ONLINE APPENDIX A

Microfoundations of Ethical Human Capital Work Systems

**CONSTRUCT DEFINITIONS**

**Moral Psychology Constructs**

We included 30 moral psychology constructs in this model because they have been identified by prior research as having ethical implications for organizations. To facilitate parsimony and understanding, we classified these 30 constructs into four categories. Traditionally, firm-level human capital has been conceptualized as the cumulative total of four dimensions of human capital: knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) of the workforce (Coff, 2002; Ray et al., 2023; Wright & McMahan, 2011). However, since the model proposed in this study focuses on *ethical* human capital, we offer a refined and more parsimonious enumeration of four categories of ethical human capital constructs that better incorporate the extant literature on business ethics. Our model proposes four categories of ethical human capital constructs: Cognitive, Competency, Affective, and Dispositional. These four categories include both the “having” or trait-like aspects of individuals’ perception of their moral selves and the “doing” or behavioral enactment aspects (Jennings et al., 2015).

We then matched the 30 moral psychology constructs with these four ethical human capital categories. The names of the constructs are shown in the first column of Table 1. The next four columns indicate the applicable categories of ethical human capital constructs (1’s = matches between construct and construct type).

The Cognitive category includes constructs such as moral development, formalism, and framing (Chugh & Kern, 2016; Rees et al., 2022). The Competency category includes constructs such as bounded ethicality and moral awareness (DeTienne et al., 2021; Reynolds, 2006). The Affective category includes constructs such as emotions and moods like guilt, shame, and felt obligation to act morally (Bonner et al., 2017, Cohen et al., 2011; Ekkekakis & Russell, 2013). The Dispositional category includes six subcategories: standard personality, personality disorders, moral maturation, moral character, and moral conation. These subcategories include common personality constructs such as conscientiousness, honesty and humility, and also personality disorder constructs such as Machiavellianism (Ashton & Lee, 2009; Costa & Widiger, 2002; Dahling et al., 2009).

Individual constructs could have either a positive or negative relationship with ethical decisions and behaviors. The next column in Table 1 indicates, based on prior research, the direction of the expected relationship, either positive or negative, between each of the 30 moral psychology constructs and ethical decisions and behavior.

The interaction of these moral psychology constructs with HR practices constitute the microfoundations or building blocks of the ethical human capital infrastructure, which we refer to as an ethical human capital work system (EHCWS). Organizations can utilize unique combinations of constructs and HR practices to create EHCWSs that will enhance their ethical human capital and thereby increase ethical organizational climate and culture. An ethical climate and culture enhancement will result from strategically selected combinations of moral psychology constructs and HR practices. This is consistent with the view that the strength of HR systems, and therefore their effectiveness, not only depends on the existence of multiple HR practices but also is related to employee interpretations of the consistency, purpose, and meaning of the HR practices (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016). These shared interpretations can focus on the importance of business ethics by integrating several moral psychology constructs within multiple HR practices. In this way, organizations can increase a specific type of human capital that focuses on ethics (Wright & McMahan, 2011). Increasing ethical human capital will increase ethical choices and behaviors and result in enhanced organizational ethical climates and cultures (Arnaud, 2010). The result can be a unique source of strategic competitive advantage based on a firm's ethical human capital infrastructure (Barney, 1991; Fiol, 1991; Gerhart & Feng, 2021; Ployhart, 2021).

**Categorization of Moral Psychology Constructs**

In the following text, the specific moral psychology constructs within each category are identified and defined. Also, prior research that shows the relationships between each construct and (un)ethical behaviors and decision-making is summarized.

**Cognitive**

Cognitive moral psychology constructs are the thought processes involved with ethical decision-making and behaviors (Rest, 1986).

*Cognitive moral development* (CMD) is a cognitive construct. Based on developmental psychology, it is proposed that people pass through increasingly sophisticated stages of moral development. As they reach higher levels, they are more likely to endorse universal ethical principles and less likely to engage in unethical behavior (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Levine et al., 1985). Those at lower levels of moral development are more self-interested and more likely to engage in unethical choices and behavior (Rest, 1986).

*Formalist vs. utilitarian moral judgment* is a cognitive construct. Formalist moral judgment tends to make decisions based on dependability, honesty, principles, integrity, law-abiding, and trustworthiness (Reynolds, 2006; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007; Schminke et al., 1997). Utilitarianism is more focused on being effective, results-oriented, and productive (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011). Formalistic team orientation leads to fewer unethical decisions, and utilitarian team orientation increases team unethical decisions and behaviors (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011). Formalist moral judgments also increase identification of procedural justice and violations of norms (Reynolds, 2006; Schminke et al., 1997).

*Framing as business vs. ethics* is a cognitive construct. Within organizations decisions can be framed in terms of either business factors or ethical factors (Rees et al., 2022; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 1999). These alternative frames can be induced by asking people to think about cost-benefit analysis, the concept of money, etc.; or alternatively asking them whether they are basing decisions on business ethical factors (Kouchaki et al., 2013; Rees et al., 2022). These two types of questions act as cues that induce people to process information in either business or ethical frames (Tenbrunsel & Messick, 1999). People with a business decision frame are more likely than those with an ethical frame to engage in unethical intentions and behaviors such as misrepresentation (Kouchaki et al., 2013; Rees et al., 2022).

*Idealistic vs. relativistic moral philosophy* is a cognitive construct. The idealistic philosophical position emphasizes avoiding harm and making decisions based on principles, whereas the contrasting philosophy of relativism is more accommodating to the possibility of inevitable harm and more skeptical about universal moral standards. Idealism is more likely to lead to recognition of ethical issues, and relativism is related to decreased ethical intentions (Valentine & Bateman, 2011). Also, idealistic moral philosophy is a way of thinking that tends to reduce unethical intentions and behavior, whereas relativistic moral philosophy increases unethical intentions and behavior (Henle et al., 2005; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; O'Boyle & Forsyth, 2021).

**Competency**

Competency moral psychology constructs are the ethics-related skills and abilities of individuals (Barnes et al., 2011; Cohen & Morse, 2014).

*Bounded ethicality* is both a cognitive and a competency construct. The concept of bounded ethicality is like bounded rationality in that both recognize the limitations of human cognition. However, bounded ethicality is a type of bounded rationality signifying people's limited capacity to think about ethical issues (Rees et al., 2019; Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008; Treviño et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2015). Because of bounded ethicality, people tend not to be aware of issues that are contradictory to their desires, and this can result in them making unethical decisions (Chugh & Kern, 2016).

*Ego depletion vs. self-regulation capacity* are interrelated cognitive and competency constructs. The strength of one's ego or self-regulation capacity can increase ethical behaviors or decision-making. Employee egos or self-regulatory capacity can be depleted because of work stress, lack of sleep, excessive alcohol consumption, and so forth (Yam et al., 2014). People are more likely to engage in unethical behavior when there is a depletion of their ego or self-regulation capacity (Yam et al., 2014).

*Ethical fading* is a competency construct. Ethical fading constitutes a reduction in recognition of moral or ethical obligations over time (Helzer et al., 2022). When organizations focus on profitability goals, other outcomes, such as recognition and awareness of moral issues tend to fade and become less important. Ethical fading contributes to lower ethical or moral awareness and reduces the likelihood of making ethical decisions (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004; Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008, Treviño et al., 2014).

*Internal locus of control* is a competency construct. People with an internal locus of control expect positive results from their own efforts, and those with an external locus of control expect that fate or forces beyond their control determine outcomes (Rotter, 1966). Internal locus of control reduces unethical behavior, and external locus of control increases unethical behavior (Chiu, 2003; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Rotter, 1966).

*Moral attentiveness* is a competency construct. Moral attentiveness is the degree to which individuals regularly think about aspects of morality. Moral attentiveness is related to lower levels of unethical behavior (Reynolds, 2008).

*Moral disengagement* is a competency construct. Moral disengagement can be a current state of cognition or an ongoing trait (Bandura, 1999; Detert et al., 2008). Moral disengagement cognitive restructuring enables people or groups to distance themselves from their own moral standards (Newman et al., 2020). *Moral disengagement propensity* reflects the tendency to morally disengage (Moore et al., 2012). Both cognitive restructuring and moral disengagement propensity can lead to unethical behavior (Detert, et al., 2008; Fehr et al., 2020; Moore, 2008; Moore et al., 2012; Treviño et al., 2014). As such, moral disengagement is a lack of capacity to be ethical. Moral disengagement can increase deviant behaviors at work (Kacmar et al., 2019). Ironically, this can occur when employee behaviors are monitored to such a great degree that they feel less agency or responsibility for enacting their own ethical standards (Thiel et al., 2023).

**Affective**

Affective moral psychology constructs are feelings, emotions, or moods (Ekkekakis & Russell, 2013). People experience moral emotions from exposure to (im)moral events based on their hereditary influences, past experience, or social learning (Greenbaum et al., 2020). Since there is some dispute about the definitions of affective constructs we focus on the most clearly defined constructs below (Greenbaum et al., 2020). Some are other-condemning and others are self-conscious (Greenbaum et al., 2020).

*Anger* and *Contempt* are generally other-condemning affective constructs. Anger can be a state or trait. People with state anger currently feel angry, annoyed, irritated, or outraged (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). Similarly, contempt arises from disdain towards others who have violated moral norms (Greenbaum et al., 2020). People with trait anger tend to feel this way more often. Anger tends to increase impulsive unethical behavior (Motro et al., 2018). Anger also promotes deception because it reduces empathy for others and promotes self-interest (Yip & Schweitzer, 2016).

However, morally motivated anger and contempt could be aligned with a felt obligation to act morally through the arousal of moral reasoning that supports opposition to unethical behavior (Smith-Crowe & Warren, 2014). This could lead to effective whistleblowing that reduces unethical behavior (Lindebaum & Geddes, 2016).

*Envy* is an affective construct. Envy is a desire for better outcomes that arises when someone feels inferior or resentful when comparing their own outcomes with the outcomes of others (Thiel et al., 2021). Relative deprivation can lead to feelings of envy that cause moral disengagement and unethical behaviors aimed at restoring equity between the envied and the envious (Zhao & Zhang, 2022). Envy can also deplete employees' self-regulatory resources, and this increases unethical behaviors (Mao et al., 2022). Envy caused by observing unethical behavior leads to moral disengagement, which can cause unethical behavior (Thiel et al., 2021).

*Felt obligation to act morally* is an affective construct. This occurs when people feel an obligation to work or achieve their goals ethically (Ogunfowora et al., 2021). When leaders are ethical role models, employees can feel elevation, which is a positive emotional response to the leader’s demonstrated moral excellence (Greenbaum, et al., 2020). This may make them more likely to feel obligated to act with morally courageous behavior that overcomes perceived risks of acting ethically (Ogunfowora, et al., 2021).

*Guilt* and *Shame* are self-conscious affective constructs. Guilt tends to focus on an act, triggered by one’s own behavior, and shame tends to focus on negative evaluations of one’s own moral character (Cohen et al., 2011; Daniels & Robinson, 2019; Greenbaum et al., 2020). Guilt and shame proneness (GASP) is related to lower levels of misrepresentation, unethical business decisions, and delinquent behaviors (Cohen et al., 2011). Employees who feel guilt are more likely to carefully consider their actions, resulting in less unethical behavior (Motro et al., 2018). Those who engage in unethical behavior are likely to experience shame. Then, they try to overcome this shame by engaging in impression management (exemplification or citizenship behaviors) or moral cleansing to make themselves or their firms appear better to others (Bonner et al., 2017; Carnevale & Gangloff, 2022; Motro et al. 2018).

**Dispositional: Standard Personality**

Standard personality constructs can encompass relatively stable ethics-related responses to people and situations (Ashton & Lee, 2009; Costa & Widiger, 2002).

*Agreeableness* is a standard personality construct. People with higher levels of agreeableness are friendly, kind, and considerate (Ashton & Lee, 2009). People with higher levels of agreeableness are less likely to engage in unethical behaviors (Cohen et al., 2014; Pletzer et al., 2019).

*Conscientiousness* is a standard personality construct. People with higher levels of conscientiousness tend to be diligent, responsible, and reliable. People with a higher level of conscientiousness are less likely to engage in unethical behaviors (Cohen et al., 2014; Pletzer et al., 2019).

*Honesty-humility* is a standard personality construct. People with personalities that score high on honesty-humility are sincere, modest, and avoid greed; whereas people low on honesty-humility are deceitful, boastful, and greedy (Ashton & Lee, 2009). People with high levels of honesty-humility are less likely to engage in unethical behaviors (Cohen & Morse, 2014; Hershfield et al., 2012; Kleinlogel et al., 2018; Pletzer et al., 2019).

**Dispositional: Personality Disorders**

Personality disorders can be relatively stable ethics-related interactions, thoughts, and behaviors that can interfere with normal social interactions (Furhnam et al., 2013; Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020). Three categories of personality disorders are relevant to ethics: the Dark Triad, Erratic Cluster, and Anxious Cluster (Furhnam et al., 2013; Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020). Each is discussed below.

The Dark Triad includes three constructs: Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy, which, in general focus on callous manipulation (Furhnam et al., 2013). The Dark Triad has been shown to be associated with unethical behaviors such as accounting fraud (Harrison et al., 2018; Mutschmann et al., 2022).

*Machiavellianism* is a personality disorder construct. People who measure high on Machiavellianism are more likely to agree that the end justifies the means and to endorse callously manipulating others for their own personal gain, even if it hurts others (Jones & Paulhus, 2009; Jones & Mueller, 2022). People with Machiavellian personalities engage in more unethical behavior, such as breaking the rules, fraud, lying, or violating codes of conduct (Dahling et al., 2009; Grover & Enz, 2005; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Mutschmann et al., 2022).

*Narcissism* is a personality disorder construct. Narcissistic people tend to have an inflated sense of their own self-importance, superiority, and entitlement (Judge et al., 2006). Narcissism is sometimes positively associated with cheating, lying, and workplace deviance (Judge et al., 2006; Muris et al., 2017).

*Psychopathy* is an affective and personality disorder construct. Psychopathy has affective elements such as callous affect, histrionic personalities, lack of empathy, and deficient impulse control. Interpersonal elements include antisocial behavior, erratic actions, and interpersonal manipulation (Smith & Lilienfeld, 2013; Stevens et al., 2012).

More extreme forms of psychopathy can result in institutionalization or incarceration for criminal behavior (Stevens et al., 2012). Yet, successful psychopaths can sometimes disguise their malevolent tendencies through superficial charisma and intellectual ability to gain important leadership positions in organizations (Babiak et al., 2010; Smith & Lilienfeld, 2013; Ullrich et al., 2008). Nevertheless, psychopathy has been associated with several business-related antisocial and criminal behaviors (Hare, 2003). These include fraud, moral disengagement, unethical decision-making, and white-collar crime (Gao & Raine, 2010; Stevens et al., 2012). However, successful psychopaths in organizations are less likely to exhibit the kinds of overly aggressive criminal behaviors that would be more common among those with a more extreme antisocial personality disorder (Smith & Lilienfeld, 2013).

The *Erratic Cluster* is a combination of personality disorder constructs that includes antisocial, borderline, histrionic, and/or narcissistic maladaptive traits (Costa & Widiger, 2002; Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020). Notably, this cluster somewhat overlaps with the Dark Triad because antisocial personality can be considered to be similar to, but a more extreme version of, psychopathy and narcissism is one of the three elements of the Dark Triad. Borderline personalities include wide swings of emotion, fragile self-image, and problems with interpersonal relationships (Miller, 2003). Histrionic personalities seek attention and excitement through flamboyant and dramatic behaviors, and when their needs are not met, they can become depressed or angry (Miller, 2003). People higher on the dimensions of this cluster are more likely to engage in unethical behavior and fraud (Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020).

The *Anxious Cluster* is a combination of personality disorder constructs including avoidant, dependent, and/or obsessive-compulsive maladaptive traits (Costa & Widiger, 2002; Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020). People who are higher on these traits are generally less likely to engage in unethical behavior, and those higher in obsessive-compulsive disorder are less likely to engage in fraud (Von Scotter & Roglio, 2020).

***Dispositional: Moral Maturation***

Moral maturation is the first part of Hannah and colleagues’ moral capacity model (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011). The second part, moral conation, is discussed below. Moral maturation focuses on individual aptitudes and is a refinement of the Kohlberg and Rest stages of moral development model (Levine et al., 1985; Rest, 1986; Thoma et al., 1999). Moral maturation includes three constructs: moral complexity, moral metacognitive ability, and moral identity (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). People with high moral conation have the capacity to "generate responsibility and motivation to take moral action in the face of adversity" (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011). These three constructs are expected to increase moral sensitivity, moral judgment, and moral motivation (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). Moral identity is discussed here as a part of the moral maturation model although it is also part of the moral character model discussed below.

*Moral complexity* is a cognitive, competency, and dispositional construct. Moral complexity represents the extent to which individuals possess and apply mental representations (e.g., categories, connections, prototypes) to ethical issues, allowing them to process ethical questions with more elaborate and differentiated cognitive representations (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). Moral complexity enables leaders to make more ethical decisions (Robinson et al., 2022).

*Moral metacognitive ability* is an affective, cognitive, and competency construct. Moral metacognitive ability encompasses the capacities to control and regulate one's own cognitions, differentiating it from general cognitive ability (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). Moral metacognitive ability enables the solving of complex moral dilemmas because it enables self-control related to moral sensitivity and morality judgments (Hannah et al., 2020).

*Moral identity* is a competency and dispositional construct. Moral identity represents individual self-ratings of the importance of having the traits of a moral person and presenting a moral image to others (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hannah et al., 2020). People with higher moral identities perceive themselves as good versus bad people (Cohen & Morse, 2014). Moral identity is similar to the concept of the “moral self” which has been defined as,

“a complex system of self-defining moral attributes involving moral beliefs, orientations, dispositions, and cognitive and affective capacities that engage regulatory focus toward moral behavior.” (Jennings et al., 2015, p. S106).

Moral identity increases moral behavior (e.g., whistleblowing), and moral motivation and reduces unethical behavior such as lying (Aquino et al., 2009; Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011; Hertz & Krettenauer, 2016; Mesdaghinia et al., 2022; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007; Shao et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2019; Wen & Chen, 2016). The Moral identity of leaders increases followers' moral identity and moral attentiveness through followers' perceptions of and positive response to the ethicality of their leaders (Zhu et al., 2016).

***Dispositional: Moral Character***

Moral character is the "disposition to think, feel, and behave in an ethical versus unethical manner" (Cohen & Morse, 2014: 43). This model includes three constructs: moral motivation (desire to do good instead of bad), moral self-regulation ability (trait-based capacity), and moral identity (concern for being a moral person; Cohen & Morse, 2014; Cohen et al., 2014). People with low moral character are more likely to engage in harmful and delinquent work behaviors and are more tolerant of unethical negotiation tactics (Cohen et al., 2014). People with higher levels of moral character are more likely to make ethical decisions (Nguyen & Crossan, 2022). The moral identity construct was discussed above as part of the moral maturation model.

*Moral motivation* is an affective and dispositional construct. People who feel higher levels of concern for honesty, and for others, have higher levels of moral motivation (Cohen & Morse, 2014; Cohen et al., 2014; Graham et al., 2011). People with higher levels of moral motivation tend to avoid greed, whereas people with lower levels are more deceitful (Ashton & Lee, 2009; Cohen & Morse, 2014; Hershfeld et al., 2012; Pletzer et al., 2019).

*Moral self-regulation* *ability* is a competency and disposition construct. Moral self-regulation ability is the capacity to engage in good behavior and avoid bad behavior (Barnes et al., 2011; Cohen & Morse, 2014). Those with higher levels of self-regulation ability have a "disposition toward regulating one's behavior effectively" especially avoiding negative long-term consequences (Cohen & Morse, 2014: 49). People who score higher on consideration of future consequences tend to avoid unethical behavior (Cohen & Morse, 2014).

***Dispositional: Moral Conation***

Moral conation is the second part of Hannah and colleagues’ moral capacity model (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011). This second part of their model focuses more on actions and includes three constructs: moral courage, moral efficacy, and moral ownership (Hannah & Avolio, 2010; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011). People with high moral conation have the capacity to "generate responsibility and motivation to take moral action in the face of adversity" (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011: 664).

*Moral courage* is a competency construct. Moral courage represents an ability to act and speak up on ethical issues even though it may entail some personal risk of rejection or disapproval (Comer & Skerka, 2018; Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011; Ogunfowora et al., 2021). Employees with higher moral courage engage in higher levels of ethical behavior (Hannah, Avolio, & May, 2011; Hannah Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011; Ogunfowora et al., 2021; Sekerka et al., 2009).

*Moral efficacy* is a competency construct. Moral efficacy is the belief that one has the abilities, motivation, resources, and skills to make moral decisions and enact moral behaviors (Hannah & Avolio, 2010; Mitchell & Palmer, 2010; Owens et al., 2019; Treviño et al., 2014). People with higher levels of moral efficacy engage in fewer unethical behaviors, are more resilient to pressures for unethical conduct, are more likely to speak up against unethical behaviors, and are less likely to engage in unethical pro-organizational behaviors (Hannah & Avolio, 2010; Lee et al., 2017; Mitchell & Palmer, 2010; Owens et al., 2019; Schaubroek et al., 2012; Treviño et al., 2014).

*Moral ownership* is a cognitive and competency construct. Moral ownership is the inclination to be held responsible for the unethical behavior of others and oneself (Hannah & Avolio, 2010; Ogunfowora et al., 2021). Employees with higher moral ownership exhibit more ethical behaviors (Jino & Dyaram, 2019). When leaders model moral ownership it creates a sense of obligation in others to act more ethically (Hannah & Avolio, 2010; Ogunfowora et al., 2021).

**IDENTIFYING A BROAD DOMAIN OF MICROFOUNDATIONS FOR EHCWSs**

A key objective of this study was to identify and incorporate a broadly inclusive yet parsimonious domain of potentially useful moral psychology constructs and HR practices that form the microfoundations of EHCWSs (Van Scotter & Roglio, 2020). By incorporating a broad domain, individual organizations will have a greater ability to understand the multiplicity of the ethical structures in different organizations based on their organizational strategy, structure, and environment; and thereby create a potentially unique source of sustained advantage through ethics. We used systematic methods to ensure the broad inclusion of constructs.

A new and innovative method was used to identify links between moral psychology constructs that match with multiple HR practices and could be part of EHCWSs. First, articles that both examined moral psychology constructs and proposed practical implications for using these constructs were identified. A comprehensive search began with the identification of established moral psychology constructs contained in meta-analyses and literature reviews of business ethics and moral psychology publications (De Cremer & Moore, 2020; Jennings et al., 2015; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Park et al., 2022; Pletzer et al., 2019; Tenbrunsel & Smith‐Crowe, 2008; Treviño et al., 2014).

Second, articles with moral psychology constructs were identified and coded into Table 1, below. Table 1 contains the names of the identified moral psychology constructs within each construct type. The construct type columns indicated a match between each construct showing a “1” if it matched the construct type column heading. In the next column, the direction of the relationship between each of these constructs and ethical decision-making/behavior was recorded as positive (1) or negative (-1).

Third, based on prior cross-country research on the factor structure of high-performance work practices and their alignment with business ethics literature (see Table 1), 12 HR practices were identified as relevant for integration within an EHCWS (Posthuma et al., 2025). These 12 practices were allocated to two human capital functions, accumulation and stewardship. This two-factor structure follows the models that differentiate between the firm's classic models of financial capital accumulation and financial capital stewardship (Averch & Johnson, 1962; Chowdhury et al., 2025). We adapt these models here because the goal of high-performance work practices is typically to increase a firm's financial results. However, our focus is on balancing financial results with ethics.

Under the columns for ethical human capital practices, indicator variables coded as “1” signify that peer-reviewed publications matched the moral psychology constructs (rows), which were specific to the identified HR practices (columns).

The utilization of scholarship in this way helps to fill an important need to make peer-reviewed scholarship relevant to organizations (Rogelberg et al., 2022; Rynes et al., 2002; Rynes et al., 2007). Therefore, this matching of constructs and practices will help to address repeated calls to close the gaps between academic research and practice (Bartunek, 2007).

Fourth, the column on the far right of Table 1 indicates the total number of matches between each moral psychology construct and the number of times they matched with the HR practices. The row at the bottom of Table 1 indicates the totals of types of constructs, the net positive or negative relationship with all the constructs and ethical behavior and decision-making (+9), and the total of times each HR practice was mentioned as a match with all moral psychology constructs.

**Table 1. Microfoundations of Ethical Human Capital Work Systems: Ethical Human Resources and Practices.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Ethical Human Capital Dimensions** | | | | Direction of Relationship: Positive vs. Negative | **Ethical Human Capitalization** | | | | | | | | | | | | Number of Practices Per Construct |
| Cognitive | Competency | Affective | Dispositional | Ethical Human Capital *Accumulation* | | | | | | Ethical Human Capital *Stewardship* | | | | | |
| Recruiting | Selection &Promotion | Analyses: Job Results, Risk, & Training Needs/Effectiveness | Training | Development | Turnover & Exit Management | Job and Work Design | Financial & Recognition Rewards | Leadership & Performance Management | Ethics Codes & Enforcement | Communication | Whistleblowing |
| **readiness Potentials** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Cognitive** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cognitive Moral Development | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 3 |
| Formalism vs. Utilitarian Moral Judgment | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 6 |
| Framing as Business vs. Ethics | 1 |  |  |  | -1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Idealistic vs. Relativistic Moral Philosophy | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 5 |
| **competency** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bounded Ethicality | 1 | 1 |  |  | -1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 2 |
| Ego Depletion vs. Self-Regulation | 1 | 1 |  |  | -1 |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 6 |
| Ethical Fading vs. Moral Awareness | 1 | 1 |  |  | -1 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 4 |
| Internal Locus  of Control |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | 2 |
| Moral Attentiveness | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 5 |
| Moral Disengagement | 1 | 1 |  |  | -1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 6 |
| **Affective and Dispositional** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Affective** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Anger & Contempt |  |  | 1 |  | -1 |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |
| Envy |  |  | 1 |  | -1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 3 |
| Felt Obligation to Act Morally |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 5 |
| Guilt and Shame |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 4 |
| **Standard Personality** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agreeableness |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 4 |
| Conscientiousness |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 6 |
| Honesty-Humility |  |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 | 4 |
| **Personality Disorders** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Machiavellianism |  |  |  | 1 | -1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  | 6 |
| Narcissism |  |  |  | 1 | -1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |
| Psychopathy |  |  |  | 1 | -1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |
| Erratic Cluster |  |  |  | 1 | -1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 4 |
| Anxious Cluster |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 2 |
| **Moral Maturation** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Moral Complexity | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 3 |
| Moral Metacognition | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 2 |
| Moral Identity |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 8 |
| **Moral Character** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Moral Motivation |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 | 6 |
| Moral Self-Regulation Ability |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |
| **Moral Conation** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Moral Courage |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 5 |
| Moral Efficacy |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 4 |
| Moral Ownership | 1 | 1 |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 3 |
| Sum: | 12 | 13 | 6 | 13 | 9 | 6 | 20 | 9 | 19 | 16 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 22 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 122 |

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