendez experienced moral incongruence when he was asked to endorse fraudulent accounting

practices at Halliburton (Eisinger, 2015). Similarly, John Kopchinski experienced moral

incongruence when he was asked by Pfizer to promote a drug at dosage levels that had proven

dangerous for some consumers (Hensley, 2009). In yet another case, Ford engineers experienced

moral incongruence when they were pressured by top management to relax safety standards they

deemed necessary for driver safety in order to meet production demands (Lee & Ermann, 1999).

Although individual approaches to addressing potential incongruity between personal and role

expectations may vary, one thing is clear: Moral incongruence is an important and prevalent

phenomenon in organizations.

Moral incongruence represents a unique form of incongruity manifested by a misfit

between personal moral values and the morality of role expectations. Notably, moral

incongruence may manifest in two ways. First, we may observe moral incongruence when role

expectations are ethical and personal morality is low. Indeed, a fair amount of the literature on

employee ethicality (e.g., Paterson & Huang, 2018; Stevens, 2008; Treviño, K., Den

Nieuwenboer, & Kish-Gephart, 2014) has attempted to unpack this specific form of

"unethicality." In such cases, employees choose to engage in unethical acts which are not aligned

with the moral expectations of the assigned role. For instance, an executive that has an opportunity to accept an illegal bribe in exchange for granting a contract to one specific company represents one example of an individual experiencing moral incongruence of this form. That said, we direct our focus to the other form of moral incongruence, which occurs when role expectations are *unethical* and personal morality is *high*. As an example, an accountant with a strong moral code that is directed to overstate sales numbers is likely to experience this form of moral incongruence. Bracketing our research to this second form of moral incongruence allows for a more nuanced investigation of employee attitudes and behaviors in the face of difficult individual moral decisions. In addition, it also provides us an opportunity to build upon a rich and robust literature that has considered how and when organizations may provide different forms of "pressure" for employees to act unethically (e.g., Chen & Chen, 2021; Mai, Welsh, Wang, Bush, & Jiang, 2021; Mitchell, Baer, Ambrose, Folger, & Palmer, 2018).

To investigate the moral incongruence phenomenon, we first consider the potential emotional effects of moral incongruence on employees. Drawing on deonance theory (Folger, 2001), we suggest that moral incongruence may promote prohibitive voice and withdrawal behaviors via increased levels of moral outrage. These effects are likely observed because expectations laid upon individuals to transgress personal moral values may incite a negative emotional response that motivates retribution. In addition, we also consider the cognitive effects of moral incongruence. Drawing on socio-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999), we examine how moral incongruence may promote unethical role behavior via increased levels of moral disengagement. Specifically, we posit that moral incongruence may "deactivate" self-regulatory systems that would otherwise regulate (un)ethical attitudes and behavior.

Building upon the emotional and cognitive effects of moral incongruence, we next identify and examine boundary conditions that may further inform our understanding of these relationships. As highlighted by deonance theory and socio-cognitive theory, individual responses to issues of morality are typically guided by dispositional individual traits, mental models, and sensemaking that occurs within the organizational environment. Accordingly, we identify moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002), self-interest (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2005), moral intensity (Jones, 1991), unethical climate (Dickson, Smith, Grojean, & Ehrhart, 2001), and ethical leadership (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005) as critical first-stage boundary conditions that shape how moral incongruence effects moral outrage and moral disengagement. Considering the downstream consequences of moral incongruence, we also identify organizational identification (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) as an important second-stage boundary condition.

Our conceptual model makes several theoretical contributions. First, this work represents, to our knowledge, the first comprehensive investigation of the moral incongruence construct. As we contend, the experience of encountering role-driven situations that are at odds with personal morality has important implications for both employees and organizations. Through our theorizing of the downstream effects of moral incongruence, we contribute to several literatures, including the literature on (un)ethical behavior in organizations and the literature on role incongruence (e.g.,Edwards & Cable, 2009; Edwards & Shipp, 2007; Rich, LePine, & Crawford, 2010; Schneider, 1987). Second, our integration of deonance theory and socio-cognitive theory provides insights into the emotional and cognitive effects of moral incongruence that could not be inferred from previous work. Third, our identification of key boundary conditions provides us with additional insights pertaining to key individual and contextual factors that may further

inform our understanding of moral incongruence. Given the existence of moral incongruence in modern organizations and the potential detrimental effects that may follow, this work has critical implications for both theory and practice.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. *Moral incongruence*

Our conceptualization of moral incongruence is informed by several literatures, including the literature on employee "fit" (e.g., Kristof, 1996; Vogel, Rodell, Lynch, 2016) and work that considers *role* incongruence (e.g., Bidwell, 1955; Morris, 1971; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). From the perspective of fit, scholars have highlighted the importance of ethical fit, or the alignment between an individual's moral aspirations with the organization's ethical values (Coldwell, Billsberry, Meurs, & Marsh, 2008). In essence, moral incongruence represents a specific type of ethical *mis*fit. Moral incongruence is also closely related to the construct of role incongruence. Role incongruence exists when there is a mismatch between employees' preferred behavior and role demands or expectations (Bidwell, 1955; Morris, 1971; Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). In this vein, moral incongruence represents a distinct form of role incongruence in which the misfit is derived solely from issues surrounding personal morality.

Moral incongruence is related to (but distinct from) the concepts of role morality (e.g., Applbaum, 1999) and "necessary evils" (Molinsky & Margolis, 2005). Applbaum (1999) defined role morality as "a claim of being morally right in harming others in ways that, if not for the role, would be wrong'' (p. 3). Indeed, people may act in ways typically viewed as immoral out of a commitment to pursue the specific norms of their occupation. Though Applbaum's conceptualization of role morality highlights a potential "incongruence" of ethicality, the source of incongruity is a key distinguishing factor. Whereas Applbaum's role morality highlights a

"societal" concern for ethical behavior, moral incongruence represents a "personal" concern. In other words, though moral incongruence necessitates that a job requirement goes against an individual's personal moral code, Applbaum's role morality does not. Necessary evils involve actions that may do some harm in service of a perceived "greater good." In the case of necessary evils, personal values will not necessarily conflict with role expectations, as individuals may perceive that the immoral action serves a greater purpose. In other words, whereas moral incongruence necessitates a moral conflict on behalf of the employee, necessary evils do not.

2.2. Person-role fit perspective

To further unpack the moral incongruence phenomenon, it is also necessary to position moral incongruence within the broader person-role fit literature. As scholars have highlighted, employees strive for fit in their work roles because it eases work routines, reduces uncertainty, increases organizational identification, and improves well-being (Edwards, 1991; Nielsen, Dawson, Hasson, & Schwartz, 2021; Yu, 2013). Given the nature and importance of fit, individuals tend to self-select into roles that are consistent with their own abilities, values, and personality (Dierdorff & Morgeson, 2013; Wilk & Sackett, 1993). That said, individuals often face significant challenges pertaining to their ability to accurately predict or anticipate fit. On the one hand, individuals will rarely have access to all relevant information at the onset of employment (Jones, 1999), which may ultimately lead to a mismatch between predicted and actual fit (van Vianen, 2018). On the other hand, employee roles are often dynamic (DeRue & Morgeson, 2007; van Vianen, 2018); thus, it is likely that employees may observe shifts in both the form and scope of roles over the course of employment. In short, though the person-fit job perspective provides us with an understanding of employee "ideals" pertaining to fit, misfit (i.e., moral incongruence) is likely to remain a significant risk for employees.

3. Propositions

3.1. Main and indirect effects

To uncover the potential downstream effects of moral incongruence, we first take an

emotion-focused lens to examine how moral incongruence may promote moral outrage. The

deontic model of fairness (Folger, 1998) addresses the fundamental psychological problem of

conflicting moral demands. As highlighted by the deontic model, individuals develop personal

moral codes and assess the morality of behaviors by contemplating the connotative and

contributive features of the decision (Folger & Stein, 2017). Connotative forces get their strength

from rules or moral principles that people consider morally important. Contributive forces

consider potential outcomes of behaviors and examine whether those outcomes are morally

acceptable. Central to the model is the contention that when individuals are faced with a

behavioral decision that conflicts with their moral code (either connotatively or contributively),

they experience a form of moral tension that requires resolution.

Drawing on the deontic model of fairness, we posit that when individuals experience

moral incongruence, it will create a sense of moral tension that, in turn, will lead to moral

outrage. Previous work (e.g., Bies,1987) highlights how violations of moral norms can lead to

strong adverse emotional reactions. Indeed, internal tension may arise when individuals witness

others being treated in a manner inconsistent with their own moral code, when they feel moral

expectations are not met, or when organizations do things that violate personal moral norms

(Folger & Stein, 2017; Gibson, 2003; Hericher & Bridoux, 2022). Such conflict often manifests

itself in moral outrage, defined as an anger-based emotion directed toward a perceived immoral

act (Batson et al., 2007).

Accordingly, we posit that as individuals experience incongruence between their role expectations and personal moral values, they will experience an internal tension following from the perception that they are bound to act in ways that are in conflict with their personal moral values. Given that this moral tension is dictated largely by external factors (i.e., organizational expectations of behavior) rather than internal factors (i.e., personal expectations of behavior), a likely consequence of this is a negative emotional response, manifesting as moral outrage. To elucidate, consider the situation faced by Facebook employee Frances Haugen, a product manager who worked on civic misinformation at Facebook. With a growing sense (and corresponding evidence) that Facebook may require employees to emphasize profits above the health and well-being of users, Haugen provided documents and evidence of what she perceived to be immoral behavior by the company (Allyn, 2021). In this instance, we contend that Haugen encountered moral incongruence regarding Facebook's expectations of her own role behavior, leading to a sense of moral tension and subsequent moral outrage which culminated in her decision to "blow the whistle" on Facebook's practices. In sum, we predict that:

Proposition 1. Moral incongruence is positively related to moral outrage.

Importantly, moral outrage is not the only potential response to moral transgressions. In addition to emotion-based responses, research suggests that moral transgressions can trigger a cognitive psychological response as well. Drawing on socio-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), we posit that moral incongruence will also promote moral disengagement. Moral disengagement is characterized as a mechanism through which individuals disable cognitive self-regulatory processes, often explaining the association between unethical behavior and a subsequent lack of remorse for said behavior (Bandura, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1999). In daily life, individuals develop principles of appropriate conduct that serve as a means of self-regulation. Given that people

utilize their moral models to envision, screen, and judge their own behavior, these principles manifest in one's moral conduct and prevent inhumane behavior. Behaving in a way that contradicts these principles results in self-condemnation. Along these lines, individuals typically carry on in ways that are in concert with their moral standards, since they envision their own positive and negative assessments of the conceivable moral self (Detert, Trevino, & Sweitzer, 2008).

Self-sanctioning plays an integral role in regulating our behaviors as we monitor our own actions and make judgments about them in relation to our moral beliefs. However, self-regulatory systems only work when they are activated, and the deactivation of these systems may have deleterious effects (Bandura, 1991). Indeed, individuals engage in immoral behavior when moral self-regulatory mechanisms that regularly hinder immoral conduct are deactivated through the psychological process of moral disengagement (Moore, Detert, Trevino, Baker & Mayer, 2012). Expanding upon this, we predict that moral disengagement is a likely consequence following from moral incongruence. As previously highlighted, moral incongruence may create a sense of moral tension, and one way that individuals may seek to "resolve" said tension is by disengaging from their own moral principles. Thus, moral disengagement may be used by individuals with incongruent role expectations to shield themselves from perceptions of wrongdoing that may arise as they decide whether or not to ignore their personal moral values in lieu of acting unethically. In sum, we predict that:

Proposition 2. Moral incongruence is positively related to moral disengagement.

The moral outrage and disengagement stemming from moral incongruence is also likely to guide individuals' downstream behaviors. We first posit that prohibitive voice and withdrawal are two critical outcomes of moral outrage. Our inclusion of prohibitive voice and withdrawal as

downstream consequences of moral outrage is informed by the exit-voice-loyalty-neglect

(EVLN) model (Farrell, 1983; Hirschman, 1970; Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers, & Mainous, 1988). At

a high level, the EVLN model highlights how individuals may respond to dissatisfaction in their

organization (Farrell, 1983). One way in which employees may respond to dissatisfaction is by

withdrawing input (i.e., neglect or exit). Yet, in other instances employees may choose to speak

up (i.e., voice) (Hirschman, 1970). Given that moral outrage may incite a "call to action,"

(Thomas & McGarty, 2009) prohibitive voice and withdrawal appear uniquely suited for

investigation.

    Our consideration of prohibitive voice and withdrawal as consequences of moral outrage

is also informed by deonance theory. Prohibitive voice consists of employee expressions

regarding concerns about work practices or behaviors that are harmful to their organization

(Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2013). When people feel moral outrage over occurrences at work, they are

likely to express their emotions via voice behaviors that address the perceived cause of their

outrage (e.g., requests that conflict with personal moral values). For example, utilizing deonance

theory, Yu, Li, Xu, and Li (2022) found that bystanders of abusive supervision may feel negative

emotions that motivate them to speak up in support of the victim. Similarly, Mitchell, Vogel, &

Folger (2015) found that third-party observers of unethical behaviors have feelings of moral

outrage, even when they are not the direct target of immoral action. These emotions are

expressed in ways consistent with prohibitive voice (e.g., speaking up against an abusive

supervisor). Similarly, withdrawal behaviors may result from a violation of the deontic

perception of fairness (Barclay & Kiefer, 2014; Shaw, Wild, & Colquitt, 2003). The

deontological perspective determining how individuals *ought to* behave upon experiencing moral

incongruence suggests that retribution or response to the incongruence could take several forms,

from complaining against the status quo (e.g., voice; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010) to exiting the

organization (e.g., withdrawal; Hirschman, 1970). In the following sections, we further explore

the indirect effects of moral incongruence on both prohibitive voice and withdrawal through

moral outrage.

Scholars define voice as "informal and discretionary communication by an employee of

ideas, suggestions, concerns, information about problems, or opinions about work-related issues

to persons who might be able to take appropriate action, with the intent to bring about

improvement or change" (Morrison, 2014; p. 174). Voice is often aimed toward upper

management and managers, as those are the individuals that tend to have the authority to

implement the suggested changes. Generally speaking, voice is viewed as beneficial for

organizations as it provides a means of bringing issues to the notice of managers or upper

management (Detert & Burris, 2007). Scholars often distinguish between two different forms of

voice. Specifically, existing scholarship suggests that voice may be *promotive*—aimed at

introducing new ideas about how organizations can function better, or *prohibitive*—aimed at

highlighting harmful practices that can lead to failure or negative consequences for the unit

(Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2013; Kakkar, Tangirala, Srivastava, and Kamdar, 2015). For our part, we

focus on prohibitive voice as the most likely event stemming from moral outrage.

Prohibitive voice is driven by concerns about work practices that could harm the

organization (Liang et al., 2012), and individuals often engage in prohibitive voice to bring

attention to problems or to express dissatisfaction with the status quo (Chamberlin, Newton, &

LePine, 2017). One such "status quo" that individuals might experience is the organizational

need for individuals to behave in accordance with role expectations that go against their own

moral codes. As individuals experience moral outrage following moral incongruence, they may

engage in prohibitive voice to bring attention to this moral discrepancy (Skarlicki & Rupp,

2010). Indeed, prohibitive voice as a retribution response to moral outrage is likely for two

reasons. First, it may serve as a call to action from employees, with the goal of bringing attention

to the organizational demand(s) or wrongdoings that caused the moral outrage. Second, it may

also serve to provide a sense of relief for employees. Indeed, expressing concerns around the

source of discontent may give employees the sense that they are "passing the buck" to others in

the organization, which may relieve some of the internal tension associated with the experience

of moral incongruence and moral outrage.

> **Proposition 3**. Moral incongruence has a positive indirect effect on prohibitive voice
>
> through moral outrage.

In addition to prohibitive voice, withdrawal is another likely outcome of deontic moral

outrage. Withdrawal is typically conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that captures

voluntary employee lateness, unauthorized absenteeism, and voluntary turnover (Koslowsky,

2000; Berry, Lelchook & Clark, 2012). Withdrawal behaviors are almost universally viewed as

detrimental to organizations, and common predictors of employee withdrawal include job

characteristics such as low job satisfaction and job disengagement (Hulin, 1991; Berry et al.,

2012). We theorize that the moral outrage that follows moral incongruence will promote

withdrawal behavior for two critical reasons. First, as highlighted by deonance theory, moral

outrage may induce feelings of deontic anger toward the organization as employees seek to

attribute blame for their unfavorable circumstances (Folger & Skarlicki, 2005). As individuals

experience negative feelings directed at the organization, they may choose to withhold efforts

toward their work (neglect) or find ways to dissociate themselves (exit) from the organization

(Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001). Second, moral outrage is likely to induce stress and strain as

individuals attempt to reconcile and react to conflicting role demands (c.f., Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007). One way in which employees may attempt to alleviate this strain is through withdrawal behaviors. In sum, we predict that:

Proposition 4. Moral incongruence has a positive indirect effect on withdrawal through moral outrage.

We next consider the potential downstream consequences of moral disengagement resulting from moral incongruence. Socio-cognitive theory suggests that moral disengagement can have a psychological effect which may prompt employees to conjure different justifications for unethical practices and engage in different forms of unethical behavior (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Bandura, 2002). Moral disengagement provides an avenue for employees to deal with the moral dissonance resulting from incongruent role and moral expectations. Indeed, moral disengagement may lead to unethical role behavior because disengaged moral thinking detaches an immoral act from the blame or self-sanctions that would typically prevent it. This break between personal moral principles diminishes self-hindrances that would ordinarily stop people from engaging in immoral activities (Bandura et al., 1996; Duffy, Aquino, Tepper, Reed, and O'Leary-Kelly, 2005).

Though there are different forms of (un)ethical behavior that may occur within an organization, one form that is uniquely relevant within the context of moral incongruence is unethical role behaviors. We focus here on those unethical role behaviors that are suggested by the specific experience of moral incongruence that led to moral disengagement. More specifically, we characterize unethical role behaviors as those forms of unethical behavior that are at the source of moral incongruence. In other words, they represent unethical behaviors that organizations may endorse (either directly or indirectly), based on the specific role expectations

outlined for employees by the organization. For example, employees involved in the Wells Fargo scandal likely faced moral incongruence when it became clear that the only way to meet the required sales goals was to open accounts fraudulently (Glazer, 2017; Peltz, 2016). In this instance, the participation of Wells Fargo employees in the opening of fraudulent accounts represents their level of unethical role behavior.

We predict that employees experiencing moral disengagement are more likely to engage in unethical role behavior. Moral disengagement provides an avenue for employees to deal with the moral dissonance resulting from incongruence between role and personal moral expectations. Indeed, moral disengagement may lead to unethical role behavior because the disengaged moral thinking detaches an immoral act from the blame or self-sanctions that would typically prevent it. This break between personal moral principles diminishes self-hindrances that would ordinarily stop people from engaging in immoral activities (Bandura et al., 1996; Duffy et al., 2005). In other words, unethical role behaviors should become more likely because individuals that are morally disengaged may become numb to the ethical implications of their actions (Moore et al., 2012).

Proposition 5. Moral incongruence has a positive indirect effect on unethical role behavior through moral disengagement.

4. Boundary conditions

4.1. First-stage moderators

Beyond examining the main and mediating effects of moral incongruence, it is also worth considering whether there are potential boundary conditions that may further inform our understanding of the moral incongruence phenomenon. Given the socio-cognitive nature of moral incongruence, it is likely that both individual and contextual factors may have an impact

on our proposed relationships. As such, we begin by identifying moral identity as a key

individual difference that is likely to shape the extent to which moral incongruence influences

moral outrage and moral disengagement. We also consider how self-interest may inform our

understanding of moral incongruence. Extending to potential contextual factors, we next move to

an examination of the role of moral intensity. Further considering the role of context, we also

consider how unethical climate and ethical leadership may interact with moral incongruence to

impact moral outrage and moral disengagement.

Socio-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999, 2002) suggests that individual moral principles

and self-sanctions play an important role in guiding personal morality. Moral reasoning and self-

regulatory mechanisms constitute the internal identification with the perceived moral behavior of

an individual. This identification or self-conception organized around a set of moral traits is

known as moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Blasi, 1984; Damon & Hart, 1992; Erikson,

1959; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998;). Typical traits that constitute an individual that is high in

moral identity include *caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking,*

honest, and kind (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Individuals who identify strongly with these moral

traits are perceived as having a strong moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002) and are likely to

behave in ways that exhibit these moral characteristics.

Identity is a sensemaking mechanism that enables individuals to interpret a social

stimulus or a trigger event (Bednar, Galvin, Ashforth, & Hafermalz, 2019; Weick, 1995).

Identity pertains to an individual's sense of "who I am," which forms the basis for how an

individual may interpret and respond to a trigger event (Burke & Stets, 2009). With this in mind,

we contend that moral identity is a key sensemaking mechanism that will impact how individuals

interpret and respond to moral incongruence. Our inclusion and specification of moral identity as

a boundary condition is based on scholars having proposed that moral identity is a primary

boundary condition in both the social-cognitive model of moral decision making (e.g., Aquino et

al., 2009; Aquino & Freeman, 2009) and the deontological literature on ethics (e.g., Lin & Loi,

2021).

       We first consider how moral incongruence may interact with moral identity to impact

moral outrage. Specifically, we predict that the positive relationship between moral incongruence

and moral outrage will be stronger when individuals' moral identity is high than when it is low.

When individuals have a strong moral identity, we anticipate that situations which might

promote potential violations of said moral principles may intensify affective responses. For

example, a salesperson that is expected to record sales before they are finalized may experience

even greater moral outrage if they perceive themselves as honest and fair. Conversely, an

individual that is low in moral identity may experience lower moral outrage in this scenario. If an

individual does not have a strong moral identity, it is less likely that being faced with a morally

incongruent situation will promote such a negative affective response. Indeed, an accountant that

is asked to artificially inflate revenue may experience less moral outrage if they do not value

characteristics such as honesty and fairness.

       That said, we expect a slightly different effect of this interaction on moral

disengagement. Specifically, we predict that the relationship between moral incongruence and

moral disengagement will be weaker at high levels of moral identity. At high levels of moral

identity, individuals are prone to more self-sanctioning (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Importantly,

Bandura (1999) notes that individuals may be less likely to morally disengage when they operate

with high levels of moral self-sanctioning. This stands in contrast to the potential impact on

moral disengagement when moral identity is low. When an individual minimally identifies with

the above-mentioned traits, it is easier for them to disengage from their moral code when faced

with a behavioral choice that places role expectations above a personal moral code. In the event

of a mismatch between role expectations and individual moral values, an individual's moral

reasoning, as a product of their moral identity, may guide their inclination to moral

disengagement. In short, low levels of moral identity may enhance the likelihood that moral

incongruence will lead to the deactivation of self-regulatory processes, thus promoting higher

levels of moral disengagement.

> **Proposition 6a**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage is
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> moderated by moral identity, such that the relationship is stronger when moral identity is
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> high than when it is low.
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> **Proposition 6b**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement
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> is moderated by moral identity, such that the relationship is weaker when moral identity
>
> is high than when it is low.

In addition to moral identity, we posit that another critical individual factor is self-

interest. Self-interest—defined as the motivation to engage in actions with the sole purpose of

achieving personal benefit (Cropanzano et al., 2005)—is considered a strong motivation for

human behavior. Our inclusion of self-interest as a boundary condition is informed by both the

deontic theory of fairness and socio-cognitive theory. First, the deontic theory of fairness offers

explanations for why people may choose to behave ethically when moral behaviors compete with

self-interest (e.g., a sense of obligation; Folger, 2001). Similarly, socio-cognitive theory

highlights that individuals may, at times, choose to subvert self-interest to the benefit of others

(Bandura, 2002). Given the importance of self-interest within the context of both theories, it is

worthwhile to consider how self-interest interacts with moral incongruence to impact moral

outrage and moral disengagement.

In organizational settings, self-interest may broadly take the form of either tangible (e.g.,

promotions or pay) or intangible benefits (e.g., recognition or status). Within the specific domain

of morality, moral actions are traditionally conceived as those which are not purely self-

interested. As Korsgaard (1996) highlighted, an action is only moral when it is done in

accordance with moral imperatives, and actions conceived as having moral outcomes are amoral

when the person doing them receives any kind of personal benefit (e.g., drawing personal

satisfaction from providing charity). Though that represents a somewhat extreme perception of

immoral behavior, the point underscores that people motivated by self-interest may be less

inclined to consider the moral elements of a behavioral decision and more likely to engage in

behaviors that do not necessarily conform to moral norms yet provide personal benefits.

We first propose that the positive relationship between moral incongruence and moral

outrage is weaker when individuals are high in self-interest. Broadly speaking, we anticipate that

individuals high in self-interest are more apt to "relax" moral standards in order to achieve their

desired personal aims. Indeed, self-interested individuals should be less motivated by appeals to

moral values and less bound by their own moral codes (Folger, Stein, & Whiting, 2017). Given

this, we anticipate that employees high in self-interest will likely view moral incongruence as a

stepping-stone for them in reaching their own personal goals. When conforming to immoral role

demands provides a personal benefit (e.g., opportunity for promotion) or does not lead to

personal harm, individuals high in self-interest should be less emotionally affected by the moral

implications of their decisions. One way this may manifest is through a reduced sense of moral

outrage. This stands in contrast to individuals who are low in self-interest. For those employees,

we would expect greater consideration of any potential deviation from personal moral codes, and thus a stronger impact on moral outrage.

That said, we propose that the relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement will be stronger when individuals are high in self-interest. When employees are focused on achieving personal aims above other factors (e.g., acting in accordance with generally accepted societal norms), moral incongruence is less likely to promote self-sanctioning attitudes and behavior. Indeed, as Qin and colleagues (2017) highlight, when individuals are motivated by self-interest, they are more likely to find justifications for engaging in unjust behaviors. As individuals high in self-interest seek additional justifications for dealing with morally incongruent situations, we anticipate that they will experience even greater levels of moral disengagement. In essence, moral disengagement provides individuals high in self-interest a potential pathway to engaging in behaviors that may benefit them personally, even if said behaviors are not necessarily in perfect alignment with their personal moral code.

> **Proposition 7a**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage is moderated by self-interest, such that the relationship is weaker when moral self-interest is high than when it is low.
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> **Proposition 7b**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement is moderated by self-interest, such that the relationship is stronger when self-interest is high than when it low.

In addition to characteristics of the employee, it is also important to consider how factors that shape moral incongruence may impact downstream outcomes. One such factor that follows from consideration of moral incongruence is moral intensity, which captures the moral imperative of the ethical issue(s) at the source of incongruence (Jones, 1991). Moral intensity can

vary based on six characteristics which include proximity, probability of the effect, magnitude of the consequences, temporal immediacy, concentration of the effect, and social consensus (Jones, 1991). As Jones argues, moral intensity may increase when outcomes are more localized (proximity), when the probability of the outcome is higher, when the consequences of a moral issue are more serious (e.g. death vs an insult), when the result is more immediate after the behavior (temporality), when the negative outcomes are narrowly focused (concentration of effect), and when society judges the behavior to be unethical (social consensus).

We expect that the level of tension experienced from moral incongruence is likely dictated, in part, by the moral intensity of the ethical issue(s) at hand. Given this, we first predict that the relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage will be stronger at high levels of moral intensity. As individuals face a role expectation that requires a very intense ethical lapse—for example, misrepresenting laboratory results for a newly developed medication to meet external standards—they are likely to experience a significant visceral emotional reaction, thus promoting even greater levels of moral outrage. This is likely to occur because ethical lapses that are high in moral intensity should increase the salience and the stakes associated with potentially engaging in the incongruent action. That said, we also anticipate that high levels of moral intensity may weaken the positive relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement. Indeed, as individuals face more extreme unethical role demands, employees should find it harder to disengage from their own moral principles and subsequently engage in the anticipated unethical role behavior. The logic for this is largely consistent with our general understanding of moral intensity and (un)ethical decision-making—as unethical behavior becomes more intense or extreme, individuals may find it more difficult to justify engaging in said behavior (May & Pauli, 2002; McMahon & Harvey, 2007).

Proposition 8a. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage is moderated by moral intensity, such that the relationship is stronger when moral intensity is high than when it is low.

Proposition 8b. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement is moderated by moral intensity, such that the relationship is weaker when moral intensity is high than when it is low.

Broader components of the organizational context may also impact responses to moral incongruence. One such factor is the extent to which employees must contend with an unethical climate. As Dickson and colleagues (2001) note, climate pertaining to ethics captures shared perceptions of morally (in)appropriate behavior. In addition, it also provides insights into how moral issues are handled by various members (e.g., coworkers) of the organization. Socio-cognitive theory asserts that shared perceptions of ethicality in an organization may guide moral decision-making within the organization (Domino, Wingreen, & Blanton, 2015; Otaye-Ebede, Shaffakat, Foster, 2000). Whereas a strong climate would have a high level of agreement amongst co-workers around general norms of a behavior in the organization, a weak climate would have a low level of agreement (Dickson et al., 2001). Indeed, while individual employees may enter an organization with differing personal moral codes, the ethics climate within an organization may ultimately guide the formation of shared perceptions. Thus, it is important to understand the ways in which unethical climate may interact with moral incongruence.

We first consider how unethical climate may interact with moral incongruence to impact moral outrage. Specifically, we anticipate that the positive relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage will intensify when unethical climate is weak. To elucidate, this would include situations in which organizational norms tend to support ethical behavior in

general, yet the employee is subject to conflicting role and moral expectations from other sources

(e.g., pressure from team members). In instances such as these, an additional level of internal

conflict (beyond just moral incongruence) is introduced to employees as they must contend with

inconsistent messaging from different organizational sources. As employees face additional

confusion and conflict around what type of behavior is considered "appropriate," we anticipate

that they will experience even greater levels of moral outrage. This logic underscores the broader

point that employees seek consistency of behavior, not just from themselves but also from their

leaders (Yukl, 2010).

We also consider the interactive effect of unethical climate on moral disengagement.

Specifically, we predict that the positive relationship between moral incongruence and moral

disengagement will intensify when unethical climate is strong. Though moral incongruence is

likely to lead individuals to disassociate from their own moral compass, employees may

experience even more moral disengagement when there is "consistency" of immoral expectation

(i.e., across multiple levels of the organization). For example, the pervasive immoral climate at

Wells Fargo likely made it easier for sales representatives to morally disengage when opening

fraudulent accounts (Seriki, Nath, Ingene, & Evans, 2020). In conditions when individuals can

socially justify their unethical behavior, they may perceive that such behavior is appropriate, thus

becoming more likely to disengage from personal moral standards. In sum, we predict that:

Proposition 9a. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage is

moderated by unethical climate, such that the relationship is stronger when unethical

climate is weak than when it is strong.

Proposition 9b. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement

is moderated by unethical climate, such that the relationship is stronger when unethical

climate is strong than when it is weak.

Though an unethical climate may provide a noteworthy "peripheral" role, individuals

may also receive more direct cues about morality in their organization. Specifically, the

ethicality of an individual's leader is also likely to interact with moral incongruence. Ethical

leadership is defined as the extent to which an employee's leader demonstrates "normatively

appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships" (Brown et al.,

2005). Consistent with the principles of social learning theory (Bandura, 1986), prior work on

ethical leadership argues that employees learn how to behave in their organizations, or regulate

their behaviors, by observing consistent actions of their leaders (Paterson & Huang, 2019;

Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003). This is due, in part, to the fact that ethical leaders can elicit

high levels of trust from their employees. Employees are likely to feel that if their leaders behave

in a certain way, such behaviors are appropriate and therefore expected of them in that context

(Brown et al., 2005). Within the context of morality, some have argued that organizational norms

relating to morality carry even more weight in the minds of employees when they are in concert

with observed leader behaviors (Gerpott, van Quaquebeke, Schlamp, & Voelpel, 2019).

We first predict that the positive relationship between moral incongruence and moral

outrage is stronger at high levels of ethical leadership. As scholars have noted (e.g., Huang &

Paterson, 2017; Kim & Vandenberghe, 2020) employees that perceive their leader to have high

levels of ethical integrity are more likely to believe that ethicality is valued within the

organization. That said, the presence of an ethical leader likely presents a direct threat to an

employee that is faced with moral incongruence. Though the unethical expectations may be

viewed as appropriate at the organization-level, engaging in such acts may put the employee in

the crosshairs of the ethical leader, thus creating a difficult "catch-22." These perceived risks and

challenges, in turn, should lead to even greater levels of moral outrage. That said, we expect a

slightly different interactive effect on moral disengagement. Specifically, we anticipate that the

relationship between moral incongruence and moral disengagement is stronger at low levels of

ethical leadership. When leaders do not emphasize ethicality, the self-regulatory mechanisms

associated with immoral action should be dampened as the employee faces even fewer barriers to

unethical behavior. Indeed, when role expectations and leader-specific expectations both point

toward the potential utility or importance of unethical behavior, employees should find it easier

to disengage from their own moral standards.

> **Proposition 10a**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral outrage is
>
> moderated by ethical leadership, such that the relationship is stronger when ethical
>
> leadership is high than when it is low.
>
> **Proposition 10b**. The relationship between moral incongruence and moral
>
> disengagement is moderated by ethical leadership, such that the relationship is stronger
>
> when ethical leadership is low than when it high.

4.2. Second-stage moderator

Moving downstream, we consider a potential boundary condition that shapes how moral

outrage and moral disengagement impact our outcomes of interest. At a high level, we anticipate

that individuals will rely on perceptions of their environment and their proximal experiences in

ways that may shape subsequent behavior. Indeed, social identity theory (Ashforth & Mael,

1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000) suggests that the extent to which employees identify with the values

of the organization may impact employee behavior. As such, we examine the role of

organizational identification in shaping the downstream outcomes of prohibitive voice, withdrawal, and unethical role behavior.

Organizational identification represents the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their membership in their organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). In other words, organizational identification captures the degree of overlap in values between the individual and their organization—the higher the overlap, the stronger the identification felt by the individual (Bartel, 2001; Bergami & Bagozi, 2000). As organizational identification increases, employees tend to feel less uncertainty around expected norms of behavior within the organization (Hogg & Terry, 2000). As such, the extent to which an employee identifies with their organization has implications for a variety of employee outcomes.

We first predict that the relationship between moral outrage and prohibitive voice is stronger when organizational identification is strong. When employees highly value their membership in their organization, concerns may arise around the potential reputational consequences of morally questionable organizational activities (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Dukerich, Kramer, Parks, & Whetten, 1998), in part because those consequences may extend to the employee as well (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bartel, 2001; Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). As employees experience moral outrage from morally incongruent situations, strong levels of identification with the organization may increase employee motivation to "take action" via voicing concerns around potential issues pertaining to organizational activities or direction. In short, we anticipate that employees who strongly value their membership in the organization may make greater efforts to point out issues in current practices.

We next predict that the relationship between moral outrage and withdrawal is stronger when organizational identification is weak. Low levels of identification are often associated with

a weakened sense of loyalty toward the organization (Hirschman, 1970). When individuals who

do not feel a strong connection to their organization also experience moral outrage, we anticipate

that they will become more apt to mentally and physically "check-out" from their job, thus

leading to greater levels of withdrawal (c.f. van Knippenberg, van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). This

stands in contrast to employees that have a strong level of organizational identification. At high

levels of identification, the moral outrage that individuals experience may be superseded by the

employee's loyalty and commitment to the organization (c.f. Luan, Zhao, Wang, & Hu, 2022).

Indeed, employees with a strong identification mindset may find that withdrawal represents too

significant of a personal lapse, and/or signals a level of disloyalty that they are not comfortable

with.

Finally, we predict that the relationship between moral disengagement and unethical role

behavior is stronger when organizational identification is strong. Though strongly identifying

with the organization often leads to positive outcomes, it is not without negative consequences

(Conroy, Henle, Shore, & Stelman, 2017). One such consequence of high organizational

identification is that it may further motivate employees to engage in role-expected behaviors,

even if those expected behaviors are immoral (c.f. Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014; Luan et al.,

2022; Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell, 2010). Chen et al. (2016) highlight that moral

disengagement and employee pro-organizational unethical behavior may be exacerbated by

organizational identification in highly competitive settings. We extend upon this logic to suggest

that moral disengagement stemming from moral incongruence interacts with organizational

identification to motivate unethical role behaviors. Indeed, when employees experience moral

disengagement, strong levels of identification may exacerbate their personal disconnection from

the ethicality of their actions, thus leading to even greater levels of unethical role behavior. This

stands in contrast to employees with low organizational identification. When employees with low levels of organizational identification experience moral disengagement, they may feel less compelled to engage in these types of unethical behaviors. Indeed, low levels of organizational identification suggest that employees will feel less loyalty or pride for their organization (Liu, Lu, Zhang, & Cai, 2021), and thus may not have the same incentive(s) to engage in unethical role behavior as those with high organizational identification. In sum, we predict that

> **Proposition 11a.** The relationship between moral outrage and prohibitive voice is moderated by organizational identification, such that the relationship is stronger when organizational identification is strong than when it is weak.

> **Proposition 11b.** The relationship between moral outrage and withdrawal is moderated by organizational identification, such that the relationship is stronger when organizational identification is weak than when it is strong.

> **Proposition 11c.** The relationship between moral disengagement and unethical role behavior is moderated by organizational identification, such that the relationship is stronger when organizational identification is strong than when it is weak.

5. Discussion

Moral incongruence has significant implications for organizations. Yet, minimal work has systematically investigated the role that moral incongruence plays in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors. In this research we developed a theoretical model explaining how and when moral incongruence influences key employee outcomes. To unpack the moral incongruence phenomenon, we integrated deonance theory (Folger, 1998) and socio-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999) to highlight how moral incongruence may impact prohibitive voice, withdrawal, and unethical role behavior through the mechanisms of moral disengagement and moral outrage. Considering potential contingencies, we also examined how moral identity, self-

interest, moral intensity, unethical climate, ethical leadership, and organizational identification may further explain these core processes.

5.1. Implications for theory

Our research has several implications for theory. In this work we sought to advance our understanding of the ethical challenges that employees may face through an investigation of the moral incongruence phenomenon. In doing so, we build upon a rich literature that has considered the implications of broader forms of role incongruence at work (e.g., Edwards & Cable, 2009; Edwards & Shipp, 2007; Rich et al., 2010; Schneider, 1987). We contribute to the literature on role incongruence by identifying moral incongruence as a potential roadblock for employees who aim to join and remain at organizations that align with their own personal values. Considering the role of moral incongruence as a predictor of key outcomes, we also build upon the growing conversation that considers ethical consequences for employees.

Our integration of deonance theory (Folger, 1998) and socio-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999) represents an additional step forward in advancing our understanding of the ethical dynamics facing individuals in organizations. As highlighted by socio-cognitive theory, moral agency plays a key role for individuals concerning their ability to exercise power to refrain from immoral behavior. Extending upon this, deonance theory provides us with a key theoretical backdrop outlining how employees may deal with conflicting ethical demands in the workplace, particularly as it relates to the downstream outcomes of moral incongruence. In short, our integration of these two theories provides us with theoretical insights that could not be deduced from the extant literature.

Drawing on deonance theory and socio-cognitive theory, we also explored the potential detrimental effects of moral incongruence for employees. Specifically, we argued that moral

incongruence creates an internal tension for employees and spurs a negative emotional response, manifest through moral outrage. Moral outrage, in turn, increases the likelihood that individuals will engage in prohibitive voice behaviors and withdrawal from the organization. In addition, we contend that another way that employees will seek to "resolve" the internal tension following from moral incongruence is by detaching from personal moral values, or morally disengaging. As employees morally disengage, they should be more apt to engage in the prescribed unethical role behaviors. Considering both the emotional and cognitive effects of moral incongruence, we extend upon previous work that has considered the implications of mismatched values and role expectations. To that end, our conceptual framework provides a basis to understand the various pathways through which individuals can feel, make sense of, and respond to ethically uncertain or incongruent situations at work.

Finally, our investigation also contributes to scholarly work on (un)ethical decision making and role incongruence via consideration of individual and contextual boundary conditions. We first considered the role of the individual, examining the manner in which moral identity, self-interest, and organizational identity can impact responses to moral incongruence. To account for the fact that not all ethical issues are created equal, we also considered the role of moral intensity. Given that the contextual environment is also likely to shape how individuals respond to moral incongruence, we considered the potential impact of unethical climate and ethical leadership. Investigating these potential contingency factors provides us with additional insights into the dynamics of moral incongruence and enhances our understanding of this important phenomenon.

5.2. Implications for practice

This work also has significant implications for practitioners. One critical implication follows from how roles are structured and the potential ethical dilemmas that employees may face stemming from the decisions that are made around role design. Most notably, our work highlights the potential negative effects of facing work demands that interfere with personal moral codes, noting that they may not only have detrimental effects for the employees themselves, but also for the organization. When organizations or managers take a conflicting (or ambiguous) stance on morality in job roles, employees may face difficult ethical decisions that will dictate how they weigh consistency with personal moral principles versus consistency in performing in their job role as designed. To relieve employees of the moral incongruence burden, organizations will need to exercise caution while designing job roles so as to remove the potential for conflict between role and moral expectations.

Our work also has important implications for how organizations and hiring managers might choose to approach recruitment and selection practices. On the one hand, organizations with a strong ethics-focused climate should take care to recruit and select employees that are more resilient in the face of ethical challenges. For instance, this might involve providing potential employees with sample decision scenarios that ask how they would deal with different morally conflicted situations. On the other hand, our work has slightly different implications for organizations that prefer their employees to operate in a more "gray area" of morality (Bruhn, 2009). In organizations or jobs such as these, hiring managers may actually prefer to select employees that have a higher level of comfort operating with moral incongruence.

This research also has implications for employees themselves. In this work we argued that a key outcome of moral incongruence was unethical role behavior. Indeed, organizations are rife with examples of employees engaging in unethical behavior that may otherwise have been

viewed as acceptable (if not explicitly endorsed) by the organization (e.g., Wells Fargo; Glazer, 2017; Peltz, 2016). That said, employees likely also bear a certain level of responsibility in avoiding unethical role behavior, even in the face of moral incongruence. As such, employees might consider potential strategies for avoiding unethical role behavior. For instance, employees might consider asking for specific confirmation that the organization expects the employee to engage in unethical behaviors in order to fulfill their job requirements (i.e., "getting it in writing"). In addition, employees might consider observing and monitoring the behavior of relevant others (e.g., other individuals in the same job position) to fully gauge organizational expectations.

Finally, this work highlights an opportunity for organizations to utilize likely employee responses to ethical issues to further deter unethical behavior or employee discontent. For instance, given the likelihood that employees may engage in prohibitive voice following moral incongruence, HR managers might consider implementing a reporting system of ethics violations, thus allowing for an organization-sponsored means of uncovering and dissuading ethical lapses within the organization. Notably, such reporting systems would likely require direct lines to organizational change to be truly effective. For example, the implementation may require an ethical compliance officer who has enough structural or hierarchical power to implement changes necessitated by the ethical concerns brought forth.

5.3. Future research directions

One initial avenue of future research involves the development of a measure of moral incongruence. To accomplish this, scholars might first compare measures of ethicality (e.g., Moore et al., 2012) with measures of other forms of incongruence (e.g., value incongruence; Vogel, Rodell, & Lynch, 2016) to develop and refine a list of measure items. Sample items might

include "I am asked to do things in my job that are inconsistent with my moral code" or "my organization expects me to do things in my job which are in conflict with my own personal moral values." Future scholarship may further affirm the content validity of the measure via the procedures outlined by Hinkin & Tracey (1999). Specifically, they can examine the definitional correspondence and definitional distinctiveness of moral incongruence (Colquitt, Sabey, Rodell, & Hill, 2019). As a final validation step, scholars may utilize a CFA to examine the distinctiveness of moral incongruence from other related constructs, such as unethical behavior or value incongruence.

Utilizing a measure of moral incongruence as previously outlined, scholars might next consider testing our (or other) theoretical models of moral incongruence in a field study. For example, researchers might ask employees to rate their moral incongruence, moral disengagement, and moral outrage, with further examination of our dependent variables via ratings from a co-worker or supervisor. In addition to investigating moral incongruence in the field, scholars might also consider examining moral incongruence in an experimental setting. This could involve crafting a scenario in which participants in the experimental condition are faced with a situation that may create moral incongruence (i.e., "it has become clear to you that it will be impossible to meet your sales targets without stealing information from competitors"). Scholars could then examine the downstream effects of this scenario in comparison to participants in a control condition.

In this work we considered several outcomes, mechanisms, and boundary conditions of moral incongruence. Though we aimed to investigate key constructs that are both important and relevant to the phenomenon of moral incongruence, a fully inclusive investigation that considers all possible outcomes of moral incongruence is outside the scope of this paper. Indeed, it is

certainly the case that moral incongruence may impact other work attitudes and behaviors as well. For instance, moral incongruence might impact other, non-ethically valanced mechanisms such as job engagement. We might also observe other emotional reactions beyond moral outrage, as moral incongruence might facilitate frustration or guilt. Moving downstream, it could also be interesting to consider how moral incongruence impacts other critical outcomes such as individual task performance, citizenship behavior, or counterproductive behavior. In addition, it might prove fruitful to consider how the experience of moral incongruence impacts others in the organization, such as team members or subordinates. As such, we encourage future research to further investigate the potential effects of moral incongruence in organizations.

In this work we utilized moral incongruence as the launching point of our theoretical model. That said, it is indeed likely that different factors related to job requirements, organizational context, and the individual may impact the likelihood that someone will experience moral incongruence. As such, future research might also consider potential antecedents of moral incongruence. For instance, individuals in jobs with objective metrics of performance that are very difficult to reach (e.g., challenging sales goals) may be more likely to experience moral incongruence than employees engaged in jobs with less quantifiable performance metrics. As another example, employees high in moral awareness may find it easier to identify morally incongruent situations than those who have difficulty recognizing the ethical implications of situations in general. To further advance our understanding of moral incongruence, we encourage future scholarship to consider these and other antecedents of this important phenomenon.

One critical outcome that we focused on in this investigation was unethical role behavior, or immoral behaviors that employees may engage in that are consistent with role expectations.

As a future direction, it may prove fruitful to extend upon our model and consider the

downstream consequences that may follow from unethical role behavior itself. For instance,

engaging in unethical role behavior may make employees less morally courageous (c.f. May,

Chan, Hodges, & Avolio, 2003) when faced with other, non-role required sources of pressure to

act unethically. We might also observe effects on employees that reside outside the scope of

ethical behavior as well. For example, engaging in unethical role behavior may lead to employee

burnout, further promoting negative employee attitudes and behaviors. In sum, future research

would benefit from additional consideration of the ways in which unethical role behaviors

impact employees.

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Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework of Moral Incongruence.