

A PREDICTIVE AND CAUSAL-COMPARATIVE STUDY EXAMINING EMOTIONAL EX-  
HAUSTION, WORKLOAD, SURFACE ACTING, AND INCLUSION ON MANAGERS

by

Dana Matthews Morris

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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APPROVED BY:

Joseph Fontanella, Ed.D, Committee Chair

Michelle Barthlow, Ed.D, Committee Member

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative, causal-comparative and predictive correlational design study is to examine how workload, surface acting, work group inclusion, and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in domestic, white-collar roles. A critical variable is emotional exhaustion which has been identified as a key characteristic and predictor of burnout in the workplace. While many current burnout studies have excluded underrepresented minorities and focused on job performance and job demands in human service industries, this study addresses relevant psychological workplace factors that have been associated with detrimental mental and physical conditions of underrepresented minorities - emotional dissonance and lack of inclusion. Such conditions impact organization commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction. This has been a gap in literature as well as a call for future studies. Four instruments were used to measure the variables workload, surface acting, work group inclusion and emotional exhaustion via an online survey - workload subscale of the Areas of Worklife Survey, surface acting subscale of the Emotional Labour Scale, Work Group Inclusion Scale, and the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, respectively. The following paper provides an introduction, literature overview, method detail, and findings of the study. Using quota sampling and snowball sampling techniques, 146 participants were included in the study.

*Keywords:* burnout, job demand, emotional dissonance, surface acting, emotional labor

## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and friends. As I pen this message, it is slightly surreal that the end is visible. For years, the idea of completing this degree seemed impossible. However, many people have played an important part in getting me to the end.

To my husband who has figuratively and literally stood by my side: thank you for understanding all the vacations I brought my laptop on. Although, I suppose in hindsight, the ocean and beach more than made up for it. Thank you for understanding all the events I left a little early. My husband saw the bright rises and late slumbers. He witnessed the tears I occasionally shed from pure exhaustion, and he has heard every doubt I had. Yet, he was always encouraging and confident that I would see my way through to the end. Thank you for being my cheerleader.

My mother told me many, many years ago to pursue this degree. At the time it seemed very far-fetched. Where would I get the time? However, if I look back at every other major decision in my life, ending up exactly where my mother suggested is simply par for the course. She was right about this degree. She knew I could do it even before I realized it. Thank you for being the visionary in my life.

To my friends – The Committee - who are absolutely the epitome of girl bosses, girl power, feminists, and any other title empowering women: thank you for helping me maintain balance in my life. When I thought my schedule could not permit any “fun,” they easily navigated my day with a plan on how to make it happen. When I told them the daunting number of participants I needed for my study, they said without hesitation, “we’ve got it.” Thank you for reminding me how resilient I am.

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This is dedicated to everyone who has supported me and believed in me throughout this entire process. It is a testament that we all need each other's support. Even when you perceive your kind word as a small act, it may be enormous to the recipient. We did it!

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### **List of Abbreviations**

Areas of Worklife Survey (AWS)

Conservation of Resources Theory (COR)

Emotional Labour Scale (ELS)

Institution Review Board (IRB)

Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R)

Mahalanobis distance (MD)

Maladaptive perfectionism (MP)

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

Strong Black Woman (SBW)

Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Underrepresented Minority (URM)

World Health Organization (WHO)

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Overview

During the past two years, the Covid-19 pandemic has confirmed what most workers have known for years – burnout is a real workplace experience. Workloads changed as some employees were directly impacted by the virus and team headcounts fluctuated. Adding more complexity for many managers, work environments completely changed. A virtual world ended face-to-face communication, brought new stressors, and blended personal and professional environments. Balancing it all has resulted in many workers becoming exhausted resulting in burnout. Emotional exhaustion is considered the first and most dominant predictor of burnout. Based on relevant models and theories of burnout syndrome and job demands, empirical findings have supported that such work demands that exceed available resources will result in mental and physical issues. However, cognitive labor may not be the only trigger of exhaustion. Pandemic aside, it could further be proposed that race may also contribute to burnout by the emotional dissonance and isolation experienced in the workplace. The following quantitative, causal-comparative and predictive correlational design study explores how workload, surface acting, inclusion and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American white-collar, managers. Chapter One provides a background of emotional exhaustion and its predictive nature on burnout syndrome. Included in the background is an overview of the theoretical framework used for this study. It includes models and theories associated with job demand, conservation of resources theory, social identity, and work group inclusion. The problem statement examines the scope of recent literature on emotional exhaustion as well as burnout and identifies gaps in knowledge. The purpose statement follows which defines the variables of the study and the study's significance

which details how the study can add to the existing body of knowledge and improve lives. Lastly, the research questions and definitions pertinent to this study are provided.

### **Background**

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) formally declared burnout syndrome an occupational phenomenon (The World Health Organization, 2019). In the WHO's International Classification of Diseases, burnout is defined as long-term, unmanaged stress in the workplace (The World Health Organization, 2019). It is characterized by feelings of cynicism of one's job, inadequate professional competency, and most strongly by emotional exhaustion (The World Health Organization, 2019). Most burnout literature identifies emotional exhaustion as the key driver necessary for the determination of the syndrome. Individuals experience this exhaustion through mental and physical issues including anxiety or headaches and gastric issues (Kazdin, 2019). Organizations experience the downhill consequences in the form of absences or turnover which directly impacts productivity (Ferres et al., 2004; Kazdin, 2019). Since the Covid-19 pandemic was formally declared in March 2020, emotional exhaustion - along with similar stressors - reached national attention (Moss, 2021). A large driver in this movement is the significant change that the pandemic unexpectedly brought economically and socially.

For most, the shift was swift and unplanned. In an effort to keep citizens safe and stabilize the rising infection rate, states declared mandatory stay-at-home orders for all non-essential businesses (Meyer et al., 2021). This means thousands lost their jobs in the service, food, and retail industries (Larue, 2020). The rise in unemployment coupled with the closing of educational institutions and social distancing triggered a polar shift in labor and job demands (Larue, 2020). It also forced many in white-collar roles who did not lose their jobs to work from home with no preparation. While employees took from the office what they required to continue work in the

near future, none could foresee how long full-time remote working would last. Therefore, many did not have resources like printers, second monitors, or ergonomic furniture that was present in the workplace. This change also found working parents balancing the demands of family and work simultaneously during traditional work hours (Meyer et al., 2021).

With the change, both benefits and new challenges arose. Home offices provided schedule flexibility, comfort for employees, and a validation that productivity can be maintained away from the physical work office. However, work hours increased with no matching change in resources (Moss, 2021). This left many employees challenged to disconnect from work as they attempted to keep up with continuous job demands (Moss, 2021). For many, it created a continuous workday. This has resulted in a depletion of employee energy reserves and an increase in stress – a state Maslach and Jackson (1981) refers to as emotional exhaustion (Meyer et al., 2021). Even occasional problems with internet connectivity were found to manifest into anxiety for some employees as idle offline moments could be perceived as a lack of engagement by leaders (Islam, 2021).

### **Historical Overview**

Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger is credited with introducing the burnout construct in 1974 (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Freudenberger's observed study was conducted exclusively in the human services sector. His results were based on the depleted state of volunteer staff that worked at a free New York rehabilitation center for drug addicted and homeless residents (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). From his observations - both professionally and personally - burnout closely resembled depression (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Having personally suffered from burnout, Freudenberger's writings primarily focused on preventing the condition.

Years later, psychologist Christina Maslach expanded on burnout by delving deeper into understanding the drivers and characterization of exhaustion. Maslach accomplished this while studying how human service workers emotionally managed their demanding schedules (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Through her interviews, she cited that those experiencing burnout also tended to exhibit cynicism and diminished self-efficacy (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The newly identified characteristics were observed by her in instances when the individual lacked autonomy or was asked to complete tasks which conflicted with their values or desires (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach also advanced the notion that burnout should not be viewed as a depressive condition which countered the concept of founder Freudenberg (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Declaring her observations as a form of burnout, in 1981 Maslach teamed with Susan Jackson to publish an instrument which measures the syndrome - the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The self-reporting questionnaire was the first measurement of the syndrome. MBI was initially only intended for human service professionals such as teachers and social workers - those whose emotions influence the emotions of others as either a medium or final goal (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). However, in the following decade post MBI, the industries analyzed expanded as research increased over 50% (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; McGeary & McGeary, 2012). MBI not only became a voice for those outside the human services industry, but also helped to validate the existence of burnout. Prior to the instrument, the syndrome was frequently characterized as a fad. Today, the MBI and burnout have been accepted across a variety of sectors. Following suit, the WHO recently adopted and published a conceptualization of burnout that is in line with Maslach's three-dimension model instrument (The World Health Organization, 2019).

## **Society-at- Large**

Despite the growing focus on mental well-being and frequent coverage of burnout consequences, there remains a debate between physicians and scientists on what constitutes burnout (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017). WHO's recent upgrade acknowledging burnout as an occupational phenomenon brings attention to its prevalence. Prior to the update, the ambiguity of the earlier definition made it easy to dismiss the issue (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Today, the update brings greater transparency and importance. However, the organization stopped short of declaring it a medical condition - a risk that may drive American workplace leaders to continue to overlook its severity (The World Health Organization, 2019). This means no disability coverage and no workplace accommodations (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). This is in stark contrast to how countries such as Sweden have managed the condition. In Sweden, burnout is a medical condition (Grossi et al., 2015; Moss, 2021). It is placed in the same category as post-traumatic stress disorder which causes physical and mental health issues to exist even after the stressors have been removed (Moss, 2021). Similarly, burnout is an erosion that happens over time. Thus, such placement infers that recovery from burnout will not be an overnight process. Instead, it is believed to take place over months or years - an incentive to prevent the syndrome at the onset (Moss, 2021).

Also challenging, the WHO definition suggests that the chronic stress of burnout is something to be managed. While occasional dilemmas are inevitable and manageable, chronic stress is not. It can not solely be managed by positive thinking, excluding Fridays from the work week, or working from home if the workload or other contributing factors that detract from satisfaction are not modified (Moss, 2021). Instead, such chronic occurrences can trigger medical diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, strokes, and metabolic syndrome (Chandola et al., 2006). It

has also been found that emotional exhaustion and burnout typically predict general life satisfaction and depressive symptoms (Upadaya et al., 2016).

### **Theoretical Background**

This study utilizes several theories including the primary, underlying three-dimension burnout syndrome model. Other theories and models to be explored include the emotional labor construct, conservation of resources theory, job-demands-resources theory, social identity, and work group inclusion model. Together, these models and theories have guided the research questions of the study.

Burnout syndrome is not associated with any prior history of psychological or psychiatric conditions. It is driven by the chronic difference between what employees expect of their work environment or workload and the actual environment and work. The three-dimension model revolves around three factors which trigger occupational burnout syndrome - professional inefficacy, cynicism, and emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Of the three factors, emotional exhaustion has proven to be the most prominent and strongest indicator of burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). Emotional exhaustion is the feeling of being emotionally depleted or over-extended. Long-term effects of emotional exhaustion result in negative mental, behavioral, and physical symptoms. Prominent physical symptoms include headaches, fatigue, and insomnia (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Prominent mental and behavioral symptoms include anger, anxiety, lack of patience, and heightened suspicion (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Central to the model is understanding that burnout exists on a continuum (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). On one end is the negative workplace where emotional exhaustion and eventual burnout occurs (Maslach et al., 2012). The opposite end reflects a positive experience of engagement which includes energy, engagement and professional

efficacy (Maslach et al., 2012). Such a model allows leaders to consider workplace factors that are likely to trigger negative experiences and avoid such exhausting states. In this study, emotional exhaustion is measured and predicted using instruments and subscales that assess potentially negative attributes of the workplace.

Empirical findings and literature have also associated emotional labor as a contributor of workplace stressors. The construct of emotional labor refers to the ability to manage the displayed emotions required to fulfill a job role (Grandey et al., 2015). While not as obvious as workload, regulating emotions is indeed a job demand for many workers. It is especially depleting when emotional dissonance emerges - a difference between displayed and genuine, experienced emotions. Emotional dissonance - specifically surface acting - is measured in this study. When chronic, the process of managing emotions can be mentally depleting causing burnout to be probable. This construct is explained by the conservation of resources (COR) theory. Central to COR is the perspective that employees aim to secure, maintain, and protect valued resources - including emotional resources - and reduce any losses (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Exhaustion arises when there are long periods of few resources which eventually lead to resources becoming compromised. Employees specifically experiencing exhaustion as a result of emotional dissonance may be more prone to absences due to illness (Indregard et al., 2018). Empirically, emotional dissonance has been found to be a correlate of exhaustion (Zapf & Holz, 2006). This study seeks to determine if surface acting is a predictor of emotional exhaustion and differs across race.

The organization also possess burnout risks when there are high levels of workloads and comparatively low resources. The existence of heavy workloads and diminished resources aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. Past research has supported that burnout can be adequately explained using this model (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019; Qian et al., 2019). The model

suggests that every working condition has its own unique set of stressors and can be categorized as either job demands or job resources (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019). Job demands refer to the physical, social or organizational aspects of the job that require consistent physical or mental efforts (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019; Qian et al., 2019). They are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs. Meanwhile, job resources refer to factors that assist in achieving work goals or drive development (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019; Qian et al., 2019). The JD-R model suggests that if an individual performs at a high cost for extended periods of time, burnout is likely to occur (Demerouti et al., 2001). It also insinuates that job resources such as autonomy or social support can hedge the impact of job demands on burnout (Bakker et al., 2004). Without such support and inclusion, burnout can prevail via factors including emotional dissonance and exclusion.

Lastly, the study looks to Shore et al.'s (2011) work group inclusion model and the social identity theory to explore inclusion's effect on African-American and Caucasian American managers. Presented in 2011, Shore et al. addressed a gap in inclusion literature by attempting to provide a central definition and model on the construct. Shore et al.'s (2011) efforts quickly became widely accepted among scholars (Tang et al., 2015). The work group inclusion model is based on psychology professor Marilynn Brewer's social identification definition (Brewer, 1991; Chung et al., 2020). The model includes two subclasses - belongingness and uniqueness. Belongingness refers to the need of establishing and retaining strong and solid relationships with others (Chung et al., 2020; Shore et al., 2011). To achieve this need, employees seek to have frequent, positive interactions with members of the desired group. Employees also have a need to be treated and viewed as unique, distinct contributors (Chung et al., 2020; Shore et al., 2011). When consider-

ing Shore et al.'s model, some researchers have questioned the feasibility of achieving both belongingness and uniqueness as they appear to contrast. However, Shore et al. (2011) maintains that both are needed to create a sense of inclusion. When individuals are not content with the conditions of their social or work group, or impacted with negative conditions such as ostracism, they are likely to leave the group to have their needs fulfilled (Fiset et al., 2017). Past research notes that consequences of ostracism increases termination intentions, decreases morale, and decreases job performance (Chen & Tang, 2018; De Clercq et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2009).

### **Problem Statement**

Recent published studies on emotional exhaustion and its eventual outcome, the burnout syndrome, have exhibited limitations. Burnout research surrounding race and ethnicity has proven to be inconclusive inviting more opportunity for exploration (Audi et al., 2021; Lawrence et al., 2021). Current studies either do not reflect African-American presence, are inconclusive, or includes participant sizes that are too immaterial to adequately generalize the findings (Olson et al., 2019; Qian et al., 2019). Thus, there has been a call for additional research to validate results and explore factors contributing to exhaustion and burnout rates among underrepresented minorities (Garcia et al., 2020; Qian et al., 2019). Such factors include, but are not exclusive to, emotional dissonance, isolation, and lack of social support (Lawrence et al., 2021; Mayo & Roberts, 2019). This is especially important as perceived exclusion and managing feelings has been shown to have a direct effect on physical symptoms (Zambrana et al., 2021). Several studies also point out that recent burnout research has a disproportionate focus on human service industries such as healthcare. As such, there is a call to explore other professional industries (Lawrence et

al., 2021; Qian et al., 2019). The problem is there is insufficient evidence on the combined predictive qualities and causal factors of emotional exhaustion on the African-American population and white-collar roles.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative, predictive correlational and causal-comparative design study is to discover how workload, surface acting, work group inclusion, and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in domestic, white-collar roles. Analyzing data using a predictive correlational design, the criterion variable is the emotional exhaustion score. The emotional exhaustion scores reflect the extent of employees feeling depleted and overextended (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The score is measured using the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The presumed predictor variables include workload scores, surface acting scores, and work group inclusion scores. Workload scores reflect how an employee reacts to workplace pressures (Leiter & Maslach, 199). Surface acting scores reflect the extent of the tension that employees experience when expressing emotions that are not authentically felt (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Workgroup inclusion scores reflect the degree to which an employee perceives they are a valued member of their work group by satisfying their need to belong and their need for unique, authentic attributes to be accepted (Chung et al., 2020). The following instruments measure the predictor variable scores: workload subscale of the Areas of Worklife Survey, surface acting subscale of the Emotional Labour Scale, and the Work Group Inclusion Scale, respectively.

When analyzing data using a causal-comparative design, the independent variable is the race of the managers - African-American and Caucasian American. The dependent variables are emotional exhaustion scores, workload scores, surface acting scores, and work group inclusion

scores of managers as previously defined and measured by the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, workload subscale of the Areas of Worklife Survey, surface acting subscale of the Emotional Labour Scale, and the Work Group Inclusion Scale, respectively.

Considering the various physical, emotional, and organization risks that emotional exhaustion and burnout can trigger, the intended audience of the study findings includes organization leaders. These stakeholders have the power to influence corporate culture and diminish occupational stressors. The beliefs and actions of leadership along with the behavior accepted by others influence the norms and values of the overall team culture (Lilly et al., 2021; Linnenluecke & Griffiths, 2010).

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study can be traced to the mental and physical well-being of employees as well as corporate efficiencies. Unaddressed, research has shown that emotional exhaustion - and eventual burnout - can evolve into negative workplace outcomes such as increased employee turnover, absenteeism, and reduced job performance that impact the organization (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Fida et al., 2018; Olson et al., 2019). It has also been negatively associated with the mental and physical well-being of employees (Fida et al., 2018; Olson et al., 2019; Zambrana et al., 2021). Triggers of exhaustion such as exclusion in the workplace – also included in the study - can further complicate the environment. A lack of “high levels of social support” from coworkers and supervisors, has proven to heighten the likelihood of psychiatric issues and increase the risk of illness-related absences (Williams et al., 2008). Empirical support confirms that inclusion plays a significant role in the perception of social support. When inclusion and acceptance are evident, social support is perceived to exist and employee turnover intent is lower (Ferres et al., 2004). Employee turnover results in both direct and indirect organization

costs. Direct costs appear in recruitment fees, new hire training, overuse of experienced personnel, expertise loss, and possible performance decrease (Lambert & Hogan, 2009). Indirect costs may appear in the form of morale drops and the loss of employee social groups (Lambert & Hogan, 2009).

Currently, there is not a complete understanding of the prevalence and ramifications of burnout or emotional exhaustion among underrepresented minorities (URM) readily available (Lawrence et al., 2021). An intentional focus on burnout and exhaustion assessment among URM populations - specifically African-Americans - may be beneficial in improving their retention and motivation (Lawrence et al., 2021). Intervening and mitigating the symptoms can diminish or halt the loss of talent and improve job satisfaction. Past studies have shown that entities with high levels of racial diversity in upper and lower management levels exhibit superior job outcomes in comparison to those with low levels of management diversity (Richard et al., 2021).

### **Research Questions**

Research questions guiding this study include the following:

**RQ1:** How accurately can emotional exhaustion scores for managers be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

**RQ2:** Is there a difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

### **Definitions**

1. *Depersonalization* - Interacting with customers or colleagues in a distant or cynical manner (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It can also be described as emotional detachment.
2. *Emotional exhaustion* – Refers to the feeling of being overwhelmed and overextended as a result of the workplace (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

3. *Inclusion* – Occurs when an employee feels a sense of belonging and acceptance of their unique qualities (Chung et al., 2020).
4. *Manager* – Includes job roles responsible for leading junior staff performance and their productivity as well as those with a formal title of manager performing as individual contributors. This excludes job roles described as C-suite. Those executive roles are often identifiable via the notation of “chief” in the job title. Example C-suite roles omitted include chief executive officer (CEO), chief financial officer (CFO), chief operations officer (COO), and chief information officer (CIO). C-suite roles establish strategies and policies applied across the organization. The results are often reported directly to the board of directors (Guadalupe et al., 2014).
5. *Private sector* – Refers to for-profit entities (Woodruff, 2020). Private sector excludes public sector and non-profit organizations. Public sector references all government organizations including the federal, state, and local government (Woodruff, 2020). Public-sector organizations focus on services to the public including education, utility services, emergency services, and health services. Non-profit organizations are not governed by profit and work toward goals that better the society.
6. *Surface acting* – Occurs when displayed emotions differ from genuine emotions in an effort to meet the recipient’s expectations or job requirements (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003).
7. *Underrepresented minority* - Includes “Black Americans (i.e., African-American, Caribbean-American), Latinx Americans (i.e., Mexican American, Puerto Ricans), and Native Americans (i.e., American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians)” (Lawrence et al., 2021).

8. *White-collar* – Indicator of skilled, non-manual labor performed in an office or similar professional, private sector environment (Schreurs et al., 2011). This is in contrast to blue-collar work which is traditionally manual in nature and performed in factories, plants, or mills (Schreurs et al., 2011). It also excludes red-collar government roles in the public sector and non-profit entities (Brody & Kiehl, 2010).
9. *Workload* – Refers to the tension experienced by employee as a result of workplace pressures (Leiter & Maslach, 1999). It takes into consideration the number of hours worked, recovery time needed, and the nature of the workload.
10. *World Health Organization* – The World Health Organization is a United Nations agency that promotes health and coordinates global responses to health emergencies (The World Health Organization, 2019).

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Overview

The purpose of the following literature review is to identify characteristics and effects of emotional exhaustion as well as explore how high workloads, surface acting, and lack of inclusion contribute to emotional exhaustion. The chapter opens with the theoretical framework describing key theories and its contributors which guided the research questions and design of the study. It is followed by related literature which focuses on what impact diversity has in the workplace and how it impacts African-Americans. Together, the two components of the chapter will reveal common relationships emotional exhaustion has with the stressors of workloads, surface acting, and inclusion. It also reveals how cultural belief systems – often unaccounted for by leadership - may introduce detrimental pressures to the workplace.

### Theoretical Framework

#### Three-Dimension Burnout Syndrome Model

Burnout syndrome refers to long-term workplace stress. It is triggered by a difference between what employees expect or desire of their work environment or workload and the actual environment and work demands (Moss, 2021). It is not derived from other psychological or psychiatric conditions. The syndrome was first introduced by psychologist Henry Freudenberger in 1974 based on the observation of drug rehabilitation and homeless center employees (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Freudenberger primarily associated the reactions of center staff with depression. Other psychological and physical symptoms he noted included loss of motivation, fatigue, headaches and gastrointestinal disturbances (Kazdin, 2019). It was later revealed in his book *Burnout:*

*The High Cost of High Achievement*, that Freudenberger also experienced burnout. Freudenberger attributed all observations as “a response to stress... [or] a demand that an individual may make upon themselves in terms of a requirement for perfectionism or drive” (Kazdin, 2019).

Years later, psychologist Christina Maslach created a three-dimension model that narrowed the characteristics of the syndrome down to three factors - diminished professional efficacy, cynicism, and emotional exhaustion (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). This model has become the prominent blueprint of burnout in academia and medically. The World Health Organization (2019) subsequently formally accepted and published the model.

Inefficacy is a component of self-evaluation. It refers to an employee’s personal feelings of incompetence, productivity, and accomplishment levels in a given situation. Maslach has suggested that inefficacy is the last dimension of the model to emerge as an outcome of cynicism and exhaustion (Kalliath et al., 2000). Thus, a work environment filled with overwhelming and negative emotions dissolve the sense of effectiveness. Employees may find it difficult to function when they are emotionally or physically depleted and disconnected. In contrast to Maslach, other literature varies on when inefficacy develops. Scholars have viewed inefficacy as a linear result of emotional exhaustion followed by cynicism. Some also believe the feeling emerges in parallel along with the remaining dimensions (Breso et al., 2007). Others refer to the burnout state as an “efficacy crisis” suggesting that exhaustion and cynicism develop as a result of inefficacy (Breso et al., 2007). An example of this scenario may occur if performance feedback is untimely. Hearing no thoughts on performance may cause employees to wonder about its quality and their value to the team triggering exhaustion and cynicism. While empirical findings show that inefficacy impacts job performance resulting in long-term stress, some scholars do not believe it is a strong,

reliable predictor of burnout. Scholars including Kalliath et al. (2000) believe that instead of a three-dimension model, burnout is in fact a two-dimension model solely including cynicism and emotional exhaustion.

Cynicism, also referred to as depersonalization, reflects a detachment. It is a method of mentally distancing one's self psychologically from the workplace. Instead of feeling invested in assignments, employees develop an impersonal feeling toward their tasks. It also has a darker expression as some employees become jaded and distrustful of the motives of other colleagues. This can have significant effects on productivity, profitability, and quality of work. For white-collar professionals experiencing cynicism, less due diligence or careless judgement may occur potentially breaching federal or regulatory laws. Material mistakes and oversights can result in fines, jail time, and reputational damage. While cynicism can be attributed to high workloads, it also appears in environments with little fairness, high conflict and employees that lack autonomy. Persistent cynicism among employees is typically an indicator that organizational commitment, motivation, and job satisfaction is low. The last noted facet - emotional exhaustion - is considered the primary attribute of the syndrome (Kalliath et al. (2000; Whittington et al., 2021).

The third dimension of burnout is emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion refers to a state of feeling overextended and emotionally depleted from an accumulation of stress. Of the three dimensions, study findings have shown that it is the prominent symptom of the syndrome (Burke, 1989; Kalliath et al., 2000). When unreasonable demands, conflict or lack of support deplete emotional resources, well-being and the ability to take on a fiduciary role of others is diminished (Valcour, 2020). Prolonged periods of stress create emotional exhaustion in the work-

place. What triggers emotional exhaustion in each individual may differ. An instance that is considered overwhelming for one, may not be challenging for another. Inherent risks of individuals also play a role as well.

Common triggers of emotional exhaustion have included long work hours, unreasonable workloads, and lack of control. Research studies have mostly focused on human service occupations such as therapists, medical professionals, and law enforcement roles (Whittington et al., 2021). Symptoms of emotional exhaustion can manifest both mentally and physically. Mental traits include feelings of being “stuck” or “trapped” in situations. Physically, it can materialize into a growing list of issues including insomnia, headaches, and gastric complications. Prolonged physical reactions can even create permanent damage to an employee’s well-being.

Despite the many decades of study and even a renewed focus of stressors as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, questions and criticisms exist of the syndrome. There remain open questions around how to properly differentiate burnout from other conditions, whether it should be considered a medical condition, and what solutions will adequately resolve the condition.

Even with a separate medical definition of the phenomenon, there are overlaps with medical conditions anxiety and depression creating confusion and eventual dismissal that burnout is the source of employees’ ailments (Kazdin, 2019). A frequent noted example is insomnia which overlaps with mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. Similarly, gastric and bowel issues are associated with stress (Kazdin, 2019). The stark difference is burnout has yet to be upgraded from a syndrome to a medical condition. A medical condition is an abnormal state of health that interferes with well-being. A syndrome is defined as a set of signs and symptoms that characterize a particular disease. Medical conditions have a determined cause. There are established methods to treat the problem. Also critical, is that it is more likely to be covered by insurance and receive

attention in the form of benefits from the employer. Syndromes - at their onset - do not typically cause damage to organs or body systems. They also usually do not appear in blood tests, body scans, or X-rays. Medical tests for employees experiencing burnout syndrome may more or less appear as "normal." With no cause established by the medical community and normal test results, it may easily fail to be addressed. This can have detrimental consequences for the employee. The American Heart Association recently attested to the positive correlation between emotional distress and cardiovascular risk (McBride, 2021). This observation becomes more critical as studies such as those conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation - known for focusing on current national health issues - reveal that four in ten adults have reported symptoms of stress. This is over double the amount of pre-pandemic rates. With no upgrade to medical condition, the burden of correction sits with the employee – despite starting with, being controlled by, and being sustained inside the organization (Kazdin, 2019). Those conditions may appear in the form of high levels of emotional dissonance, unreasonable workloads, and work group exclusion.

### **Emotional Labor and Conservation of Resources Theory**

Emotional labor is a process of managing feelings in an effort to fulfill the requirements or expectations of a job role. It is often referred to as emotions work. The concept was introduced by sociologist Arlie Hochschild in 1979. It was later updated by Hochschild in 1983 to expand the concept of the term (Williams, 2013). The update included economic commodity as a desired outcome of displayed emotions (Grandey et al., 2015; Williams, 2013).

Emotions management may occur through cognitive, physical, or expressive means (Grandey et al., 2015). Cognitive management refers to attempting to modify your thoughts, ideas, or beliefs in an effort to change your emotions. For example, employees may publicly display photos on their desk that frequently trigger happy emotions. When attempting to manage

emotions physically, employees may take deep breaths or walks to suppress frustration or reduce anger. Using expressive gestures is a third way to manage emotions. For some employees, simply smiling may erode negative feelings.

Hochschild further categorized the manner of emotion management by the degree to which employees believe the emotions displayed. He identified two degree types - surface acting and deep acting. When surface acting, the employee visibly exhibits an emotion for the benefit of the audience (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018). They pretend with the intention of their audience having a specific reaction or engagement. Surface acting is also referred to as “faking in bad faith” as the exhibited emotion is not genuine. When deep acting, the employee seeks to authentically believe the emotions exhibited (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018). Unlike surface acting, the reaction of the intended audience is secondary. The employee’s first concern is believing their exhibited emotion. Deep acting is referred to as “faking in good faith” (Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018). However, it should be noted that with both surface acting and deep acting, both instances include an employee attempting to change their initial, authentic emotions.

Emotional dissonance describes the discrepancy between emotions felt and what is displayed based on what is required or what is perceived to be appropriate for the job role (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018). It may also be described as the strain experienced when emotions felt and those presented are different. Of the two types, surface acting has been thought of as the more problematic strategy as it presents superficial emotions (Andela & Truchot, 2017). This is especially critical in human service roles where an empathetic attribute is expected, or intuitive skillset is gained with experience (de Castro et al., 2006). For example, therapists are expected to truly be concerned about the well-being of their

patients not simply present for purely monetary reasons. The same is expected for those in the medical fields. The commercialization of emotions was a critical concern for theory founder Hochschild (Zapf & Holz, 2006). He suggested that there would be long-term impact on employees when their emotions became a commodity established by management. In highly standardized and routine environments, presenting false emotions may come with ease. However, in more dynamic environments, disingenuous emotions may be discovered by others and have negative career impacts (Zapf & Holz, 2006).

Emotional dissonance can place workers in a state of emotional exhaustion which is a strong predictor of burnout - specifically if a significant amount of energy is spent suppressing genuine emotions (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Hewlin, 2009). Empirical results have shown that emotional dissonance is positively related to two burnout components - emotional exhaustion and cynicism (Andela & Truchot, 2017; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Cheung & Tang, 2007). Emotional dissonance is negatively related to the third burnout component, inefficacy (Andela & Truchot, 2017; Cheung & Tang, 2007).

While emotional dissonance fulfills job demands, it often comes at an employee's cost. The conflict between genuine and displayed emotion over time may diminish an individual's identity. Lack of identity reduces the ability to respond spontaneously as an individual spends their effort on strategies to regulate themselves. Suppressing emotions can lead to feelings of hypocrisy and self-alienation from one's own emotions. The disconnect can also place some employees at risk of disappointing their business partners or colleagues (Andela & Truchot, 2017). In general, like physical labor, when constant emotional conflict is being reconciled, it can lead to performance issues, increased absenteeism, and emotional exhaustion (Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018).

The emotional labor and emotional dissonance constructs are in line with Stevan Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory (COR) (Halbesleben et al., 2014). COR rests on the underlying premise that individuals are motivated to protect and even acquire new resources. Resources refer to items valued by an individual. The theory further suggests that the loss of a resource has a greater impact than a similarly valued resource gain. Those may be broken down into four categories - objects, personal characteristics, states, and conditions. In all categories, employees make investments in resources to meet job demands with the expectation that a positive outcome will be received (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Stress appears when there is a threat of a resource loss, an actual resource loss, or when resources are taken and depleted with no resource gain afterwards (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey et al., 2015). Depletion occurs when emotion displays require more self-control than available (Grandey et al., 2015). The imbalance eventually results in the erosion of an employees' emotional resources.

In the past, studies on emotional labor and COR have surrounded human service fields. However, scholastic views on the topic have broadened. Emotional labor is not only exclusively thought to include required emotions. Emotional labor within the workplace is broadening to include the unseen, mental load involved in ensuring relationships with direct reports, partners, and supervisors are harmonious and happy. Ultimately, emotional labor could be thought of as any activity that depletes an employee's emotional, mental, or energetic tank. This is a concept Hobfoll disagreed with. However, the broadened concept acknowledges the changes experienced throughout the pandemic and those in white-collar roles. In the midst of the pandemic, there has been an increased effort to maintain status quo and, in some instances, surpass the normal course of business. As managers work to maintain their own job demands, they also have been adapting to changes in their personal lives and assisting with changes experienced by their supervisors,

staff, and business partners. Those changes may come in the form of process changes, colleague anxieties, or work schedules. Aside from the pandemic, the expanded view of emotional labor is more applicable to white-collar roles. While there is often limited interface with the direct customers in white-collar managerial roles, effectively achieving company objectives involves building and maintaining relationships. Emotions are not typically a role requirement, but there are expected or ideal emotions necessary for optimal performance and harmony.

A challenge emerges when workplace harmony requires labor in a deceptive manner. Corporations under pressure to meet profit goals forecasted to shareholders and reporting timelines are at particular risk. Unfortunately, aggressive timelines and high demands can create a domino effect. When deliverables that have a downstream impact fall behind or have an error, the risk of material misstatements and issues increases. For many managers, the demands do not just impact them individually. Sandwiched in the middle of a team's hierarchy, the demands of managers may involve business partners, direct reports, and supervisors. Thus, the effort involved in meeting targets spreads. In extreme toxic environments like those demonstrated in Wells Fargo, WorldCom, and Enron, leaders have threatened employees with termination and blackballing practices (Lilly et al., 2021; Witman, 2018). Ultimately, emotional labor driven by the bottom line is often associated with detrimental consequences.

Various management theories help explain why employees may engage in behavior that is harmful to others. Groupthink is a common driver behind such behavior. First coined by psychologist Irving Janis, groupthink refers to individuals making irrational decisions in an effort to retain group harmony (Lilly et al., 2021). When this actively occurs, employees may suppress their personal opinions to execute or advocate the expectations of the work group (Lilly et al., 2021). Group cohesion is the underlying moderator of the concept. The more cohesive the group,

the higher the probability that independent thinking of an employee will be replaced by group-think and vice versa. Success achieved by the work group also increases the probability that individuals will go along with the desires of the group. Most notable, any individuals that go against the group would be considered a threat (Lilly et al., 2021; Witman, 2018). Those threats may be as extreme as termination or as subtle as ostracism (Lilly et al., 2021). Thus, individuals tend to be compliant with the desires of the group in an effort to avoid punishment. Choosing between employment and morality and integrity can often prove to be exhausting for white-collar managers pressured to meet aggressive goals.

### **Job-Demands-Resources Model**

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model was established by researchers Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). The model seeks to explain how the workplace impacts employee well-being. The underlying premise is that all organizations can be categorized into two groups - job demands and job resources (Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). This is without consideration of sector or company (Bakker & de Vries, 2021; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Job demands refer to the physical, social or organizational aspects of the job that require consistent physical or mental efforts (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019; Qian et al., 2019). They are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs. Alone, they are not negative. However, when demands exceed existing resources, they become stressors (Jimenez & Dunkl, 2017; Park et al., 2020; Paškvan et al., 2016). Examples include excessive workloads, combative relationships with colleagues, and work-home interference that the pandemic introduced for some professionals. Meanwhile, job resources refer to factors that may assist in achieving work goals or drive development (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019;

Qian et al., 2019). Examples include autonomy, social support, feedback, or additional direct reports. What sets the JD-R model apart from others is that it reflects healthy and negative possible workplace scenarios. It can serve as a monitoring tool to continuously ensure optimal job characteristics are present. For example, an observation of high job demands and low job resources on the model reflects a high-stress workplace environment that may lead to burnout over long periods. The model suggests that if an individual performs at a high cost for extended periods of time, emotional exhaustion is likely to occur (Demerouti et al., 2001; Jimenez & Dunkl, 2017; Park et al., 2020). It insinuates that job resources such as autonomy or social support can hedge the impact of job demands and eventually lessen or postpone emotional exhaustion (Bakker et al., 2004). Without such support and inclusion, emotional support can prevail via factors including work group exclusion. The model also suggests that workplaces high in resources trigger employee motivation and lower turnover.

Despite this being a popular model, there has been criticism that it is not a consistently effective monitoring tool. It should be noted that to be more effective, employees can not all be treated — and thus monitored - the same to measure stress. Employees may (a) experience different degrees of job resources and demands; (b) be in different stages of job strain; (c) vary in using recovery and job crafting strategies; and (d) differ in personal resources such as emotional intelligence (Bakker & de Vries, 2021).

Corporate cultures with high levels of conflict, heavy workloads, and low resources can trigger emotional exhaustion and lead to burnout. While there are two distinct categories involved in the JD-R model, job demands have a stronger relationship with emotional exhaustion and burnout. The existence of heavy workloads and diminished resources aligns with the Job De-

mands-Resources (JD-R) theory. Past research has supported that burnout can be adequately explained using this model (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019; Qian et al., 2019). The model suggests that every working condition has its own unique set of stressors and can be categorized as either job demands or job resources (Çam & Öğülmüş, 2019).

### **Social Identity Theory and Work Group Inclusion Model**

Social identity theory (SIT) was first introduced by social psychologists Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s (Hughes et al., 2015; Willetts & Clarke, 2014). The theory suggests that employees' perception of group acceptance can be used to predict intergroup behavior and group outcomes. The theory also considers the consequences of an employee's personal and social identities based on their personal perceptions and group behavior. Theorists identified three distinct aspects of the construct – self-categorization, affective commitment, and group self-esteem. Self-categorization refers to the degree to which employees recognize themselves as a group member and their perspective of being similar to the group (Hughes et al., 2015; Willetts & Clarke, 2014). Affective commitment refers to an employees' perceived closeness to the group (Hughes et al., 2015; Willetts & Clarke, 2014). Group self-esteem refers to an employees' attitude toward the overall group (Hughes et al., 2015; Willetts & Clarke, 2014). Theory and empirical findings indicate that self-categorization and affective commitment have a positive correlation to positive group attitudes and positive social identity and self-esteem (Abrams et al., 2021; Hughes et al., 2015; Willetts & Clarke, 2014). This correlation can be attributed to an individual's need to belong and be accepted for their authentic selves. Thus, when social identity is positive, it leads to positive self-esteem, self-efficacy, and positive psychological well-being (Robinson et al., 2013). Once successfully part of a desired group, the theory suggests that members may attempt to seek even greater gain (Hughes et al., 2015). With this in mind, leaders should

properly manage how this occurs. A frequent method to obtain greater gain is by encouraging the belief that one group is better than others. If not managed properly, seeking such a distinction may result in establishing and spreading negative beliefs and attitudes (Hughes et al., 2015).

Leveraging, the social identity theory, the work group inclusion model was introduced by psychologist Marilyn Brewer in 1991 (Brewer, 1991). The theory was developed to provide understanding of intragroup and intergroup relations. It asserts that group members desire to feel included. The theory suggests that inclusion occurs when employees feel an opposing sense of belongingness and differentiation (Shore et al., 2011). This requires groups to be both similar to and different from peers. Thus, equilibrium must be established and consistently maintained at the group level. As work groups become more inclusive, the need for belongingness is fulfilled, but the distinction need is triggered. In contrast, where inclusion is minimum, distinction needs become less of a priority for individuals and the need to belong is initiated.

The work group inclusion model suggests that once such an imbalance occurs, employees will seek to fill the void in other areas. For example, as employees feel fully assimilated, the need to differentiate themselves will rise to avoid the risk of being interchangeable (Shore et al., 2011). A similar scenario exists among adolescents as they seek acceptance from peers yet desire to be authentic and unique. Employees will begin re-presenting their strengths to the group and highlighting unique attributes in an effort to end the feeling of being just a number in a large mass of individuals (Hornsey & Hogg, 1999). If their need remains unmet, those employees will seek subgroups. In contrast, those who feel too distinct from the group will seek increased assimilation. They will search for similarities with others. The challenge emerges if subgroups selected by employees conflict with the mission of the group as a whole. In addition, leaders must remain cognizant of tokenism. While visually it appears as diversity, it is likely to lead to consequences

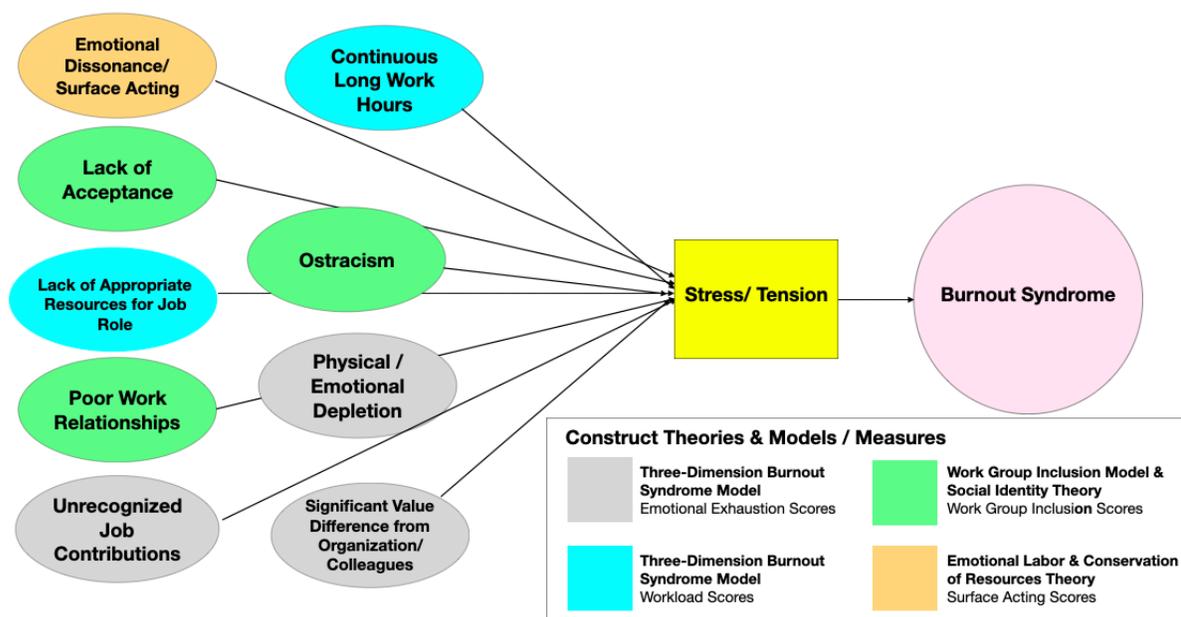
if not managed properly. Tokenism can be isolating resulting in anxiety and stress as one or several individuals work to represent many. This ultimately results in emotional exhaustion and eventually burnout (Gillespie, 2020).

In line with Shore et al.'s model (2011), employees have a human need to be unique. Uniqueness refers to the need to be distinct from the group (Shore et al., 2011). It not only involves the acceptance of differences among others, it involves appreciating the value of those differences and respecting them (Shore et al., 2011). When teammates sense too many similarities to others in a group, their sense of uniqueness becomes threatened and can result in chaos (Shore et al., 2011).

Belongingness refers to the human need to feel safe, supported, and accepted. Such a need is desired in both social and professional environments. It is needed to experience a sense of social connection (Williams & Nida, 2011). When employees feel they belong, they perceive that the organization cares for them as their genuine self. Ideally, employees choose social identities with groups, then seek the group's acceptance (Shore et al., 2011). Their need is fulfilled when an employee sees their identity in the work group. Thus, in line with the social identification concept, belongingness reflects the unity of individuals and work group (Filstad et al., 2019). When employees do not feel accepted, isolation can emerge and performance can diminish. Poor work quality and the consequences of ostracism can create material financial losses if not properly managed. When employees feel accepted, organizations reap the synergy via financial benefits. A sense of belonging has been associated with an increase in of over 50% of job performance (Carr et al., 2019). Similarly, it has been associated with over 50% of decreases in turnover and absenteeism (Carr et al., 2019).

A sense of belonging and inclusion develops cohesion and contribute to the formation of high-performing teams (Wheelan et al., 2021). While groups work toward a common goal, high performing teams are able to create synergy beyond individual skills. Benefits include optimal performance, the ability to confront issues and problem-solve, and the ability to hold poor performers accountable (Wheelan et al., 2021).

It should be noted Chung et al.'s work group inclusion model offered some differences from past models. Most past findings have asserted that racial similarity leads to greater workplace satisfaction, fewer conflicts, reduced turnovers, and lower turnover intent (Shore et al., 2011). However, that conclusion was not consistent. The mixed research findings encouraged Chung et al. to develop a framework that suggests demographic similarities do not confirm a sense of belongingness. Thus, Chung et al.'s model identifies uniqueness as the accompanied state required for employees to experience inclusion (Shore et al., 2011). With this framework in mind, employees once considered a token, may not necessarily experience negativity. The framework suggests that a URM could be valued for their uniqueness and not looked upon as a representative for their group (Shore et al., 2011).



**Figure 1**

*Theoretical Model*

**Related Literature**

This study explores emotional exhaustion experienced by managers and how job demand as well as symptoms often derived from lack of diversity and inclusion may contribute to their exhaustive state. Emotional exhaustion refers to the mental depletion or overload employees experience from burnout syndrome. It is also a strong predictor that employees are being inflicted with the syndrome – an eventual costly state to the organization, individuals, and their families. When experiencing emotional exhaustion, employers can often pinpoint the state via changes in work performance, withdrawal, or morale (Jeung et al., 2018). Examples include missed deadlines, increased turnover, or declining commitment.

According to a 2018 study done by the American Institute of Stress, burnout costs the United States more than \$300 billion per year in “absenteeism, medical, legal, insurance, and di-

minished productivity” (Jeung et al., 2018). Despite the price tag, over the past three decades, research across various industry types has been limited. Most published empirical studies, reviews, and meta-analyses on burnout have focused on human service roles such as caregivers, doctors, and medical professionals. In contrast, white-collar management roles supporting much of the United States’ economy have had limited mention. These roles include employees with significant decision-making power that may impact the financial well-being of organizations as well as the financial health of individuals. Such influence brings with it federal and professional regulations as well as internal customer and profit goals. Adding more complexity, these goals are typically time-sensitive in an effort to meet legislative mandates and to gain an edge over competitors. Unfortunately, such an environment breeds anxiety and stress among employees as they balance organization expectations with their personal lives. While “pushing through” the discomfort has casually been the advice of some, this approach can be the catalyst of greater harm than good. Long work hours, high workloads, lack of work-life balance, and inadequate compensation present while pushing through can result in burnout. Emotional exhaustion and burnout represent the mind and body’s way of signaling a need. It is ultimately, an imbalance of demands (e.g. deadlines, demands, workload) in comparison to resources (e.g., supplies, time, energy) (Chen et al., 2019; Koutsimani et al., 2019).

Intensified workloads which require an increased amount of effort from employees without increased resources can originate organically through continuous customer needs, evolving working conditions, and industry changes (Rantanen et al., 2021). Resources not only refer to time and energy, but also sources of motivation and restoration. Traveling, holiday gatherings and dinner with friends all represent a form of resource. Unfortunately, the recent Covid-19 pan-

demic removed many of those options as workers chose physical well-being over social gatherings and activities used to recover from day-to-day stress. In the American Psychological Association's 2021 *Work and Well-being Survey* of 1,501 United States' adult workers, 79% of participants revealed that they experienced occupational stress in the month prior to the survey (Thorbecke, 2021). This serves as just one example of why the pandemic has been linked to soaring burnout rates for both essential workers and white-collar office workers (Thorbecke, 2021).

At the onset of the current Covid-19 pandemic, American workers experienced a surge in burnout and emotional exhaustion. There was a loss of normalcy and loss of financial and physical security. For essential workers, the stressors have been well documented via the number of rising infection cases and challenges associated with attempting to stay healthy while tending to those sick and new evolving restrictions (Thorbecke, 2021). In contrast, the pandemic forced many white-collar employees to work from home and face a different set of challenges. With school and daycare doors closed, many were left with mastering the balancing act of home, personal, and family responsibilities simultaneously. The change left many feeling overwhelmed and guilt-ridden on how to properly allocate each its appropriate attention (Valcour, 2020). There was little to no assistance and in some instances no opportunity for quiet time. For others, working from home created isolation and a feeling of confinement that was overbearing (Valcour, 2020).

Particularly critical for this study is understanding how stress and exhaustion impact managers during the pandemic. Harter (2021) notes that Gallup consulting and research group tracked the self-reported state of managers - including individual contributors - during the pandemic at its onset in March 2020 and later throughout the following year in 2021. As expected, 2021 saw a significant increase in exhaustion with participants reporting they felt a sense of

burnout “very often” or always” (Harter, 2021). The emotions of managers are especially important in the workplace as they set the tone for corporate culture. Corporate culture consists of the shared values, attitudes, and beliefs that exist within an organization (Nguyen et al., 2019). Cultural norms deriving from the environment defines what is acceptable and discouraged within the organization (Nguyen et al., 2019). When building a risk-based corporate culture, it involves ensuring employees are aware of risk and less susceptible to conforming behavior that is unethical and pose a threat to the organization (Bushman et al., 2018). When norms and attitudes align with an employee’s personal values and needs, synergy can emerge (Nguyen et al., 2019). Managers and executives should play a critical role in not only establishing the culture, but determining what they desire for the culture to emphasize (Nguyen et al., 2019). If managers are emotionally depleted, it challenges their influence over the team. Contributing factors of such a state includes lack of work-life balance and lack of motivation (Abramson, 2022).

A new demand of virtual meetings has also risen in the midst of the pandemic. Despite its harmless appearance, virtual meetings have been a constant source of stress in office settings. Without face-to-face contact, nonverbal cues are missed which serve a critical role in communication. When using video conferencing, receiving no cues from the audience makes it challenging for presenters to determine who is engaged or who may have concerns or questions on what is being said or shown on screen. Technology can also contribute as a stressor as video and audio issues prevent the ability to identify who is speaking or responding. Nonverbal cues also break the monotony of staring at a screen for the bulk of the day. The end result includes employees overcompensating to guess what the missing nonverbal cues are (Laskowski-Jones & Castner, 2022).

A group significantly impacted from workplace stress is women. Women emerged as a highly vulnerable group to burnout which was heightened by the pandemic. In June 2020, The Pew Research Center reported that 11.5 million women - in comparison to 9 million men - lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic (Truscott-Smith et al., 2022). Working women were also found to experience higher on-the-job burnout than working men do - a difference that widened during the pandemic. Just before the pandemic in 2019, 30% of women and 27% of men revealed they "very often" or "always" experience a sense of burnout (Truscott-Smith et al., 2022). The variance between the two groups spread significantly once the pandemic arose. The three-percentage-point difference grew to a twelve-percentage point gap in 2020 when measured March to December (Truscott-Smith et al., 2022). A strong driver in the increase is believed to be among working mothers who experienced a significant disruption (Saad et al., 2021). Many mothers took on the lead role as childcare providers - and in some cases educators - when institution doors closed. This change occurred as working mothers balanced their full-time jobs simultaneously (Truscott-Smith et al., 2022).

Today, over two years since the pandemic was declared, many managers are returning to the physical workplace. However, emotional exhaustion and burnout are not following suit toward normalizing. Instead, new stressors are emerging as employees return to work. For those employees with unvaccinated family members, returning to work is a high-risk activity. Others may experience anxiety when considering sharing their vaccination or health status with coworkers. In addition, returning to the office may reduce feelings of autonomy and diminish work-life balance as commutes re-enter their day. Despite the pandemic's disadvantages, returning to the office caused employees to recalibrate their workplace expectations. The new challenges, together with changed priorities evolved into what is being referred to as The Great Resignation.

## Great Resignation

In 2021, an all-time record was set as over 24 million American employees between April and September voluntarily left their jobs (Sull et al., 2022). By January of the following year, approximately 4.3 million Americans, or 3% of workers, departed their roles according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Job Openings and Labor Turnover* report (Leonhardt, 2022). Just a month later, the statistic rose by 100,000 more people according to the U.S. Department of Labor (Iacurci, 2022). Organizational psychologist and business professor, Anthony Klotz, coined the trend just before the pandemic occurred in 2019 (Laskowski-Jones & Castner, 2022). At the time, annual worker turnover had climbed to an all-time high (Laskowski-Jones & Castner, 2022). A contributing factor of the mass departure across sectors has been identified as emotional exhaustion and burnout. Burnout concerns have mounted as those employees left behind in the exodus picked up the additional work demands - in many instances with no additional resources. Other major reasons include a sense of being devalued, - an identified driver of burnout - career advancement, and an accumulation of toxic workplace environments (Hirsch, 2021; McKinney, 2022; Moss, 2021; Parker & Horowitz, 2022).

Primary contributors to toxic culture include failure to encourage diversity, inclusion, equity, and prevent unethical practices (Hirsch, 2021; Sull et al., 2022). According to a Stanford University study, entities with perceived poor environments worsened during the pandemic (Hirsch, 2021). It has been a factor that has led white-collar employees who salvaged their jobs during the pandemic to leave them in the present unknown economic state rather than continue to labor in "unsupportive environments" (Hirsch, 2021). Although the great resignation is predicted to plateau soon, the trend is raising employer's attention to workplace inequities as it pertains to not only URM, but women and other disadvantaged groups (Hirsch, 2021).

## **Workplace Diversity and Inclusion**

Unfortunately, burnout studies focusing on gender along with race and ethnicity have proven to be inconclusive and limited (Lawrence et al., 2021). Two large drivers of this gap may include the lack of minority representation in the corporate workplace and the inherent physical and mental issues faced by African-Americans. African-Americans make up 13% of the United States population (Gynn & Schrottenboer, 2020; Rope, 2021; United States Census Bureau, 2021). However, only 8% of white-collar, corporate positions are made up of African-Americans (Gynn & Schrottenboer, 2020; Rope, 2021; United States Census Bureau, 2021).

The disparity is even more acute at the executive level. African-Americans make up less than 1% of Fortune 500 chief executive officers (McKinney, 2022; Rope, 2021). This homogeneity among leaders is a driver in the issues faced by URM at lower levels of the organization. While homogeneous workplaces may have strong cohesion due to shared culture, opinions, and norms, it may also overshadow biases towards those not included in the homogeneous group. It is a factor associated with the underestimates of workplace inequities faced by URM (Krentz, 2019). The similarity among leaders becomes critical when they control the financing and selection of diversity programs and culture. With no complete understanding of biases and issues, effective solutions cannot be exercised. Institutional biases and discrimination directly pose a threat to civil rights laws and empower inequitable opportunities, unfair policies and normalcies (McGee, 2020).

Low minority percentages in the workplace also appear to be in direct contrast to the long-term strategy of most publicly traded United States' corporations. Most Fortune 500 companies have active programs in place to stimulate and ensure employee diversity (Flory et al., 2021). However, these pro-diversity portrayals by organizations are disconnected from their true

reality. Wilton et al. (2020) notes that 87% of all Fortune 500 companies have publicly expressed their commitment to diversity on their website, yet only 3% of those organizations are willing to report their employee demographics.

Such low numbers also gives context to the reported sense of undervalue African-Americans reported in The Great Resignation surveys. With less representation in the workplace, this group is likely to have less sponsorship for career advancement. The *2022 Job Seeker Nation Report* revealed that African-American workers' participation in the mass exit is to obtain career momentum (Taylor, 2022). An estimated 8 million African-American employees left their jobs in 2021 (Taylor, 2022). One of the factors driving this mass departure was identified as systemic glass ceilings (McKinney, 2022; Taylor, 2022).

Despite the mounting research identifying problems when there is a lack of diversity, it is key for leaders to be aware that diversity can bring enhancements to organizations. Today, more than any other time, the demographic makeup of the organization is likely to be diverse. Thus, it appropriate that executive leaders understand how to cultivate it. When properly cultivated, diversity encourages social integration and trust which enhances productivity, efficiency, and innovation (Guillaume et al., 2014; Wheelan et al., 2021). If diversity is mismanaged, it can undermine social integration and eventually diminish job performance (Guillaume et al., 2014). When diversity and inclusion are embraced, the ingredients for a high-performing team emerge for individual employees and for the organization (Wheelan et al., 2021). On an individual basis, representation extends beyond numbers and creates a place of safety, comfort, and confidence. Guillaume et al. (2014) presents a model that explains how diversity impacts work groups.

Central to Guillaume et al.'s (2014) model is social group identity. The model suggests that the higher the dissimilarity of the work group, the more favorable the group outcomes.

Group outcomes include “innovation, effectiveness, and well-being” (Guillaume et al., 2014). Effectiveness refers to an employee’s contributions to their role. They may deliver an in-role performance which includes the performance of their formally identified tasks or extra-role performance which includes organizational citizenship behavior - contributions beyond the expected tasks such as idea sharing or assisting overwhelmed employees. Well-being refers to an employee’s satisfaction with their role and the extent to which their job contributes to positive health conditions. The mentioned outcomes emerge as employees are willing to contribute to their work group. Their willingness is driven by their individual needs being met. In line with models like Shore et al.’s inclusion concept, needs include examples such as a sense of belongingness and acceptance of uniqueness. The extent to which diversity drives favorable outcomes depends on how individuals and the overall organization values inclusion and equitable treatment. Yet another example of why corporate culture is a critical attribute of the workplace (Guillaume et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011).

Exposure to similar people in senior roles or even lateral roles suggests that statistically, there are opportunities available (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Specifically, in the case of senior roles, it allows underrepresented employees to envision themselves beyond their current role. What once may have appeared bleak, becomes a possibility. At an organization level, communication is more open and effective (Wheelan et al., 2021). Freedom of expression facilitates the discussion of ideas and opinions (Wheelan et al., 2021). Creativity and innovation are enhanced as the group leverages different opinions, work styles, and backgrounds (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Cottrill et al., 2014; Wheelan et al., 2021). Study findings show that diversity increases critical thinking and problem solving (Wheelan et al., 2021). Not only do teams benefit from considering alternative viewpoints, conflicts with trusted and respected peers with

no fear of retaliation enhances conflict resolution (Wheelan et al., 2021). Most critical to organizations, is the correlation to diversity and improved financial performance (Wheelan et al., 2021). Equitable organizations out pace their competition by leveraging and embracing the unique talents, ideas, and opinions of their team.

A cognitive resource perspective can also be utilized to illustrate the competitive advantage diversity has on workplace outcomes (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). “The combination of employees’ knowledge, skills, and abilities become the firms’ human capital, and source of competitive advantage to the extent the resources are valuable ... and strategically difficult to substitute” (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013). Despite the supported diversity findings, research proves that workplaces are still impacted by homophily - the tendency for people to be attracted to others similar to them (Phillips et al., 2018). URM observe this environment as well as what happens to them and others and form conclusions about the priorities of their organization. When diversity and inclusion are not embraced in the workplace, negative consequences may arise. Exclusion has tangible and measurable impacts - low quality performance, decreased employee satisfaction, turnover, and burnout (Bloudoff-Indelicato, 2016; Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Phillips et al., 2018).

Proper diversity management includes treating employees fairly with their well-being in mind despite what the diversity composition consists of (Cottrill et al., 2014). While diversity statistically lags, its occurrence in the workplace is more probable than past years. Thus, inclusion is critical. Simply appreciating or desiring diversity is no longer sufficient. It involves the appreciation of individual differences to a degree that an “employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (Guillaume et al., 2014; Shore et al., 2011). Despite its

known positive impacts, a glaring issue with inclusion is that there remains no consensus on its construct (Shore et al., 2011). Such a gap makes it challenging for organizations to apply the concept practically and effectively. It also evolves into counterproductive behavior which takes away from productivity (Zhu & Zhang, 2021). Lack of inclusion has also been associated with challenges on an individual level. Consistent exclusion has been associated with psychological and physical issues (Richard et al., 2021).

### **Health Implications**

In general, stress triggers the release of certain hormones including cortisol and catecholamines - two primary stress hormones (McEwen, 2008). These hormones are key indicators of threats. Once resolved, the body returns back to its normal state. However, chronic triggering of the stress-response system that occurs during burnout can disturb a significant portion of the body's functionality and escalate the likelihood of numerous health issues (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2021; McEwen, 2008). Those issues include increased heart rate, high blood pressure, and elevated blood sugar levels (Schrader, 2019).

The release of cortisol also impairs bodily functions outside of stressful or fight-or-flight instances. Such a constant release of the hormone disrupts the immune, digestive, and reproductive systems (Schrader, 2019). Constant fight or flight mode can also lead to negative changes to eating habits, poor sleeping hygiene, digestion issues, significant weight loss or gain, frequent heart palpitations, headaches or migraines, as well as high blood pressure (Schrader, 2019). In a seven year period, researchers found that African-Americans reporting high levels of stress had a 22% higher risk of developing high blood pressure when compared with participants with lower stress levels (Gavidia, 2019). This inherent risk suggests that long bouts of stress may adversely contribute to poor cardiovascular health (Gavidia, 2019).

Chronic stressors also increase allostatic load. Allostatic load refers to the accumulation of biological impacts or consequences experienced when the body adapts to daily physical and emotional stress. It is also described as bodily “wear and tear” (Van Dyke et al., 2020). As demands exceed the body’s existing resources, the body enters into survival mode. High allostatic loads are the breeding ground for several diseases and conditions - premature gaining of the immune system, “coronary vascular disease, obesity, diabetes, depression, cognitive impairment and both inflammatory and autoimmune disorders” (Djuric et al., 2008). Stress may also lead to negative birth outcomes (Gavidia, 2019).

The ramifications of excessive stress go beyond physical and emotional issues. Such impacts are followed by social erosions of relationships with loved ones and in the workplace. A large driver of relationship changes is due to the anxiety, lack of motivation, frustration, and hopelessness the impacted individual may be feeling (Schrader, 2019).

### **African-American Workplace Stressors**

On most poor health indicators – for stressor and non-stressor medical conditions - African-Americans experience far worse states in comparison to Caucasian Americans. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health cites that African-Americans are more likely to experience psychological distress in comparison to Caucasian Americans (American Psychological Association, 2016). Researchers have identified perceived pervasive discrimination as a key workplace differentiator between the races that trigger such poor health states (Van Dyke et al., 2020). Perceived pervasive discrimination is associated with chronic exhaustion and stress (Van Dyke et al., 2020). This form of exhaustion and stress extends beyond daily pressures. It is a long-term state. In the workplace, this external occurrence is not just ex-

clusive to race. It can include gender and sexual orientation differences. However, race and ethnicity has been found to be a key indicator when exploring health disparities among different groups (Meyer et al., 2021). The chronic exhaustion and stress associated with discrimination is a catalyst for health issues in URM. Statistics reflect that African-Americans, along with Native Hawaiians and Latin Americans experiencing these occurrences, have been impacted greatly by diabetes (Teshome et al., 2022; Williams, 2018; Williams et al., 2018). According to a study published recently in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, discrimination and socioeconomic status also serve as possible catalysts for a heightened risk of developing high blood pressure, or hypertension (Williams, 2018). Perceived discrimination can also drive unhealthy behaviors such as cigarette smoking or alcohol and substance use (Williams, 2018).

When considering mental health stemming from workplace discrimination, vigilance is a frequently used term that follows. Vigilance is a heightened sense of awareness of danger (Williams, 2018). A recent Baltimore study found that African-American adults tend to experience higher levels of vigilance than Caucasian American (Williams, 2018). Not surprising, vigilance also has a positive correlation with depressive symptoms (Williams, 2018).

Other external workplace stressors that may be experienced by URM are team biases (Wheelan et al., 2021). Biases may manifest through lower statuses within work groups with less influence (Wheelan et al., 2021). While this informal designation happens naturally - and in most instances unconsciously - if that assignment is based on characteristics such as race or ethnicity, a larger stress-oriented issue can emerge. Unfortunately, these instances are noted often among minorities (Wheelan et al., 2021). The consequence is group performance suffers when statuses are deemed inappropriate or employee contributions to the group are ignored (Wheelan et al., 2021). Unaddressed or unknowing biases may result in workplace discrimination. Williams et al.

(2018) notes that African-Americans have reported the highest instances of racial discrimination - both overt and covert. Williams et al. (2018) further adds that experiences of discrimination can contribute to feelings of trauma as well as posttraumatic stress disorder. Such experiences have aided to a narrative providing insight on why some African-American managers have expressed hesitancy on returning to the workplace following the pandemic. In a 2021 study, more African-American workers expressed they were more satisfied working remotely in comparison to other races (Brooks, 2021).

Working from home has allowed some URM to shield themselves from the microaggressions of the workplace which are not only mentally exhausting, but may evolve into new burdens to hedge or correct. When working from home, feelings of being an outlier and different from peers significantly decreases. It also reduces energy exerted in identity managing and emotional dissonance. However, despite the mentioned inequalities and microaggressions, empirical findings show that African-Americans may value success in the workplace over their mental and physical well-being (McGee, 2020). This difference results in a great internal conflict. These workplace challenges and internal conflicts are present in several schemas and archetypes internally adopted by African-Americans - code-shifting, pet-to-threat phenomenon, and the strong Black woman schema. The associated beliefs and behaviors have often been generationally passed down or observed by many African-Americans. Considered together with workplace stressors such as biases, ostracism, and heavy workloads, emotional exhaustion for African-Americans is likely to materialize.

### ***Code-switching***

Code-switching, or identity shifting, refers to the strategy of modifying one's behavior, speech, and appearance to manage interracial environments (McCluney et al., 2019). The ways

the strategy is executed widely varies. However, the purpose of the approach is to encourage more acceptance from majority counterparts (McCluney et al., 2019). It involves a perceived idea of what behavior or image is accepted, followed by the execution of that idea. The switch may be a conscious act or an automatic unconscious one with a dominant social group. For years, the strategy has been viewed as a workplace survival tactic. The underlying belief was not applying the strategy would lead to discrimination or possibly termination (McCluney et al., 2019). It also has been associated with strong positive outcomes such as advancement, economic gains, and a form of empowerment (McCluney et al., 2019). Speaking the language of the majority can aid in ensuring ideas and messages of URM is heard. There are several motivations for these changes which include to combat historically imposed stereotypes of being incompetent, angry, or lazy; to increase the perception of professionalism and likelihood of hiring; or to increase the likelihood of promotion (McCluney et al., 2019). Despite external benefits, shifting identities can also produce internal and in-group conflict (Dickens & Chavez, 2018). Engaging in code-switching can trigger hostility among other minorities as they perceive such behavior as a form of self-hatred and act of abandonment from one's culture. It can also leave those engaging in the shift to feel emotionally and physically exhausted from the execution of the act along with a feeling that their true identity is unacceptable.

### ***Pet-to-Threat Phenomenon***

The pet-to-threat phenomenon was coined by professor Dr. Kecia Thomas in 2013 (Donahue et al., 2021; Johnson & Thomas, 2012). The term describes instances when minority teammates are initially embraced and cultivated by non-minority mentors. However, as the mentee becomes competent and confident, the mentor becomes hostile, distant, and in some instances detrimental to their success. The support and access previously provided toward career building

opportunities diminishes as the minority mentee becomes seen as a threat (Johnson & Thomas, 2012; McGee, 2020). The archetype was first used to describe African-American women. However, it has since been applied to both genders and across sectors (Donahue et al., 2021; McGee, 2020).

Individually, the mentee tends to become unmotivated as their workplace accomplishments begin to work against them evolving into drivers for leader resentment. This phenomenon can substantially halt the attrition of competent middle and senior level associates. At an organization level, if such a phenomenon builds a glass ceiling, the ability to retain and develop talent decreases. Thus, it serves as motivation for leaders to create a culture where talent and diversity can thrive.

### ***Strong Black Woman Schema***

The strong black woman (SBW) mantra has casually been used for many years in American culture. It is often used to signify an African-American woman in control of her life and facing adversity independently without need for support or assistance. However, those using the phrase often overlook the severity involved in executing the mantra. In this schema, two characteristics are prominent - strength and caregiving - often times at the cost of mental and physically well-being (Liao et al., 2020).

Strength is reflected in the determination to succeed, remain independent, and dedication to strict work ethic (Liao et al., 2020). Caregiving is demonstrated by behaving in a self-sacrificing manner and prioritizing the needs of others ahead of their own (Liao et al., 2020). Those who embrace the schema have the ability to excel when facing challenges. However, empirical results show that moderate to high levels of SBW acceptance is positively correlated with symptoms of depression and stress (Donovan & West, 2015; Liao et al., 2020).

The SBW schema can be traced back to several factors. Its initial origin dates back to American slavery. Portraying African-American women as physically and psychologically stronger when compared to other races served as justification for inhumane treatment toward them and their family. The enslaved women in turn sought to protect their daughters by socializing them to be strong in preparation for the cruelty and unjust life faced on plantations (Donovan & West, 2015; Liao et al., 2020). Years later, the African-American family faced different obstacles as hardships and systematic oppression ranged from low wages, unemployment, and mass male incarceration (Donovan & West, 2015; Liao et al., 2020). Women, who were often the head of the household, developed strong demeanors to manage the home and ensure the cohesiveness of their family. The woman served as financial providers and caretaker. Most recently, modern women have accepted the mantra in an effort to combat negative stereotypes plaguing the race in work and social settings (Liao et al., 2020).

Quantitative study findings have positively predicted depressive symptoms with those exhibiting SBW (Watson & Hunter, 2016). Similarly, the schema has also been correlated with anxiety symptoms such as migraines and panic attacks (Watson & Hunter, 2016). Unfortunately, adoption of this schema includes neglecting warning signs. In qualitative interviews, African-American women relayed that such anxiety was viewed as a normalcy of their lives and dismissed it as an indication of a health issue (Liao et al., 2020). They further added that adoption of the mantra often included not attending to their own needs and suppressing their emotions (Liao et al., 2020). The “loss of self” is also considered a hallmark of the schema (Abrams et al., 2019). Just as facing adversity may trigger depression, suppression of one’s emotions and needs also drives an imbalance that can eventually lead to depression (Abrams et al., 2019).

The SBW schema has also been positively associated with maladaptive perfectionism (MP) - an individual risk often associated with emotional exhaustion and burnout (Smith et al., 2018). Those impacted by MP establish unrealistic standards to achieve. They are typically excessively preoccupied with mistakes and the negative aspects of their work performance. A perceived disparity between their personal standards and actual performance is often present (Liao et al., 2020). Performance is viewed as indicator of self-worth. Socially, those with MP may easily accept ostracism due to the fear of being negatively assessed by others (Liao et al., 2020). Identifying this schema is especially key to proper mental assessments. Leaders should be mindful that those displaying this schema will downplay any issues or stress levels (Liao et al., 2020).

### ***Internalized Discrimination***

Similar to SBW, internalized discrimination involves an awareness of negative stereotypes associated with the group. However, unlike SBW where there is an active effort to overcome negative beliefs, internalized discrimination accepts the negative as truth. While there is some debate surrounding its impact, some psychologists maintain that internalized discrimination damages self-esteem. It is considered a self-destructive behavior. There is an acceptance from the adopter that their racial group is devalued which results in increased mental and physical issues (Stuber et al., 2008).

### **Summary**

Literature - along with the medical community - acknowledge long-term emotional exhaustion as a characteristic of burnout. However, empirical findings show that other workplace instances such as high workloads, constant surface acting, and lack of inclusion can trigger burnout. For URM, workplaces that lack diversity and inclusion increase the inherent risk of stressors and often times breed microaggressions. If left unaddressed, those microaggressions along with

schemas and archetypes such as code-switching, pet-to-threat, and SBW may manifest into detrimental physical and mental outcomes that significantly contribute to workplace exhaustion and eventual burnout. While it is tempting to view burnout as an employee level issue that can be resolved with quick self-help strategies and time off from work, it is critical to keep in mind that it is a systemic issue.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Overview

Quantitative, predictive correlational and causal-comparative designs were used in this study to examine how emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles. This chapter describes the methods used to address each research question and corresponding null hypotheses. The method details the design types, participants, setting and procedures of the study.

### Design

The predictive correlational and causal-comparative designs used align with the following two research questions, respectively:

**RQ1:** How accurately can emotional exhaustion scores for managers be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

**RQ2:** Is there a difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

### Predictive Correlational Design

Predictive correlational design explores the extent to which criterion behavior can be projected by predictor variables (Gall et al., 2007). Understanding this degree of a relationship between variables is often viewed as an advantage in comparison to causal-comparative designs which only identifies causes of group differences (Gall et al., 2007). Predictor variables project the outcome of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The criterion variable represents the results of the predictor variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Based on models and theories of burnout, work group inclusion, emotional labor, job demand-resources, and conversation of re-

sources, it was hypothesized that work group inclusion scores, workload scores, and surface acting scores may project emotional exhaustion scores - the primary result of occupational burnout. This design aided in determining how accurately emotional exhaustion for managers could be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores. The presumed predictor variables include workload scores, surface acting scores, and work group inclusion scores. Workload scores reflect how an employee reacts to workplace pressures (Leiter & Maslach, 1999). Surface acting scores reflect the extent of the tension that employees have when expressing emotions that are not authentically felt (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Lastly, work group inclusion scores reflect the degree to which an employee perceives they are a valued member of their work group by satisfying their need to belong and their need to have their unique, authentic qualities accepted (Chung et al., 2020). The following instruments were used to measure the predictor variable scores: workload subscale of AWS, surface acting subscale of the ELS, and the Work Group Inclusion Scale, respectively. The criterion variable is the emotional exhaustion score. The emotional exhaustion subscale of the MBI was used to measure the extent of employees feeling depleted and overextended (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Key to planning predictive designs is establishing an accurate definition of the criterion. Inadequately defined criterion can lead to an inability in identifying predictive relationships (Gall et al., 2007). The criterion variable was selected based on theories and past findings. A key difference of predictive and causal designs revolves around the timing of data measurement. To appropriately attest to predictor variables being true projectors of emotional exhaustion, predictor variables were measured first in the study (Gall et al., 2007).

## **Causal-Comparative Design**

Causal-comparative design is a nonexperimental investigation which explains phenomena by identifying cause-and-effect relationships within groups (Gall et al., 2007). Within such a study, the assumed cause is identified as the independent variable (Gall et al., 2007). The assumed effect is labeled as the dependent variable (Gall et al., 2007). Consistent with theories, schemas, and archetypes such as pet-to-threat, Strong Black Woman, and code switching, it can be hypothesized that race drives workplace behaviors that result in URM experiencing differences in emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion perspectives. The causal-comparative design supports the exploration of this causal suggestion. For this study, the design aids in identifying differences among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion scores, workload scores, surface acting scores, and work group inclusion scores. The study is similar to research conducted by Qian et al. (2019), Rajendran et al. (2020) as well as Liu and Aungsuroch (2019).

The independent variable of this design is the race of the managers - African-American and Caucasian American. In line with the traditional characteristics of the design, the independent variable is not able to be manipulated. Dependent variables include emotional exhaustion scores, workload scores, surface acting scores, and work group inclusion scores of managers. While causal-comparison design does not provide detail on the degree to which workload, surface acting, work group inclusion, and emotional exhaustion drives differences between African-American and Caucasian American managers, it can identify probable causes of differences. Awareness of the findings can subsequently help leaders resolve or offset the driving factors.

## **Research Questions**

The research questions the dissertation addresses are the following:

**RQ1:** How accurately can emotional exhaustion scores for managers be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

**RQ2:** Is there a difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

### **Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses for this study are:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between emotional exhaustion scores for managers as derived from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores.

### **Participants and Setting**

This research study has highlighted African-American managers in white-collar roles and their emotional exhaustion levels in comparison to those of Caucasian Americans. In current studies, African-Americans have been an underrepresented sample group when analyzing emotional exhaustion or other dimensions of occupational burnout. The following section describes the population, sample size, sample selection process, and setting.

#### **Population**

A concerted effort was made to obtain feedback from the primary subjects of this study – domestic Caucasian American managers and specifically African-American managers who have previously been underrepresented in studies. For the sample, there was a subset focus of those that work in white-collar roles. Throughout the dissertation, manager refers to individuals 1) responsible for leading junior staff performance and their productivity and 2) those with a formal

title of manager performing as an individual contributor. Individual contributors are often experienced subject matter experts capable of making critical decisions and assumptions. The study excluded executive job roles described as C-suite. C-suite roles are often identifiable via the notation of “chief” in the job title. Example C-suite roles excluded are chief executive officer (CEO), chief financial officer (CFO), chief operations officer (COO), and chief information officer (CIO). C-suite roles establish strategies and policies applied across the organization. Their results are often reported directly to the board of directors.

White-collar roles refer to skilled, non-manual labor roles performed in an office or similar professional environment. This is in contrast to blue-collar work which is traditionally manual in nature and performed in factories, plants, or mills (Schreurs et al., 2011). White-collar roles also exclude red-collar government roles in the public sector and non-profit entities. Public sector references all government organizations, including the federal, state, and local government. Public-sector organizations focus on services to the citizens including education, utility services, emergency services, and health services. Non-profit organizations are not governed by profit and work toward goals that better the society. Thus, white-collar roles for this study include for-profit, private sector entities.

The sample contained feedback from the identified manager groups via two sources: 1) survey audience of Pollfish, Incorporated and 2) referrals from white-collar, graduate chapter sorority and fraternity members under the National Pan-Hellenic Council. Pollfish, Incorporated is a market research entity specializing in building target audiences and providing the administration of surveys through various methods including online and mobile. Mobile data collection in particular was a desired medium of this study as it encourages quicker response time (Seifert et al., 2018). This is especially advantageous as over 80% of Americans have mobile phones and

approximately 15% rely on their phones as their sole internet source (Pew Research Center, 2021). Pollfish audience members are primarily established via its partnerships with existing websites such as news providers and their readers. Upon joining as a Pollfish audience member, individuals must complete a demographic profile. The information is used by researchers to target their desired audience. Subsequently, Pollfish periodically requires its audience members to confirm the accuracy of their data.

The National Pan-Hellenic Council is an umbrella organization composed of nine United States' based sororities and fraternities founded at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (Garcia, 2019). The century old organizations include: Alpha Phi Alpha, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, Omega Psi Phi, Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Beta Sigma, Zeta Phi Beta, Sigma Gamma Rho, and Iota Phi Theta (Garcia, 2019; Morales, 2020). All organizations under the National Pan-Hellenic Council are lifetime organizations intended to provide service past the collegiate level. While each organization is unique, they all serve their neighboring communities and promote academic, economic, and professional excellence (Garcia, 2019; Morales, 2020). All of the nine organizations were established during a period when African-Americans were denied basic rights and privileges given to others (Garcia, 2019). Racial isolation on college campuses where they were minorities created a need for African-Americans to align themselves with others sharing common ideas and goals (Garcia, 2019).

### **Participants**

Participants were obtained via quota sampling using the Pollfish audience as well as the snowball sampling technique using National Pan-Hellenic Council members. Snowball sampling assisted with obtaining URM, specifically as they have not been a predominate part of past published research (Gall et al., 2007). For this study, Pollfish audience participants were targeted

based on their race, location, job sector, and job role gathered during their onboarding membership process. Racial and gender quota sampling was performed to ensure there was an even amount of group representation in the sample. All feedback was obtained in an online survey.

Prior to starting the survey, all participants attested to the role of management in a white-collar role as previously described. The process continued for four weeks until the desired sample size was achieved. The number of African-American participants included in the sample was 73. The number of Caucasian American participants included in the sample was also 73. Together, the group sizes met the required minimum sample based on the election of a medium effect size. Gall et al. (2007) recommends that 144 participants are required for a MANOVA when assuming a medium effect size with the statistical power of .7 at the .05 alpha level. The size provides a reasonable amount of findings representative of population scores.

### **Setting**

All study interaction occurred virtually. The surveys were housed on the Pollfish website. They were available for completion for four weeks. Correspondence used with the survey included a voluntary consent form explaining the purpose, future intent, and risks of the study.

### **Instrumentation**

This study utilized four valid instruments - the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Areas of Worklife Survey, Emotional Labour Scale, and the Work Group Inclusion Scale. See Figure 2. The Maslach Burnout Inventory instrument measures occupational burnout which includes the strong predicting dimension emotional exhaustion - a variable measured in this study. The Areas of Worklife Survey assesses factors in the workplace environment via six dimensions that contribute to burnout. The Emotional Labour Scale measures six facets of emotional displays in the workplace. Lastly, the Work Group Inclusion Scale measures the sense of inclusion within teams

and work groups. Permission to use the instruments has been granted. Together, the approximate time of the survey - including demographic and screening questions - is 15-20 minutes.

### ***Maslach Burnout Inventory***

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was created in 1981 by psychologists Christina Maslach and Susan Jackson (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The tool emerged as Maslach and Jackson delved deeper into the phenomenon's initial study which associated burnout with depression. While studies support that burnout and depression are not fully independent, regarding burnout as depression is not accurate (Koutsimani et al., 2019). MBI is built on the premise that burnout is a gradual emotional and physical diminishing process in the workplace (Jeung et al., 2018). It is driven by high pressure, unreasonable expectations, heavy workloads, and lack of autonomy (Jeung et al., 2018). In contrast, depression has a wider scope of derivation. It can be traced back to many different issues at once. Maslach and Jackson's MBI focuses on three characteristics that drive burnout – emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and diminished self-efficacy. The initial purpose of the instrument was to assess the exhaustion level of human service employees (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It was believed that the staff-client relationship in human services was especially frustrating since it stemmed from problems that were not typically easy to resolve. However, it has since become a widely used tool among all workplace environments to measure burnout in numerous studies (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; Lawrence et al., 2021; Qian et al., 2019). The instrument also became a significant catalyst behind increased studies to explore the syndrome (McGeary & McGeary, 2012). The MBI consists of three subscales - emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). For this study, the emotional exhaustion subscale was utilized.

Validity of the subscale was demonstrated by correlation with job characteristics expected to contribute to burnout; correlation to outcomes associated with burnout; and correlation between MBI scores and behavior ratings made externally by those close to participants (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Additional validity evidence distinguished it from other measures similar to, but distinct from emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Support for the discriminant validity of the scale is seen in a significantly small, positive correlation between MBI scores and job satisfaction (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

The Cronbach's alpha for emotional exhaustion has been documented as .88 (Liu & Aunguroch, 2019; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). In addition, test-retest reliability was established as strong. For three samples separated by an interval of six months the analyzed coefficient was .72 for emotional exhaustion (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

The emotional exhaustion subscale consists of 9-items (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). It uses a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 0, never occurring, to 6, every day. Determination of low and high scores in past studies has typically been driven by pre-established cutoff scores (Zis et al., 2014). Scores 75% or higher indicate high degrees of exhaustion while those at 25% or less are often considered low (Zis et al., 2014). The developer notes that scoring using summation or mean calculation is appropriate (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). High scores of emotional exhaustion have been found to have a consistent and strong association with determining occupational burnout (Brady et al., 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Qian et al., 2019).

The subscale items were administered via an online survey. The approximate time to complete the items is 5 minutes based on estimated time provided by developers (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). An example item on the emotional exhaustion subscale is, "I feel used up at the end

of the workday.” Licensed permission was provided prior to research.

### *Areas of Worklife Scale*

The purpose of the Areas of Worklife Scale (AWS) is to assess possible triggers of burn-out in the workplace via the lens of six facets - control, reward, community, fairness, values, and workload. It was developed by psychologists Michael Leiter and Christina Maslach (1999). While the MBI assesses burnout, it was not developed to identify possible causes of the state. AWS was created to serve as a companion to the MBI. The model identifies the degree of fit an employee has with their workplace environment. It has become widely used in numerous studies as a tool to reveal factors contributing to burnout (Avila et al., 2021; Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Jimenez & Dunkl, 2017).

This study only uses one of the six subscales – workload. The workload subscale measures how an employee responds to work pressures, deadlines, and demands. Evidence of validity was obtained by the developers comparing a qualitative analysis of the subscale topic to that of the subscale scores (Leiter & Maslach, 1999). Validity was later attested to through explanatory factor analysis in subsequent studies (Brom et al., 2015). The results displayed a strong correlation to workload subscale. Internal consistency was well above satisfactory with a Cronbach’s alpha of .80. Reliability was established via re-test correlations. The workload subscale has a correlation of .62 over the span of one year. The subscale uses a Likert 5-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree). An example subscale item includes, “I do not have time to do the work that must be done.” A high score implies a high degree of perceived alignment between the working conditions and the respondent’s preference. It is deemed a good fit. Similar to MBI, determination of low and high scores is based on pre-established cutoff scores. Scores 75% or higher are often

classified as high, while those at 25% or less are often considered low. When considering emotional exhaustion and burnout in the workplace, heavy workloads represent the most obvious catalyst. Unreasonable workloads can deplete the energy and ability of an employee to properly recover. The underlying driver of the worklife model resides in its harmony with external factors. Matches in the worklife improves the relationship with the work environment while mismatches lead to diminished involvement (Leiter & Maslach, 1999).

The approximated time to complete the subscale via an online survey is 5 minutes based on the developer provided estimate (Leiter & Maslach, 1999). Licensed permission was provided prior to research.

### ***Work Group Inclusion Scale***

The Work Group Inclusion Scale was developed by Chung et al. (2020). The purpose of the instrument is to assess the degree to which an employee perceives they are a valued member of their work group based on their perception of belonging and satisfaction of being accepted for their uniqueness. It consists of two sub scales - belongingness and uniqueness. The instrument helps address a gap in academia. Despite diversity rising, defining and measuring inclusion is not yet consistent. The instrument is based on a widely accepted inclusion conceptual model of Shore et al. (Cottrill et al., 2014; Tang et al., 2015).

Convergent validity was established through a significant correlation with Mor Barak's widely used work group inclusion subscale and moderate correlation with similar constructs such as perceived organizational support, work group identification, and voice (Chung et al., 2020). Discriminant validity was established via comparison to the Ten-Item Personality Inventory

(TIPI) - a brief assessment of five dominant personality dimensions. As expected, low correlation was found (Chung et al., 2020). The reliability alpha of the scale has been calculated as .93 (Chung et al., 2020).

The instrument consists of 10-items (Chung et al., 2020). The subscale belongingness refers to the need to establish and maintain a relationship with others. Such connection has been associated with strong impacts on emotions and cognitive processes. Without this perception, there may likely be a high positive correlation to mental and physical issues (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The second uniqueness subscale refers to an individual's desire to be authentic (Chung et al., 2020). Both subscales, consist of five items.

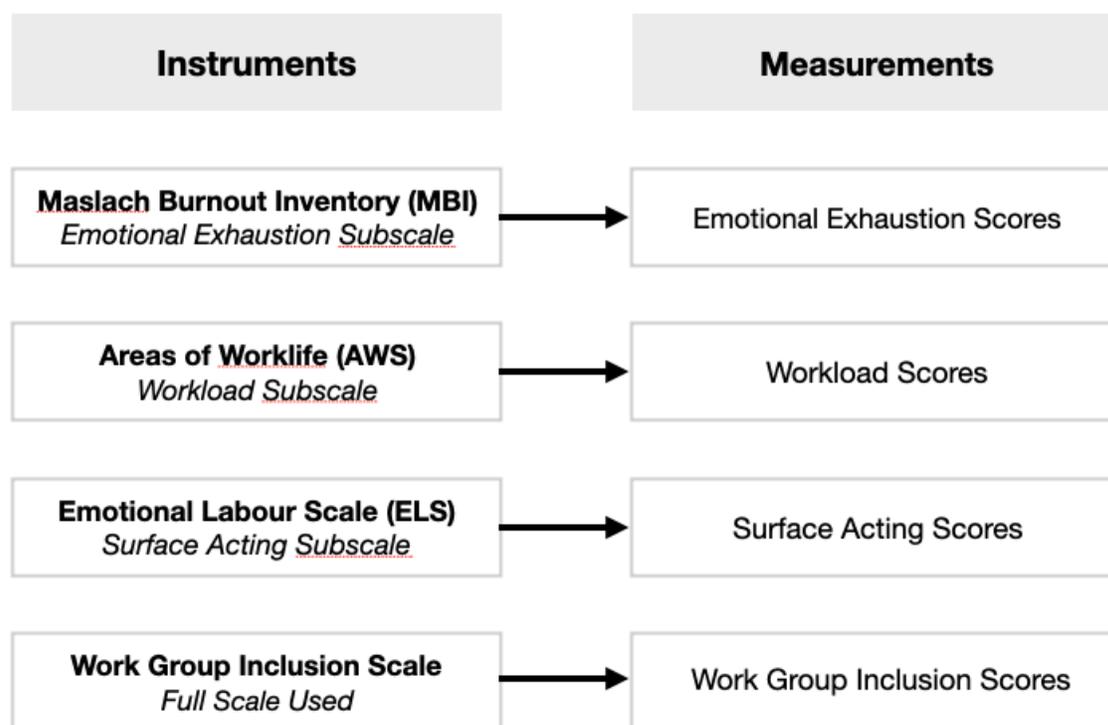
The instrument uses a Likert 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). An example item on the belonging subscale includes, "I am connected to my work group" (Chung et al., 2020). An example item on the uniqueness subscale includes, "While at work, I am comfortable expressing opinions that diverge from my group" (Chung et al., 2020). The approximated time to complete the instrument is 6 minutes. The full instrument and proof of provided permission appears in Appendix A.

### ***Emotional Labour Scale***

The Emotional Labour Scale (ELS) was developed by Brotheridge and Lee (2003). Although many employees in the workforce recognize that some form of emotion is involved in the workplace, the concept of emotional management and the labor involved was not formalized until sociologist Arlie Hochschild presented the theory in 1983 (Williams, 2013). Despite the new literature and theories that were emerging in the 1980s and 1990s on emotional labor, there remained no widely used measure to assess the construct. The purpose of the instrument is to as-

sess six dimensions of emotional expressions in the workplace via the subscales frequency, intensity and variety of emotional display, duration of interaction, surface acting, and deep acting (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). ELS has been used in numerous studies (de Castro et al., 2006; Theodosius et al., 2021). The surface acting subscale is used for the study. The surface acting subscale measures the extent to which the employee suppresses emotions or display emotions that are not felt (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Surface acting has been found to have significant positive correlation with emotional and health issues due to the tension associated with a loss of authenticity (Andela & Truchot, 2017; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003).

Convergent validity was evidenced for the full instrument by using Best, Downey, and Jones's Emotional Work Requirements Scale which measures the extent to which employees suppress their emotions in the workplace (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Similarly, discriminant validity was established as low correlations were determined between ELS scales (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). The surface acting subscale exhibits an adequate degree of internal consistency as supported by a Cronbach's alpha of .85 (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; de Castro et al., 2006). It consists of 6-items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from never (1) to always (5) with the exception of the dimension duration of interaction (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Each item begins with the stem, "On an average day at work, how frequently do you..." (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). An example from the subscale includes, "On an average day at work, how frequently do you resist expressing [your] true feelings" (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Higher averaged scores on the subscale represent higher levels of the dimension being experienced (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). The self-administered subscale was delivered via an online survey and estimated to be completed in approximately 3 minutes. The full subscale and instrument permission appears in Appendix B.



**Figure 2**

*Instruments and corresponding measurements as expressed in research questions*

### **Instrument Considerations**

It should be noted that each utilized instrument includes a Likert scale. The emotional exhaustion subscale of the MBI uses a 7-point scale while the remaining instruments utilize a 5-point scale. Developed by Resis Likert in 1932, Likert scales are used to assess the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with provided statements (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). Likert scales can be either ordinal or interval. Ranking or rating of ordinal scales is common. However, the intervals between ordinal points cannot be assumed as equal (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). The amount of underlying elements such as anxiety, stress, or joy on a Likert scale between points cannot be demonstrated. In contrast, interval scales include equal increments allowing differences between responses to be calculated. While common in research, the two scale types and

their use has been the center of debate. In 1946, Harvard psychologist Stanley Smith communicated concerns and maintained that means, standard deviations and other parametric statistics dependent on normal distributions are of minimal value and less accurate with ordinal data (Baker et al., 1966; Knapp, 1990; Wu & Leung, 2017).

Contrary to Smith, scholars including Baker et al. (1966) and Labovitz (1967) have maintained that while ordinal scales do not have true, known intervals, the differences between categories can be considered as equal without significantly altering results (Knapp, 1990). Dr. Geoff Norman, a renowned leader in research methodology, has also provided supporting evidence. Through examples using real and simulated data, Norman proved that parametric tests can be used on ordinal tools like Likert scales (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). In addition, he attested that such parametric tests are typically more robust than nonparametric tests (Sullivan & Artino, 2013).

For this study, the assigned numbers to ordinal categories provided by developers were utilized for analysis. Several findings support the decision. While intervals cannot be precisely determined, empirical findings maintain that inaccuracies would be insignificant and rarely alter results (Baker et al., 1966).

### **Procedures**

Prior to launching the study, the research proposal was successfully executed. The proposal was submitted to Liberty University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review and the board's approval prior to moving forward with data collection. IRB approval is required when human subjects are involved in research studies. Based on the details of the study, the board ensures there is ethical treatment documented in testing procedures.

While awaiting approval, online surveys were constructed on Pollfish.com. The surveys

targeted African-American and Caucasian American white-collar managers residing in the United States. Two versions of the survey were created. One version was available to the pre-established, applicable Pollfish audience. A second survey was available to non-Pollfish potential participants via an invitation. When constructing the survey for the Pollfish members, the first step included selecting the desired qualifications of the target audience based on data such as location, job type, gender, and race obtained during the members' onboarding process at Pollfish. These selections narrowed the population of audience members who qualified to participate in the survey. For non-Pollfish potential participants, their separate survey included demographic questions requesting race, age, and gender as well as screening inquiries associated with job role, job sector, and geographic location. The demographic and screening questions appear in Appendices C and D, respectively.

The survey questions consist of the workload subscale of AWS, surface acting subscale of ELS, the Work Group Inclusion Scale, and the emotional exhaustion subscale of MBI. Key considerations when building the survey included ensuring qualifying questions functioned accurately and feedback for the emotional exhaustion subscale was collected first and without the ability to edit responses after proceeding to remaining questions. Completing the emotional exhaustion subscale questions first provides more accurate predictor findings. It should also be noted that the survey required 1) responses to each question prior to moving to the next question and 2) responses to all questions before submitting. Such requirements prevent missing data values which could skew results. Instruments and subscales of instruments were unmodified. Appendices A and B, respectively, include the work group inclusion full instrument and ELS surface acting subscale. Full subscales associated with MBI and AWS were excluded from the appendices due to licensing agreements.

Once IRB approval was obtained (See Appendix K), the survey designed for Pollfish audience members was sent to the website's technical team for testing and review. Upon review completion, all surveys were launched. For Pollfish audience members, survey notifications were only provided to those meeting the specified demographic and screening requirements. For non-Pollfish potential participants, email and mobile invitations were sent. See the invitation in Appendix F. The messages contained a consent form as well as a link to the survey. The consent forms explained the purpose of the study, who the study targets, and why it was being conducted. The form also identified who has access to the data, explained that identifiable information will be removed, and shared that data for the current research will not be distributed for future research studies. An example of the consent form appears in Appendix E.

All participants completed the survey on the Pollfish website. Pollfish has a transport layer security login which encrypts passwords to hedge hacking. The platform collects data over a secure hypertext transfer protocol secure (HTTPS) connection. All individuals had a period of four weeks to voluntarily respond. The estimated time to complete the survey was approximately 15 - 20 minutes based on projected time provided by instrument developers.

Over four weeks, there were 154 attempts made to complete the survey. Seven non-Pollfish responders did not qualify to participate. At the end of the survey window, there was a total of 146 participants that completed the survey. The sample was evenly allocated between gender and race based on restrictions made during the planning phase to eliminate the impact of confounders. See the demographic detail in Table 1.

At the end of the period, scores and demographic data including gender, age, race, and job sector were downloaded into an Excel application file and uploaded into SPSS for analysis. The results are presented in Chapter 4. No identifiable information of participants was collected.

**Table 1***Race, Gender, Age*

Demographics	<i>N</i>	%
<b>Race</b>		
African-American	73	50%
Caucasian American	73	50%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	72	49%
Male	74	51%
<b>Age</b>		
> 54	8	5%
18 - 24	18	12%
25 - 34	47	32%
35 - 44	40	27%
45 - 54	33	23%

### **Data Analysis**

Two statistics were used in the study to analyze data. For RQ1, a multiple linear regression was used to determine how accurately emotional exhaustion for managers can be predicted from a linear combination of workload scores, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores. For RQ2, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to identify differences among the two groups – African-American and Caucasian managers – by examining their emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting and work group inclusion scores.

Multiple linear regression was deemed appropriate for the study as it typically is used to project the predictive relationship between a single continuous dependent variable and two or more independent variables (Gall et al., 2007). As part of the analysis, each independent, nominal variable value was associated with a dependent, nominal variable value to assess its linear association (Warner, 2013).

Use of MANOVA was deemed appropriate as it determines if multiple groups on multiple dependent variables differ. Thus, during result analysis for this study, differences between the independent variable groups on each dependent variable were examined. In line with the characteristics of a MANOVA, the independent variable race reflects a mutually exclusive categorical variable. The dependent variables – emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting and work group inclusion scores – are continuous and may result in many possible outcomes. For studies involving multiple dependent variables, this statistic is also optimal in comparison to the *t* test and analysis of variance which determines if several groups differ on only one dependent variable (Gall et al., 2007; Warner, 2013).

### **Data Screening**

Prior to conducting the multiple linear regression or MANOVA analysis for the study, data screening was performed to identify errors, inconsistencies, missing data, and outliers. Analyses based on data with the noted issues can yield incorrect or misleading results (Warner, 2013). It was pre-determined that extreme outliers resulting from processing errors or known inconsistencies will be excluded from the sample. For the multiple linear regression analysis, screening started with a scatter plot matrix which compared all pairs of the predictor variables as well as the predictor and criterion variables (Warner, 2013). The plot is presented in Figure 3. Further examination of data was performed via the Mahalanobis distance test. For the MANOVA analysis, extreme outliers were examined via box and whiskers plots for each group and all variable pairs (Warner, 2013). The plot is presented in Figure 4.

## Assumptions and Descriptive Statistics

When performing multiple linear regression, several assumptions should be present to comfortably draw conclusions from findings. Violation of these assumptions alter the interpretation of the results. The key assumptions include linearity, normality, and absence of multicollinearity (Warner, 2013). Reliable regression assessments require a linear relationship between each predictor and criterion variable. In this study, the scatter plot matrix used to detect outliers was also used to assess linearity. For most pairs, linearity was visually clear to detect (Warner, 2013). However, for those with ambiguous shapes, further examination was performed by observing the correlation via Pearson's  $r$  and a plot of actual observation values (y-axis) and standardized predicted values (x-axis). Regression analysis also requires a normal distribution of the variance between actual and predicted values (residual values) as skewed values can impact  $p$  values later used for significance testing (Warner, 2013). Quantile-quantile plots and a residual plot were used to perform the assessment. Multiple linear regression also assumes no multicollinearity is present among predictor variables (Warner, 2013). Multicollinearity refers to the extent of inter-correlation between predictor variables (Warner, 2013). It is assumed that predictor variables are not highly correlated with one another. This assumption was tested using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. Values over 10 are considered too highly correlated. Optimal values range between 1 and 5. Highly correlated predictor variables create interference when determining their unique contributions as predictors (Warner, 2013).

Similar to multiple linear regression, the MANOVA analysis is based on several assumptions. Should these assumptions be violated, results may be misleading or incorrect. When conducting a MANOVA, linearity, normality, absence of multicollinearity, and homogeneity of variance among groups is assumed to be met (Warner, 2013). A scatter plot matrix of all variable

pairs was used to assess linearity. Normality of dependent variables was initially assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which quantifies the distance between empirical measurements. Additional examination was performed using quantile-quantile plots and histograms. Pearson's  $r$  was used to identify the correlations, or relationship strength, between variables to confirm the absence of multicollinearity. Lastly, the Box's M test was utilized to identify homogeneity. All tests were processed within SPSS software.

In addition to data screening and assumptions analyses, descriptive statistics of the data was presented as well. The statistics describe and summarize the participants of this study. Statistics include the mean of variable scores as well as standard deviation to measure variability. They are presented in Table 2.

## **Testing Considerations**

### ***Type I Error***

This study has applied two tests of significance - MANOVA and multiple linear regression. In general, as more tests are conducted, there is an increased likelihood that Type I errors will also rise (Warner, 2013). To guard against Type I errors - the mistaken rejection of a null hypothesis - when conducting multiple significance tests, a Bonferroni correction was applied. Such a correction reduces the probability of obtaining false positive results (Warner, 2013). The Bonferroni adjustment produces a corrected  $p$  value by dividing the initial alpha level, or experiment-wise  $\alpha$ , by the number of significance tests ( $EW_{\alpha} / k$ ) (Warner, 2013). Using this formula, the corrected  $p$  value threshold of .03 ( $.05 / 2 = .03$ ) was the per-comparison alpha level used in this study's significance results.

### *Confounding Variables*

This study has also taken into consideration confounding variables – extraneous variables not accounted for within the study with the ability to impact all other variables (Warner, 2013). Possible relevant and identified contributing variables include job type, job role, age, and gender. Without accounting for confounding variables, results may be biased and misleading. To limit the impact of such variables, restriction was utilized. During the survey planning phase, job sector was restricted to white-collar roles to limit the impact of varying environmental stressors. White-collar roles which are often associated with high-risk, long hours, and aggressive goals have historically initiated emotional exhaustion (Moss, 2021). Similarly, the managers in this sector often carry high-achieving personalities and fortitude that is prone to trigger burnout (Moss, 2021). Gender was restricted across the managerial groups of the study to ensure the participants were evenly split between male and female. This is especially critical as working mothers have been associated with higher levels of stress as they manage workplace inequalities and competing priorities of motherhood (Meyer et al., 2021; Truscott-Smith et al., 2022). Similar to gender, certain age groups and generations have been associated with higher levels of stress (Morgan, 2021). Specifically, those between the ages of 26 – 40 managing young children and elderly parents are particularly vulnerable (Morgan, 2021). Age was not restricted while obtaining study responses. Thus, there is an array of ages. However, it was observed that approximately 60% of all participants were ages 25 – 44. In that same range, it was also noted that both gender and race among the subset of participants was fairly equal. Considering these equal variables, a sound opportunity arose to test the impact of age. Therefore, multiple linear regression

and MANOVA significance tests were performed for this restricted age range to eliminate variation. There was no difference in findings when comparing to the full sample results. See results in Appendices I and J.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### Overview

This chapter presents findings supporting the research questions of the study. Data was collected from a survey open to African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles residing in the United States. The chapter includes descriptive statistics consisting of the mean and standard deviation among emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores. An assessment of the study's variables among managers as well as the predictive nature of emotional exhaustion based on workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores is presented.

### Research Questions

**RQ1:** How accurately can emotional exhaustion scores for managers be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

**RQ2:** Is there a difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

### Null Hypotheses

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no statistically significant predictive relationship between emotional exhaustion scores for managers as derived from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores.

### Descriptive Statistics

Data for the study's variables – emotional exhaustion (MBI) scores, workload (AWS) scores, surface acting (ELS) scores, and work group inclusion scores - can be found in Table 2.

The MBI score – which also serves as the criterion variable in this study - revealed a mean score of 4.3 among all managers. The minimum and maximum scores on the subscale are 1 and 7, respectively. Both appeared in the survey sample. The mean scores for the remaining variables were as follows: AWS, 3.3; ELS, 3.1; work group inclusion, 4.0. Scores on the scale range from 1-5 for AWS, ELS, and work group inclusion. Further insight of the scoring is presented in Table 3 by gender and age.

On average, African-American managers experienced slightly higher exhaustion scores ( $M = 4.4$ ,  $SD = 1.4$ ) than Caucasian American managers ( $M = 4.2$ ,  $SD = 1.3$ ). Higher MBI scores indicates an increased state of mental and physical depletion as a result of accumulated stress from the workplace. African-American managers also experienced marginally lower work group inclusion scores ( $M = 3.9$ ,  $SD = 0.7$ ) reflecting a lesser sense of acceptance in the workplace than Caucasian American managers ( $M = 4.1$ ,  $SD = 0.7$ ). AWS and ELS scores for both African-American ( $M = 3.3$ ,  $M = 3.1$ , respectively) and Caucasian American managers ( $M = 3.3$ ,  $M = 3.1$ , respectively) were similar.

A further breakdown by gender and age in Table 3 revealed that the predominate age range of participants was 25 – 34. This range made up 32%. However, scores reflecting high degrees of the observed stressors appear in an array of age ranges. Caucasian American males between ages 18 – 24 had higher MBI scores ( $M = 5.7$ ). African-American women over 54 and African-American males ages 25 – 34 submitted higher AWS scores ( $M = 3.7$ ). Caucasian males in the 18 – 24 age range submitted higher ELS scores ( $M = 3.5$ ). African-American males ages 45 – 54 and Caucasian American males ages 18 – 24 had the lowest work group inclusion scores ( $M = 3.4$ ) indicating they experienced lower feelings of acceptance in the workplace.

**Table 2***Descriptive Statistics of Variables by Race*


---

	<i>N</i>	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<b>MBI</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>
African-American	73	1.2	6.7	4.4	1.4
Caucasian American	73	1.7	7.0	4.2	1.3
<b>AWS</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>
African-American	73	1.0	5.0	3.3	0.6
Caucasian American	73	2.0	4.4	3.3	0.5
<b>ELS</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.9</b>
African-American	73	1.0	4.7	3.1	0.9
Caucasian American	73	1.0	5.0	3.1	0.8
<b>WORKGROUP</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.7</b>
African-American	73	1.9	5.0	3.9	0.7
Caucasian American	73	1.2	5.0	4.1	0.7

---

**Table 3***Descriptive Statistics by Age*

	<i>M</i> of MBI	<i>M</i> of AWS	<i>M</i> of ELS	<i>M</i> of Work Group	<i>N</i>
<b>African-American</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>36</b>
> 54	2.8	3.7	1.8	4.4	2
18 - 24	4.8	3.6	3.1	3.8	8
25 - 34	4.5	3.2	3.4	3.6	14
35 - 44	4.1	3.1	3.0	4.0	8
45 - 54	4.8	3.3	2.6	4.2	4
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>37</b>
> 54	2.0	1.0	1.3	3.9	1
18 - 24	4.4	2.8	3.2	4.2	5
25 - 34	4.4	3.7	3.3	4.4	10
35 - 44	4.4	3.3	2.9	3.8	10
45 - 54	4.3	3.1	3.2	3.4	11
<b>Caucasian American</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>36</b>
> 54	4.1	3.6	3.2	5.0	2
18 - 24	4.2	2.9	2.5	3.7	2
25 - 34	3.9	3.2	3.3	4.1	12
35 - 44	4.5	3.3	3.4	3.9	10
45 - 54	3.8	3.1	2.8	4.0	10
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>37</b>
> 54	3.4	3.3	3.3	4.4	3
18 - 24	5.7	3.3	3.5	3.4	3
25 - 34	5.0	3.4	3.2	4.2	11
35 - 44	4.4	3.3	3.2	4.0	12
45 - 54	3.5	3.3	2.1	4.4	8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>146</b>

## Results

### Null Hypothesis 1

#### *Data Screening*

Data screening for multiple linear regression analysis was conducted on all pairs of predictor variables (AWS, ELS, and work group inclusion scores) as well as predictor and criterion (MBI scores) pairs to identify inconsistencies and extreme outliers for remedy prior to analysis. Data with such issues can produce misleading results. Upon review, no unusual results or out of range values were observed. Each participant appeared to be unique with no duplicate sets of responses. There was also no missing data. The omission of missing values was driven by the logic of the Pollfish.com survey. Before moving to a new question, the current question was required to be answered. In addition, no surveys could be submitted without all questions addressed.

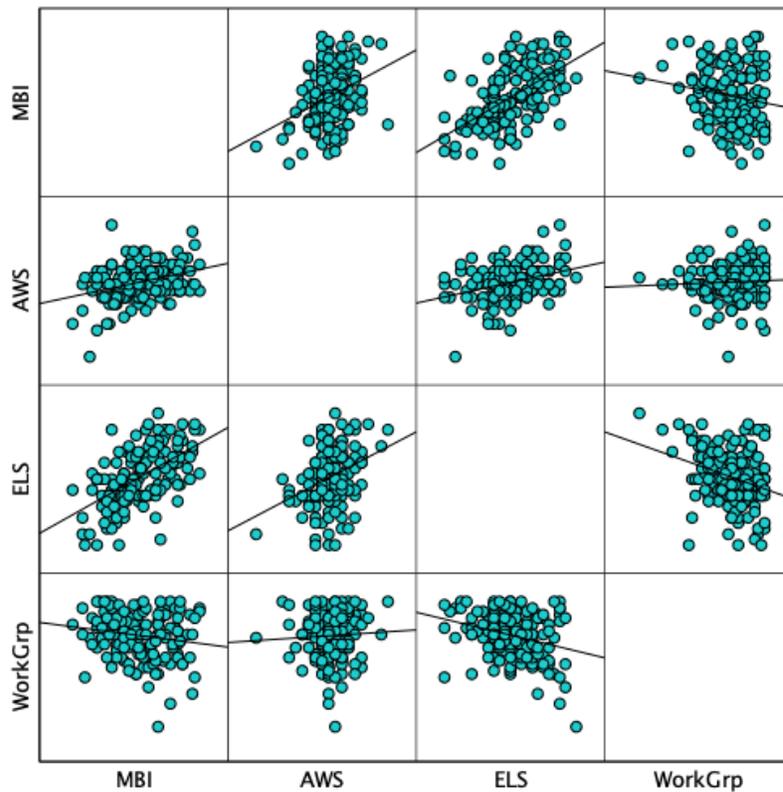
A scatter plot matrix was used to visually detect extreme outliers as shown in Figure 3. The matrix reflects all pairs of research data values. While there were a number of outliers, only several appeared to be extreme. As with other scatter plots, when variables increase, it is difficult to confidently identify extreme outliers on the matrix. As such, further examination of outliers was performed to precisely identify the outlier data values using Mahalanobis distance (MD). MD calculates the distance between two points – observed value and the centroid of the predictor variable - by converting data values to  $z$  scores and determining their standard deviation. Historically in research studies – and for this current study - most  $z$  scores lie within a MD of 3 (Warner, 2013). The MD of 3 represents an arbitrary standard (Warner, 2013). Those outside those parameters are considered an extreme outlier. In this study, MD was performed within SPSS. Two outliers were identified. Upon review, the identified outliers did not appear unusual nor the result of processing errors. In addition, removal from the sample would not result in a

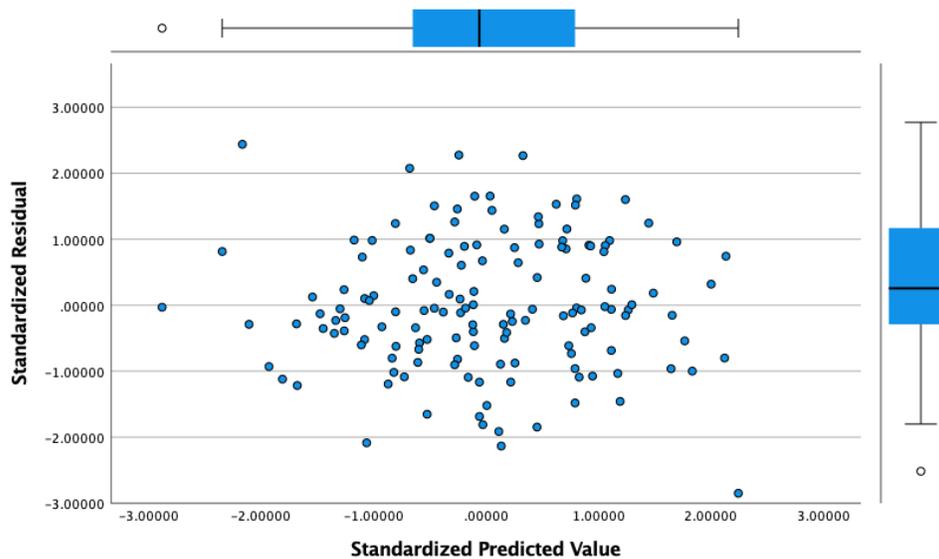
different significance finding. See results excluding the outlier points in Appendix H. As such, no responses were removed.

A visual to aid in substantiating the decision to include all observed values was a plot comparing standardized residuals (y-axis) to standardized predicted values (x-axis). Residuals reflect the difference, or error, between predicted values and actual values (Warner, 2013). Like MD, error distance is measured in standard deviation units. Data sets with residuals greater than 3 (in absolute value) have widely been deemed as outliers. See the plot in Figure 4. For this study, no residuals over 3 were observed.

**Figure 3**

*Scatter Plot Matrix*



**Figure 4***Standardized Residuals vs. Standardized Predicted Values****Assumptions***

When considering the model assessment within a multiple linear regression analysis, several underlying assumptions are made. It is assumed that there is a linear relationship among all variable pairs, results are normally distributed, and multicollinearity is absent. These assumptions allow users of the data to evaluate the strength of the predictors with minimum apprehension that other contributors are driving the results. High correlations among variables, nonlinear relationships, or distributions that are skewed can cause data users to misinterpret the effectiveness of the regression. Thus, prior to conducting the multiple linear regression analysis, assumptions tests were performed to ensure the underlying data can produce reliable results.

**Linearity.** Similar to data screening, scatter plots were used to assess linearity. The scatter plot matrix (Figure 3), which considers each pair of variables, visually presents most values of the study in a cigar shape indicating a linear relationship. However, linearity was difficult to determine for several pairs from visual examination alone. To supplement the examination, Pearson's  $r$  was used to identify the strength of the linear relationships. Pearson's  $r$  results range from -1 to +1 (Warner, 2013). Zero indicates no linear relationship between variables. Results near the absolute value of 1 reflect a nearly perfect linear relationship. Over time, it has been observed that many human behavior studies do not consistently deliver correlations near 1 as behavior is challenging to predict (Funder & Ozer, 2019). Considering the discipline, the degrees of strength in this study will be described as follows:

- Correlations equal to or above .50 are considered strong.
- Correlations between .30 - .49 are considered moderate
- Correlations equal to or below .29 are considered weak.

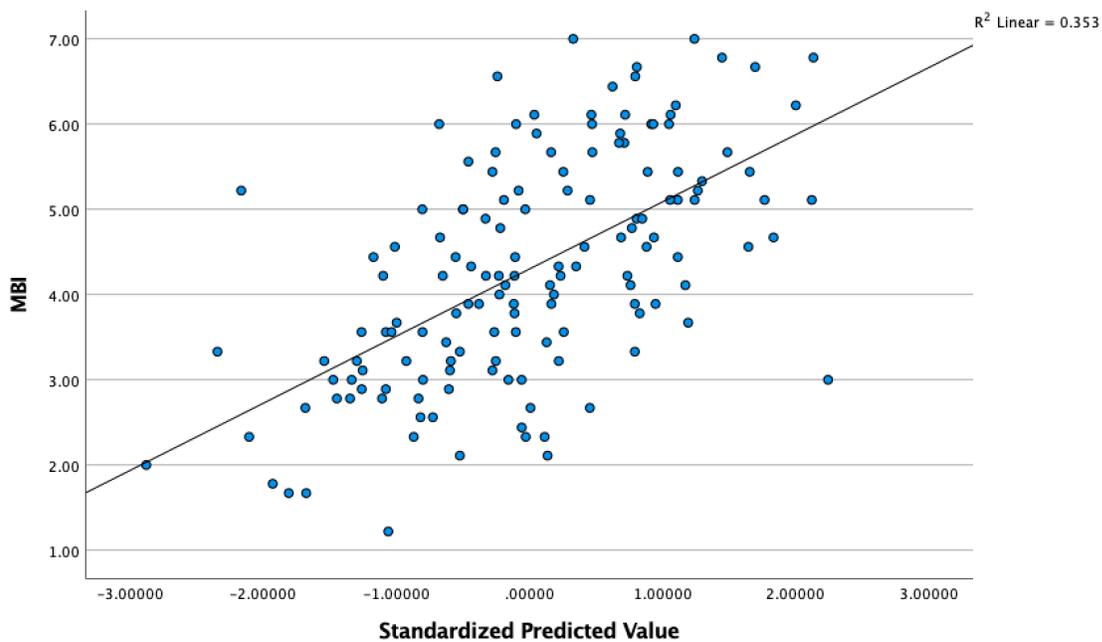
Pearson's  $r$ , along with scatter plots, can be a reasonable indicator to help support determinations of linear relationships when the sample size is large enough to provide sufficient statistic power. A sample size of at least 100 can be considered appropriate to utilize the statistic – a size this study exceeds (Warner, 2013). When observing the Pearson's  $r$ , a strong and moderate correlation exists among variable pairs with the exception of: 1) MBI and work group inclusion scores and 2) AWS and work group inclusion scores. Both demonstrated weak relationships. See correlations in Table 4.

Linearity was further assessed by utilizing a plot of actual observation values (y-axis) and standardized predicted values (x-axis). See Figure 5. The plot processed in SPSS considers a combination of the predictor variables and criterion to derive an estimated regression or fit line.

Such a comparison assesses the fit of the regression and thus linearity as well (Piñeiro et al., 2008). Since the predicted values are a perfectly linear function of each independent variable, actual observation values close to the fit line assists in attesting to the linear assumption. Figure 5 visually reflects a moderate linear relationship and presents a combined view of predictors as indicated in RQ1. No violation is noted.

**Figure 5**

*Actual Observation Values vs. Standardized Predicted Values*



**Table 4***Correlations*

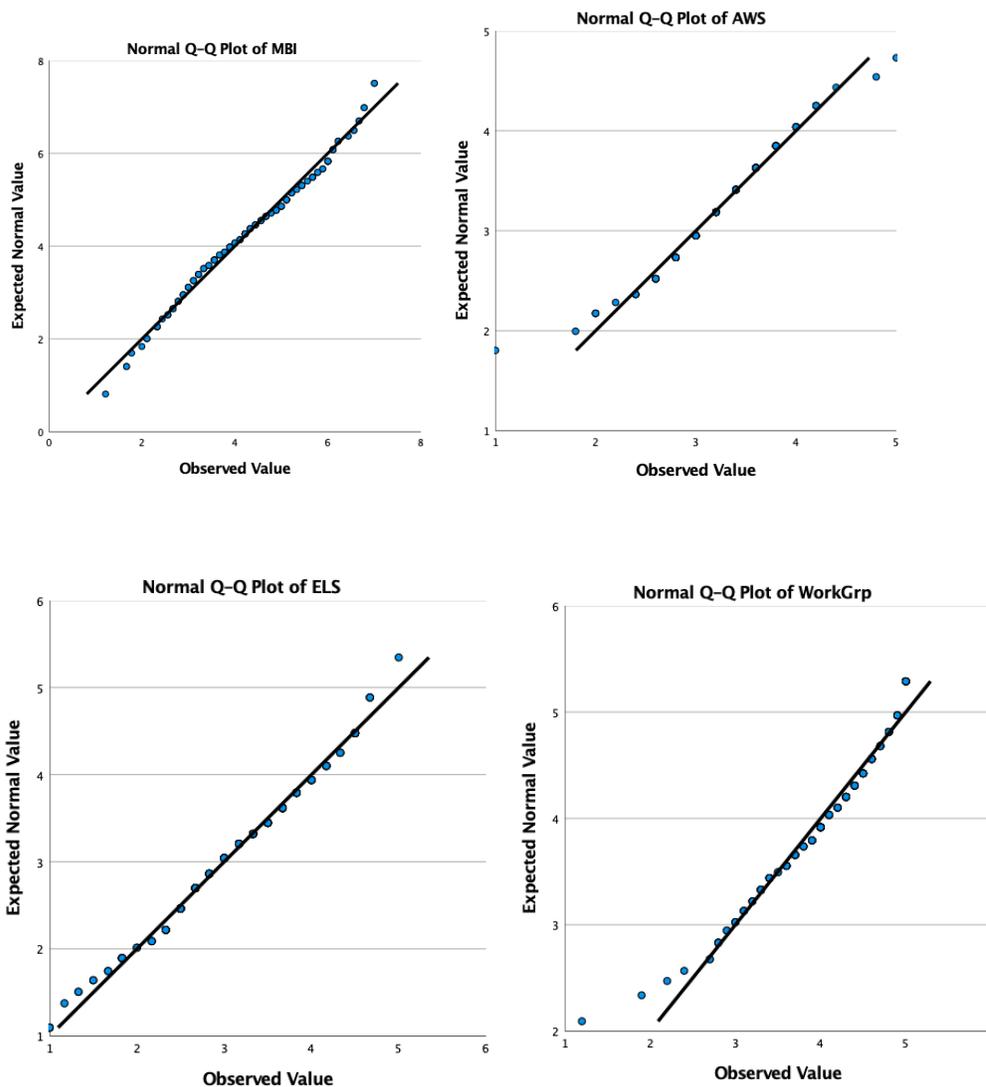
		MBI	AWS	ELS	Work Grp
Pearson Correlation	MBI	1.00	.34	.57	-.16
	AWS	.34	1.00	.34	.05
	ELS	.57	0.34	1.00	-.29
	WorkGrp	-.16	0.05	-.29	1.00
Sig. (1-tailed)	MBI	.	<.001	<.001	.03
	AWS	.00	.	.00	.27
	ELS	.00	.00	.	.00
	WorkGrp	.03	.27	.00	.
N	MBI	146	146	146	146
	AWS	146	146	146	146
	ELS	146	146	146	146
	WorkGrp	146	146	146	146

**Normality.** Normality is also required for residuals (variance between actual and predicted values) when performing a multiple linear regression analysis. Normal distribution aids in confirming that the regression model can be relied upon to explain the relationship between predictor and criterion variables. A common way to assess normality for multiple regression is via quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plots. The Q-Q plot visually reflects the quantiles of a sample dataset against the quantiles of a theoretical distribution. If the actual and theoretical data is from the same type of distribution, a straight-line pattern of the actual observations will be reflected on the scatter plot. The variables presented in the study display a fairly normal distribution with observed scores close to the theoretical distribution values. Work group inclusion scores included an observed value that is distant from the theoretical values. However, the skew does not overshadow the overall assessment of the values. Figure 6 shows all variables – MBI, AWS, ELS,

and work group inclusion scores, respectively. Figure 4 displaying residual and standardized predicted values further supports the normality assessment. The horizontal band of values is centered at zero and scattered along the center with no indication of trend, pattern, nor apparent skew which reflects a normal distribution. Thus, the variance among variables is independent of one another, constant, and confirms that a linear model is appropriate.

**Figure 6**

*Quantile-Quantile Plots*



**Multicollinearity.** Predictors of multiple linear regression models should be absent of multicollinearity. Highly correlated predictors can skew regression findings as an intended change in one predictor variable is actually a change from two independent variables. Multicollinearity for this study was assessed based on the variance inflation factor (VIF) which detects severity of multicollinearity among independent variables. VIF results were processed in SPSS and appear in Table 5. Typically, VIF less than 10 for all predictors demonstrates that there is no multicollinearity issue. In this study, the VIF value for each predictor is slightly over 1 indicating a low correlation between predictors.

**Table 5**

*Variance Inflation Factor<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
AWS	.86	1.16
ELS	.79	1.27
WorkGrp	.89	1.13

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

### ***Multiple Linear Regression Statistics***

The multiple linear regression analysis was performed in SPSS. Within the study, it is one of two significance tests. AWS, ELS, and work group inclusion scores were entered as independent variables. MBI scores were identified as the dependent variable. While the initial experiment-

wise alpha ( $EW_\alpha$ ) was .05, in an effort to limit the size of Type I errors, the Bonferroni correction procedure was applied. Considering the two significance tests ( $k$ ),  $\alpha$  was adjusted to .03 ( $EW_\alpha = .05 / k=2$ ).

The Model Summary, Table 6, reflects the strength of the relationship between the model and dependent variable, emotional exhaustion. The correlation between the predictor and criterion variables,  $R$ , is .60. For human behavior models, which are challenging to predict, this  $R$  can be considered strong (Funder & Ozer, 2019). Similarly, the  $R^2$  of .35 can be considered a moderate variation explanation value (Funder & Ozer, 2019). The adjusted  $R^2$  of .34 is fairly similar.

The AVOVA table, Table 7, reflects the fit of the regression model. The  $p$  value for this model is .001- which is less than the corrected  $\alpha$  of .03 and thus deemed significant. The outcome of this model is highly unlikely to occur if the null hypothesis is true. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected.

The independent variable coefficients are detailed in Table 8. They reflect how much the dependent variable changes with an independent variable when all other independent variables are held constant. The  $p$  values suggest that AWS, .02, and ELS, .001, can cause a significant change in emotional exhaustion, MBI, while work group inclusion, .77, is expected to have no significant impact on MBI. The regression equation for predicting emotional exhaustion is as follows:  $Y=.75 = .40x_1 + .78x_2 - .04x_3$ . Despite the weak impact of the work group inclusion coefficient, it can be concluded that the combination of independent variables are statistically significant enough to predict emotional exhaustion.

**Table 6***Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.60 <sup>a</sup>	.35	.34	1.08

a. Predictors: (Constant), WorkGrp, AWS, ELS

**Table 7***ANOVA<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
1	Regression	89.93	3	29.98	25.88	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.50	142	1.16		
	Total	254.43	145			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

b. Predictors: (Constant), WorkGrp, AWS, ELS

**Table 8***Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		97.5% Confidence Interval for B		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	0.75	0.78		0.96	.34	-1.02	2.52
	AWS	0.40	0.17	0.17	2.30	.02	0.01	0.79
	ELS	0.78	0.11	0.51	6.72	<.001	0.52	1.04
	WorkGrp	-0.04	0.13	-0.02	-0.30	.77	-0.34	0.26

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

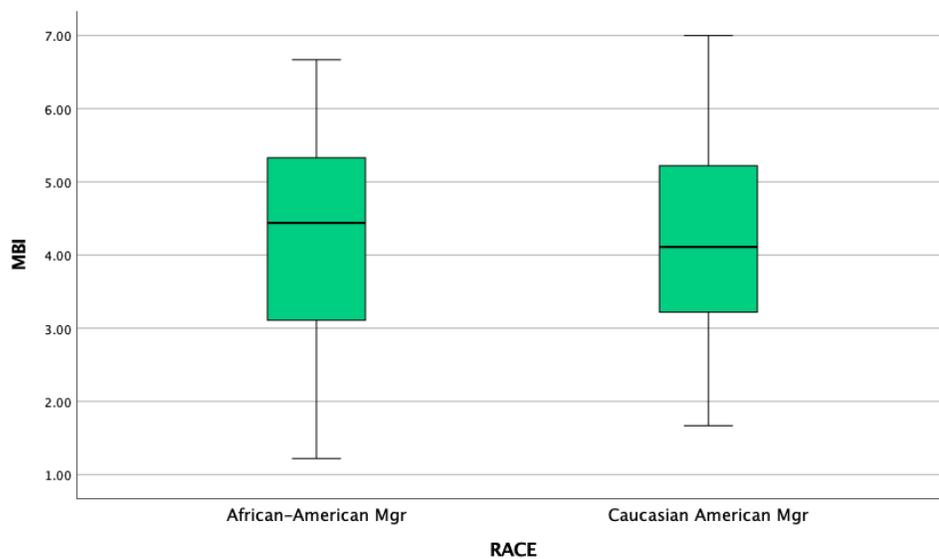
## **Null Hypothesis 2**

### ***Data Screening***

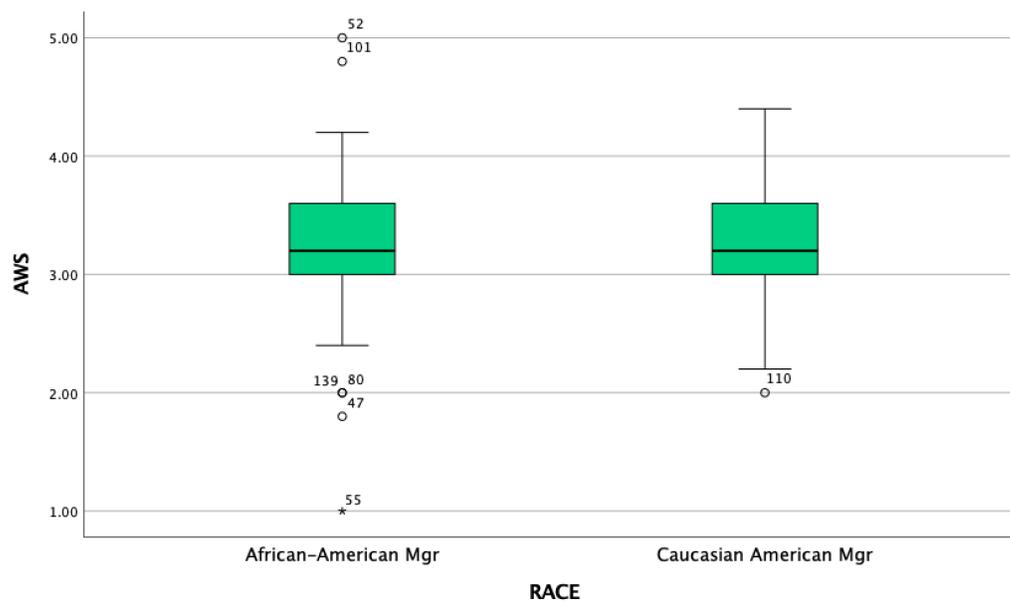
Similar to multiple linear regression, data screening for the MANOVA analysis was conducted on each group's (African-American and Caucasian American white-collar managers) dependent variables (MBI scores, AWS scores, ELS scores, and work group scores) to identify data inconsistencies and extreme outliers. Box and whiskers plots were used during the screening. The plots visually displayed the median as well as upper and lower extremes by group across dependent variables. Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10 reflect the plots for MBI scores, AWS scores, ELS scores, and work group inclusion scores, respectively. Several mild outliers were highlighted. However, only one extreme outlier was identified within the AWS scores among African-American managers. It is notated in Figure 8 with an asterisk. It should be noted that the same value was identified during the multiple linear regression analysis. While the identified score value was low, it was not the result of input error nor processing error. The extreme value is considered a true value and removal was proven to have no significant impact on the MANOVA significance results. See Appendix G. As such, the value will remain in the sample.

**Figure 7**

*Box and Whiskers Plot for MBI scores*

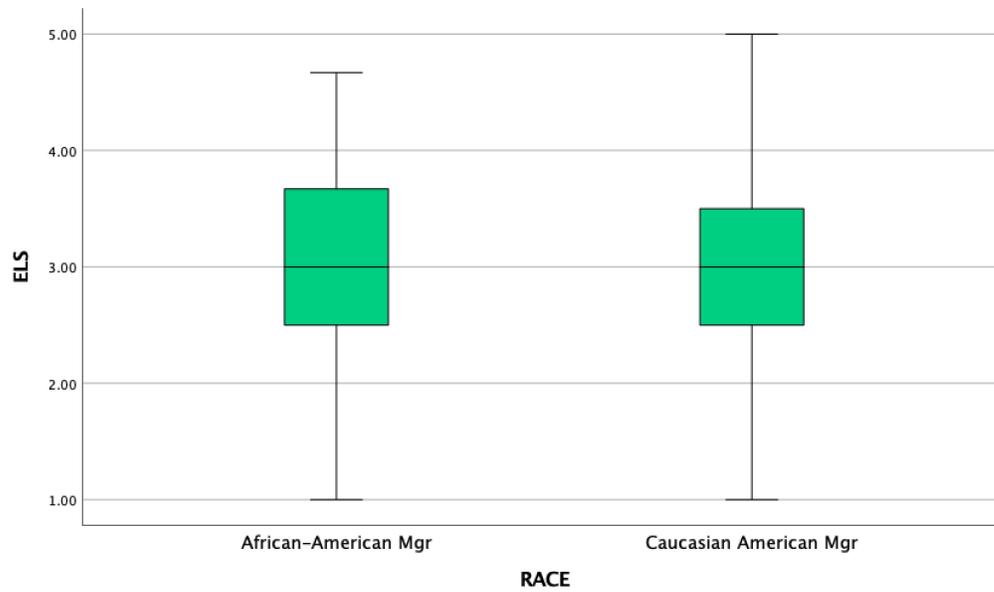
**Figure 8**

*Box and Whiskers Plot for AWS scores*

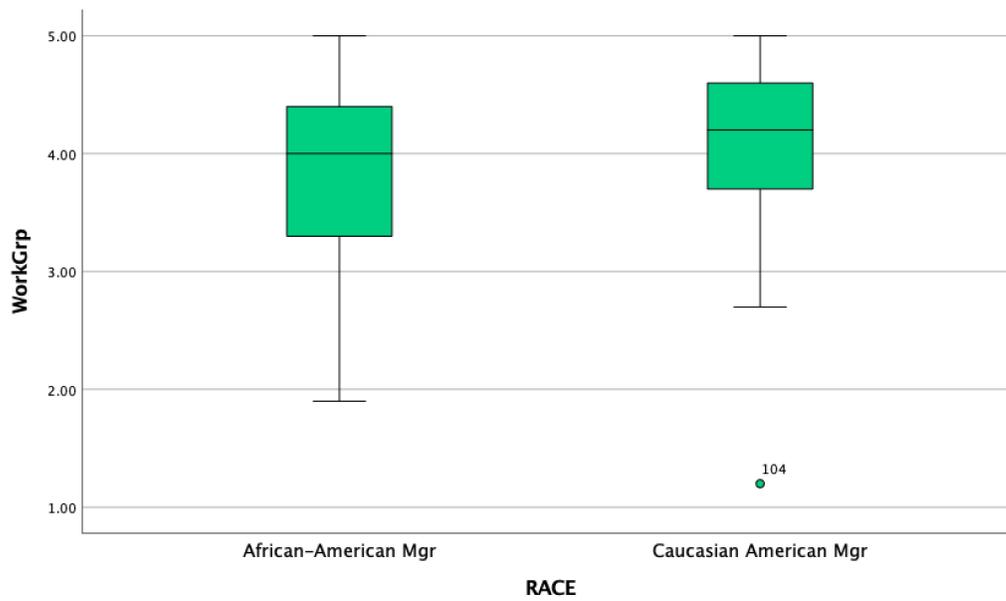


**Figure 9**

*Box and Whiskers Plot for ELS scores*

**Figure 10**

*Box and Whiskers Plot for work group inclusion scores*



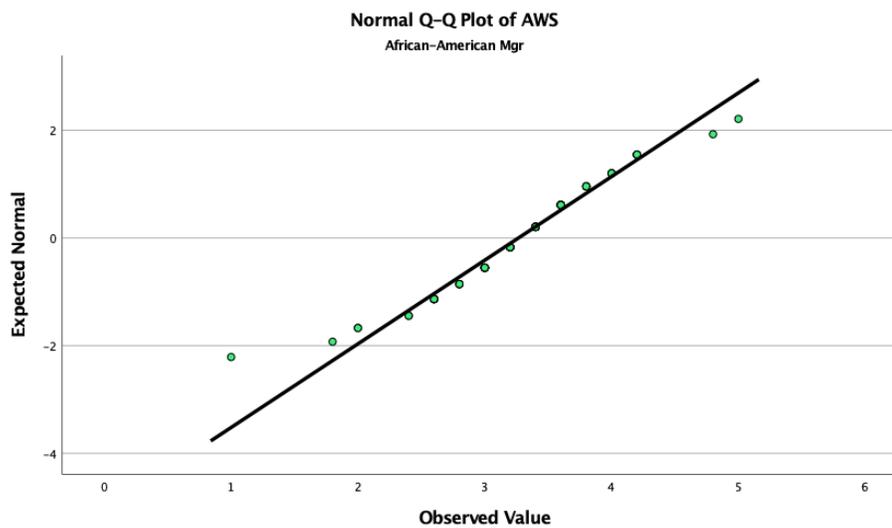
### *Assumptions*

When comparing the means of groups within a MANOVA analysis, several underlying assumptions are made. It is assumed that dependent relationships are linear, normally distributed, absent of multicollinearity, and possess homogeneity of covariance. These assumptions allow data users to evaluate the differences among means without apprehension that other attributes are driving the results. Instances like nonlinear relationships or distributions that are skewed can derive misleading means. Thus, prior to conducting the MANOVA analysis, assumptions tests were performed to ensure the underlying data was able to provide reliable results.

**Normality.** The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which quantifies the distance between empirical measurements was used to assess the normality of data. It is often used to assess sample sizes over 50 participants. See the results in Table 9. Per the test, the AWS scores were the only of the dependent variables to have  $p$  values suggesting non-normal distribution. Thus, the normality assumption was in jeopardy of being violated. A driver of the violation may be inherently embedded in the nature of the Likert scale instruments as well as the outliers previously mentioned. As a result, additional investigation of normality continued by observing Q-Q plots and histograms of AWS scores among the groups in Figures 11 and 12, respectively. Per review of the graphs, no extreme skewness was observed and thus no adjustments toward normality appear necessary for the study.

**Table 9***Test of Normality*

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
RACE		Statistic	<i>df</i>	Sig.
MBI	African-American	.08	73	.20
	Caucasian American	.10	73	.07
AWS	African-American	.12	73	.01
	Caucasian American	.12	73	.01
ELS	African-American	.09	73	.20
	Caucasian American	.10	73	.10
WorkGrp	African-American	.09	73	.18
	Caucasian American	.11	73	.03

**Figure 11***AWS Quantile-Quantile Plots by Race*

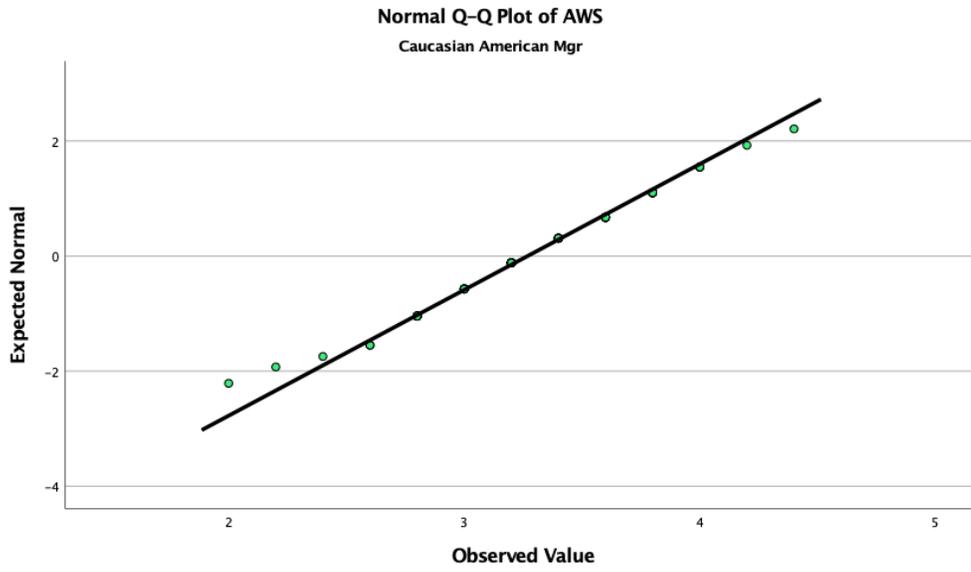
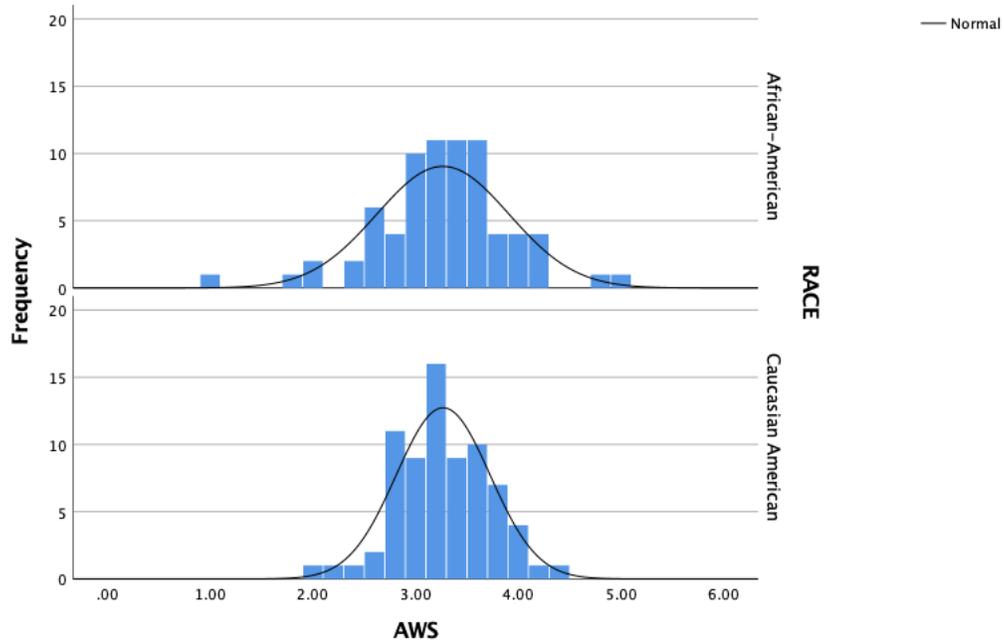


Figure 12

*AWS Histograms*



**Linearity.** A linear relationship is required for each pair of dependent variables used in a MANOVA analysis. As shown in the Figure 3 scatter plot matrix, strong to moderate relationships exist for the pairs with the exception of 1) MBI and work group inclusion scores and 2) AWS and work group inclusion scores. Both demonstrated weak linear relationships. The stronger linear relationships visually displayed values in a straight path with a cigar shape. For the weaker linear relationships, the study will continue with their inclusion despite a loss of power. This will be noted as a study limitation.

**Homogeneity of Variance-Covariance.** For MANOVA analysis, there is an assumption that all groups have the same or similar sample variances. This condition is required for multivariate normality. A lack of homogeneity of variance-covariance among groups can lead to incorrect conclusions. It may also impact the risk of a Type I error. The Box's M test was used to assess violation. As shown in Table 10, the  $p$  value ( $p=.10$ ) was not statistically significant in comparison to the corrected  $\alpha$  of .03. As such, the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance has been met.

**Table 10**

*Box's M Test of Equality*

---

Box's M	16.44
<i>F</i>	1.60
<i>df1</i>	10
<i>df2</i>	99136.26
Sig.	0.10

*NOTE. Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.*

*Design: Intercept + RACE*

**Multicollinearity.** Like multiple linear regression requirements, data values should be absent of multicollinearity which can skew findings. When executing MANOVA analysis, there is an expectation that dependent variables are related conceptually with a low to moderate correlation (Warner, 2013). However, correlations above .80 introduce possible issues. Highly correlated variables used in a MANOVA analysis introduce redundancy to the study and assures that the remaining variables will not have a significant impact on tests. Table 4 displays correlations among the dependent variables. Upon review of correlations in this study, no amounts over .60 were determined.

### ***MANOVA Statistics***

A one-way MANOVA was performed in SPSS for the causal-comparative design. As mentioned with the multiple linear regression analysis, since two significant tests ( $k$ ) were performed, the Bonferroni correction was utilized. The corrected  $\alpha = .30$  ( $EW_{\alpha} = .05 / k=2$ ). A one-way MANOVA was performed to assess any existing differences between MBI, AWS, ELS, and work group inclusion scores among African-American and Caucasian American managers.

Key statistics of the MANOVA are presented in Multivariate Tests Table 11. Relevant data appears in the second Effect labeled “race” on the Wilks’s  $\Lambda$  row. The Wilks’s  $\Lambda$  statistic is frequently used in social science studies. It assesses group means by identifying the variance in dependent variables not explained by differences among the groups. Wilks’s  $\Lambda = .98$  suggests that a significant proportion of the variance in the outcomes is not explained by the effect of race.

Also noted is the multivariate  $\eta^2$  which measures the degree of effect between independent and dependent variables. In this study,  $\eta^2 = .02$  indicates that only 2% of the multivariate variance of the dependent variables is associated with the group factor. It suggests that the independent variables have a weak effect on the outcome variables.

To determine the statistical significance of the MANOVA, the “Sig” column was used. The significance value, or  $p$  value, is .52 which is greater than the corrected  $\alpha$  of .03. It can be concluded that emotional exhaustion, workload impact, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores were not significantly based on race. Thus, the results suggest there is minimum difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers. The null hypothesis failed to be rejected. As such, no further test was performed.

**Table 11**

*Multivariate Tests<sup>a</sup>*

Effect		Value	$F$	Hypothesis $df$	Error $df$	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.99	2714.29	4.00	141.00	<.001	.99
	Wilks' Lambda	.01	2714.29	4.00	141.00	<.001	.99
	Hotelling's Trace	77.00	2714.29	4.00	141.00	<.001	.99
	Roy's Largest Root	77.00	2714.29	4.00	141.00	<.001	.99
RACE	Pillai's Trace	.02	0.81	4.00	141.00	.52	.02
	Wilks' Lambda	.98	0.81	4.00	141.00	.53	.02
	Hotelling's Trace	0.02	0.81	4.00	141.00	.52	.02
	Roy's Largest Root	0.02	0.81	4.00	141.00	.52	.02

a. Design: Intercept + RACE

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

### Overview

This chapter concludes the study. It presents a discussion of significance results and their comparison to underlying study theories and previously published studies. The implications highlight the purpose of the study and why the findings should be deemed as critical for corporate entities and its employees. Lastly, limitations of the study which could prevent the generalization of results are noted along with future study recommendations that would continue the pursuit of closing the literature gap of workplace exhaustion.

### Discussion

The purpose of this quantitative, predictive correlational and causal-comparative design study was to explore how workload, surface acting, work group inclusion, and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in domestic, white-collar roles. Burnout research surrounding race and ethnicity has proven to be inconclusive inviting more opportunity for exploration (Audi et al., 2021; Lawrence et al., 2021). The study addressed two research questions:

- **RQ1:** How accurately can emotional exhaustion scores for managers be predicted from a linear combination of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?
- **RQ2:** Is there a difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion scores?

#### Research Question 1

For RQ1, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed in SPSS. The findings of the study suggested that workload, perceived burden of surface acting, and feelings of work

group inclusion can be predictors of emotional exhaustion in the workplace. The fit of the regression when compared to estimated values was moderate. Stronger correlations between variables were anticipated. However, it should be noted that the discipline and instrument types can play a role in the findings. When considering human behavior studies, it should be noted that behavior is challenging to predict. Thus, effect sizes are typically lower (Funder & Ozer, 2019).

Likert measurement scales were used for all independent variables. While Likert scales are not believed to significantly impact study findings, there are inherent biases associated with the scale – central tendency, acquiescence, and social desirability. Central tendency refers to participants' aversion to selecting extreme responses (Douven, 2018). Acquiescence refers to the participants' tendency to respond to questions in an affirmative manner (Kreitchmann et al., 2019). Social desirability bias refers to a participant's tendency to respond in a way that makes them appear favorably (Kreitchmann et al., 2019).

This overall result is in line with theories that supported the study – conservation of resources theory, job-demands-resources theory, and social identity theory. Underlying the theories is the ideology that: 1) the depletion of resources such as energy required to work long hours or manage difficult relationships without replenishing results in mental and possibly physical fatigue; and 2) a lack of group belongingness and acceptance of uniqueness can result in stress and emotional exhaustion. The theories were apparent when comparing pairs such as ELS, AWS, and MBI scores via the scatter plot matrix (Figure 3) and correlations table (Table 4). As workload and emotional labor – work exerted to display expected emotions – increase, emotional exhaustion has been found to rise. Such was the case in this study. The findings of the study were compatible with similar past studies of surface acting – a form of emotional labor (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Cheung & Tang, 2007; Grandey et al., 2015; Indregard et al., 2018). In prior studies,

environments involving high degrees of emotional labor were observed to have a direct, positive correlation to emotional exhaustion as well as physical ailments and workplace absences. Such was the case with prior studies exploring job demands and job resources. In studies conducted by Demerouti et al. (2001) and Jimenez and Dunkl (2017), employees experiencing excessive workloads - or job demands - with no additional resources to offset the work led to emotional exhaustion over long periods.

For this study, the findings associated with work group inclusion were the only of the independent variables that reflected an insignificant coefficient and weak linear relationships with the remaining variables. The work group inclusion model suggests that employees that do not experience feelings of belongingness and acceptance of their uniqueness are more likely to experience stress and emotional exhaustion. When comparing work group inclusion scores to the remaining independent variables, the contrast to theory may suggest the instrument was inappropriate for the study - specifically if the manager has minimum group interaction.

### **Research Question 2**

The findings of RQ2 suggested there is no difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers when considering workload, surface acting, work group inclusion, and emotional exhaustion. On the surface, the conclusion appears to contradict well-documented workplace stressors like vigilance or code-switching as well as theories underlying the study – social identity theory and work group inclusion model. The results noted in Table 2 show that African-American managers displayed a higher degree of emotional exhaustion in the workplace ( $M=4.4$ ) and a lower degree of work group inclusion ( $M=3.9$ ). However, despite the noted variances, the differences were minimum in both instances. Scores for the remaining two variables were similar to those of Caucasian American managers.

In a similar prior study by Teshome et al. (2022), contrasting findings resulted. A sample of 30,551 reported that traditionally marginalized participants experienced higher degrees of emotional exhaustion. The researchers cite the variance drivers as stress originating from racial battle fatigue and minority tax. Racial battle fatigue can be likened to post-traumatic stress disorder. It is the psychological and physical effects of anticipated racism and discrimination (Teshome et al., 2022). It arises from a cumulative history of constant microaggressions and mistreatment. Minority tax refers to the time and effort expected to be set aside by URM to represent and advocate for their community in the workplace when in actuality there are no resources established to foster the diversity (Teshome et al., 2022). Those resources would include controls in place to ensure equality of roles, pay, and assignments, as well as mentoring programs. McGee's (2020) study was similar to that of Teshome et al. The findings revealed that African-American participants experienced higher levels of stress as a direct result of coping with isolation and a racialized environment. However, participants also expressed that achieving success was far more important to them than protecting their mental and physical well-being. Such is the case for the underlying premise of SBW.

When considering the contrasting results of this study, a possible rationale may be traced back to schemas such as SBW which has been directly related to mental and physical workplace stress. This schema – often passed down through generations - suggests that its adopters present themselves as resilient yet fail to engage in activities that preserve strength; and persevere as if conditions are equal although they are in fact oppressive (Watson & Hunter, 2016). The schema is premised on the ideology that unjust treatment is expected and working twice as hard to be considered average is a normalcy. Therefore, overexertion is not an indication of concern. Instead, the ability to withstand adversities and challenges is seen as a strength. For schema

adopters, the goal is not to identify and combat microaggressions experienced. It is to overcome negative stereotypes - oftentimes at their own personal expense (Liao et al., 2020).

### **Implications**

In the recent aftermath of Covid-19, the focus on burnout and emotional exhaustion has re-emerged and become a critical concern in the workplace. Despite the attention, gaps remain in literature. There is limited research on the impact race has on emotional exhaustion and an overwhelming amount of studies focused on human services. This study aimed to be a step toward diminishing the gap. The findings validated that workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion are firm predictors of emotional exhaustion. The results also suggested there is no difference among African-American and Caucasian American managers' emotional exhaustion, perception of workload, surface acting, and work group inclusion. While the results were valid, caution should be taken to conclude there are truly no differences among the managers when specifically considering emotional labor and inclusion. Instead, this particular study was unable to identify the difference. However, disparities continue to exist in the workplace.

Current statistics show minority disparities in hiring, advancements, performance appraisals, and involuntary terminations. Similarly, return to work studies identify workplace microaggressions as the reason African-American employees are less enthusiastic about being in the office (Brooks, 2021). All of these findings have been identified as contributors of emotional exhaustion. Therefore, what should be concluded about the findings is that a gap continues to exist. Further exploration should be pursued. Understanding this gap impacts not only the employees, but entities as a whole. Emotional exhaustion and burnout for one employee is a company-wide problem for all.

When considering the impact that emotional exhaustion has, enterprise leaders should not lose sight that it does eventually affect the bottom line. Emotional exhaustion is associated with a decrease in productivity and quality of work, as well as increases in errors, absences, and desire to depart (Lawrence et al., 2021). These absences and productivity drops have been estimated to cost American companies approximately \$300 billion per year (Jeung et al., 2018).

Diversity could help relieve some of the mentioned exhaustion and also ignite synergy within a company. Diversity has been proven to enhance efficiency and innovation (Guillaume et al., 2014). However, to reap these benefits, URM must not only be obtained, but also cultivated. When it is mismanaged or ignored, the likelihood of effective social integration diminishes (Guillaume et al., 2014). According to Guillaume et al.'s work group model (2014), environments high in dissimilarity – or diversity - leads to more favorable outcomes. Despite this revelation of diversity benefits, it does not appear to be a priority when examining the demographics of organizations. To date, only 8% of white-collar roles consist of African-Americans (Guynn & Schrotenboer, 2020; Rope, 2021; United States Census Bureau, 2021). In executive roles, the population drops to only 1% (McKinney, 2022; Rope, 2021).

A final takeaway recipients of the study should keep in mind is that managers play a significant role in establishing culture which impacts both the mental and physical health of their teammates. In many instances, they are the antidote to prevent stress among their team. Therefore, their susceptibility to emotional exhaustion is especially critical. When managers are emotionally depleted or experience a lack of inclusion, eventually their ability to lead will be challenged. This is especially key in high-risk processes. Entity executives should have a firm sense

that their managers are not only aware of risks, but that they are also ensuring their team members are aware of the risks, how to hedge them and how to prevent them from posing a threat to the company.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations emerged from the study. When planning the survey, there were key attributes that could be restricted in the sample - race, gender, job sector, job role. However, one attribute that was unable to be restricted at the onset was age. Prior research finds that symptoms of exhaustion significantly differ across age groups of employed men and women. Young men and women between the ages of 20–35 and 55 years old and over have been found to be especially vulnerable (Marchand et al., 2018). There have also been studies that associate generations with stress. Research conducted by Morgan (2021) found that millennial managers, those between the ages of 26-40, were more likely to experience emotional exhaustion (42%) in comparison to managers of other generation (Gen Z 34%, Gen X 27%, and Boomers 21%) and those managers that are individual contributors (30%). The susceptibility of millennial managers has been attributed to a combination of being reared in a culture where overworking was praised and having the responsibility of now caring for their elderly parents and children (Morgan, 2021). Although age in this study was not restricted during planning, it was collected as feedback from participants. It was observed that 60% of the participants were between the ages of 25 – 44. Noting that the gender and race among participants were fairly equal, an opportunity rose to observe the influence of age. Therefore, significance tests were run on the subset to limit the impact of the possible confounding age variable. The results which appear in Appendices I and J were not different from those of the entire sample.

While job sector could be restricted to white-collar, it was challenging to restrict participation at lower subsets of discipline within the sector. Ultimately, not all corporate roles face the same rigor and stress. Studies have consistently found that certain characteristics are indicators of roles that experience high levels of exhaustion – long hours, high-risk roles, profit-driven roles (Moss, 2021). Two specific roles that face high levels of stress within the white-collar sector include finance and sales-driven roles. Finance roles – specifically those which revolve around reporting, investing, and planning - have definitive reporting deadlines, are governed by changing professional and legislation rules, and expected to meet internal goals. Similarly, sales-driven roles face internal pressures along with external demands. For publicly traded companies, shareholders want high profit results. In addition, if errors or misbehavior occur, the impact from reputation damage can permanently close the doors of a company.

Not distinguishing between manager types can be looked upon as a limitation. The study was open to all managers – those leading teams and individual contributors who lead complex aspects or processes of a team. Based on published research, both types of managers experience emotional exhaustion. However, prior studies have noted differences in the degree of exhaustion experienced between the two manager types (Harter, 2021). Unlike individual contributors, managers that lead teams typically experience pressure from supervisors and pressure from their direct reports to not only resolve work-related issues, but also administrative issues ranging from compensation to deciphering entity-wide policies. In most cases, these expectations are likely to be resolved with no additional resources. The JD-R maintains when demands exceed existing resources, they evolve into stressors (Jimenez & Dunkl, 2017; Park et al., 2020; Paškvan et al., 2016).

Limitation also resides in the test designs. When conducting the assumption tests in preparation for the MANOVA analysis - after utilizing several analysis tools - it was determined that there was a weak linear relationship between the following pairs: 1) MBI and work group inclusion scores and 2) AWS and work group inclusion scores. Thus, there was some loss of power to detect differences between the two manager groups. In general, MANOVA significance can be challenging to assess. While the test is designed to separate groups, the assumption tests on which they are based are subjective in nature and can be ambiguous when interpreting. In addition, satisfying all the assumption tests is difficult to achieve in comparison to univariate analysis. No limitations were noted for the assumption testing associated with multiple linear regression. However, the design of multiple linear regression can pose an issue for studies which involve human behavior. Oftentimes, behavior cannot be accurately reflected in a linear manner which is an assumption underlying multiple linear regression. Thus,  $R^2$  values are generally lower (Funder & Ozer, 2019).

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was a first step toward closing a literature gap in workplace emotional exhaustion. Currently, there are limited studies including underrepresented minorities. There is also a disproportionate amount of studies solely focused on roles within the human services sector. Traditionally, those roles require a significant amount of emotional involvement to contribute to the well-being of others. Oftentimes it results in stress. However, other sectors such as those that impact the financial stability of the country or protect citizens can be reasonably assumed to encounter stress as well. Thus, there are more research opportunities that can be pursued. Expand-

ing the range of races, job sectors, job roles, and instruments that measure different microaggressions in the workplace can increase knowledge on emotional exhaustion. Specific opportunities that could broaden literature may include the following:

1. Determine if there are differences between underrepresented minorities and Caucasian Americans in non-managerial, staff roles when assessing emotional exhaustion.
2. Determine if there are emotional exhaustion differences between underrepresented minorities and Caucasian Americans managers specifically in the financial sector.
3. When determining differences between underrepresented minorities and Caucasian Americans in white-collar roles, utilize measures which assess known contributors of emotional exhaustion such as fairness or value systems which also have been identified as URM stressors.
4. Determine if there are differences between underrepresented minorities and Caucasian Americans in the military when assessing emotional exhaustion.
5. Determine if there are differences among underrepresented minorities and Caucasian Americans in C-suite roles when assessing emotional exhaustion.
6. Restricting participants by age, assess predictors of emotional exhaustion for managers in a non-human services sector.
7. Determine if there are differences among age groups when assessing emotional exhaustion within a non-human services sector.

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### APPENDIX A: Work Group Inclusion Scale Instrument and Permission

<b>Work Group Inclusion Scale</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Hard to Decide</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I am treated as a valued member of my work group. (B)	1	2	3	4	5
I belong in my work group. (B)	1	2	3	4	5
I am connected to my work group. (B)	1	2	3	4	5
I believe that my work is where I am meant to be. (B)	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that people really care about me in my work group. (B)	1	2	3	4	5
I can bring aspects of myself to this work group that others in the group don't have in common with me. (U)	1	2	3	4	5
People in my work group listen to me even when my views are dissimilar.(U)	1	2	3	4	5
While at work, I am comfortable expressing opinions that diverge from my group. (U)	1	2	3	4	5
I can share a perspective on work issues that is different from my group members. (U)	1	2	3	4	5
When my group's perspective becomes too narrow, I am able to bring up a new point of view. (U)	1	2	3	4	5

**To:** Jones, Dana <xxxxxxxxxliberty.edu>  
**Subject:** [External] Re: Work Group Inclusion Scale Permission Request

This is fine Dana. Just cite our work. Good luck with your dissertation.  
Best,  
Beth

On xx xx, 20xx, at xx:xx AM, Jones, Dana <xxxxxxxxxliberty.edu> wrote:

Hi Dr. Chung,

I am a doctoral student at Liberty University working on my dissertation proposal. It will be a causal-comparative and predictive correlational study examining how workload, surface acting, inclusion, and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles. The study will be conducted under committee chair Dr. Joseph Fontanella and committee member Dr. Michelle Barthlow who can be reached at xxxxxxxxxxxliberty.edu and xxxxxxxxxxxliberty.edu, respectively.

I would like your permission to use the 10-item Work Group Inclusion Scale instrument you developed in my research survey. In addition, I would like your permission to print the instrument in the appendix.

At your earliest convenience, please let me know if permission is granted or if you require additional information prior to making a decision. I can be reached at xxxxxxxxxxxliberty.edu or at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dana Jones

**APPENDIX B: Emotional Labour Scale Instrument and Permission**

<b>Surface Acting Subscale:</b> “On an average day at work, how frequently do you ...”	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Resist expressing my true feelings	1	2	3	4	5
Pretend to have emotions that I don't really have	1	2	3	4	5
Hide my true feelings about a situation	1	2	3	4	5
Show emotions that I don't feel	1	2	3	4	5
Show emotions that are expected.	1	2	3	4	5
Conceal what I'm feeling.	1	2	3	4	5

**To:** Jones, Dana <xxxxxxxxliberty.edu>

**Subject:** Re: [External] Request to use the Emotional Labor Scale (ELS) for research

Hello Dana,

Thank you for your interest in our research! Yes you may use it in your research and publish it in the appendix of your work. Attached is a copy of the (revised) Emotional Labour Scale, and attached are some articles on emotional labor.

There isn't an official manual or scoring template. The scoring is very easy; it's just a matter of calculating the averages for each of the subscales (for example, add up the three items for deep acting and divide by three).

In the revised version of the scale, we separated the two components of surface acting into their own subscale because that provides additional information that is VERY helpful. However, if you wish to simply measure deep acting and surface acting, you can combine the two subscales of surface acting and create one surface acting measure.

Regarding interpretation, if you look at previous articles that have used the scale (for example, Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002), you'll see what the average score has been for various occupational groups.

Good luck with your research!  
All the best,  
Celeste

On Xxxxxx, Xxxxx xx, 20xx at xx:xx:xx a.m. CST, Jones, Dana <xxxxxxxxliberty.edu> wrote:

Hi Dr. Brotheridge,

I am a doctoral student at Liberty University working on my dissertation proposal. It will be a causal-comparative and predictive correlational study examining how workload, surface acting, inclusion, and emotional exhaustion impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles. The study will be conducted under committee chair Dr. Joseph Fontanella and committee member Dr. Michelle Barthlow who can be reached at xxxxxxxxliberty.edu and xxxxxxxxliberty.edu, respectively.

I would like your permission to use the Emotional Labour Scale instrument you developed with Dr. Lee in my research survey. In addition, I would like your permission to print the instrument in the appendix.

At your earliest convenience, please let me know if permission is granted or if you require additional information prior to making a decision. I can be reached at xxxxxxxxliberty.edu or at (xxx) xxx-xxxx. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dana Jones

**APPENDIX C: Demographic Questionnaire****Age**

25 - 34                  35 - 44                  45 - 54                  > 54

**Gender**

Male                  Female

**APPENDIX D: Screening Questionnaire****Select the most accurate description of your organization role.**

Manager (or supervisor, lead associate) with direct reports

Manager with **no** direct reports

Non-manager role

**Select the option that describes your race appropriately.**

African-American

Caucasian-American

Other

**Select your primary residency location.**

United States

Canada

Other

**Select the most appropriate description of your occupation classification.**

White-collar (*skilled, non-manual labor typically occurring in corporate, office workplaces*)

Government

Non-profit

Labor/ blue-collar (*manual labor*)

Human services (*e.g., educator, mental health or medical physician, social worker, emergency worker*)

## APPENDIX E: Consent Form

**Title of the Project:** A Predictive and Causal-Comparative Study Examining Emotional Exhaustion, Workload, Surface Acting, and Inclusion on Managers

**Principal Investigator:** Dana Jones, Liberty University

### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study that explores occupational burnout. Currently, there is insufficient burnout research across underrepresented races and industries. This study will address these research gaps. To participate in the study, you must be either an African-American or Caucasian American manager in a white-collar role as described below and a United States resident.

For this study, manager refers to 1) employees responsible for leading junior staff performance and development as well as 2) employees with the formal title of manager performing as individual contributors with no reporting junior staff. The manager role for this study excludes C-suite executive-level roles such as Chief Executive Office or Chief Accounting Officer which plan strategies and execute activities across the company.

In this study, white-collar refers to skilled, professional positions in private sector companies. This excludes manual labor, government, non-profit, and human services roles that strive for the betterment of people such as educators and social, medical, or mental care providers.

Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

### What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of this study is to discover and compare how emotional exhaustion, heavy workloads, work group inclusion, and surface acting impact African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles. Surface acting involves suppressing authentic emotions and instead displaying emotions or behavior that is perceived to be more acceptable in the workplace.

### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete the three screening questions to attest to race, manager role, and white-collar job type.
2. Complete the survey estimated to take 15 minutes.

**How could you or others benefit from this study?**

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in the study.

Benefits to society include increasing the understanding of predictors and causes of burnout. Burnout results in psychological and physical impairment of employees. It also costs the United States approximately \$300 billion via absenteeism, training, medical, and legal costs and fees.

**What risks might you experience from being in this study?**

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

**How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Pertinent items to be aware of include the following:

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- The online survey for this study will be hosted on Pollfish, Incorporated - a market research company that specializes in gathering respondent data, developing research gathering tools and strategies. Pollfish adheres to the Privacy Shield framework designed to ensure companies have adequate data controls that are also able to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

**Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Dana Jones. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at xxxxxxxliberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Joseph Fontanella, at xxxxxxxliberty.edu.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at xxxliberty.edu.

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

**Your Consent**

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You may download a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Subject Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Date

## APPENDIX F: Email Invitation

Greetings,

I am a doctoral student in the School of Education at Liberty University. I am conducting a research study as part of my degree requirements to better understand emotional exhaustion which triggers burnout in the workplace. Currently, there is insufficient burnout evidence on underrepresented minorities as well as white-collar employees. This study will address both gaps by focusing on two groups – African-American and Caucasian American managers in white-collar roles. The purpose of my research is to identify predictors of emotional exhaustion and the relationship between emotional exhaustion and factors including workload and inclusion.

I would like to invite eligible participants to join my study. Participants must be United States residents, managers in white-collar roles, and African-American or Caucasian American. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete an online survey. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Participation will be completely anonymous and no personal identifiable information will be collected.

To participate in the study, please click on the link: <https://www.pollfish.com/surveys/xxxxxx>. A consent document appears prior to the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research including data controls and benefits. After you have read the consent form, please click the link to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey. If you would like additional information on the research, please reach out to me at xxxxxxxxliberty.edu.

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Sincerely,

Dana Jones  
Researcher  
xxxxxxxliberty.edu

**APPENDIX G: MANOVA Results Excluding Extreme Scores**

*Multivariate Tests<sup>a</sup>*

Effect		Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.99	2862.81	4.00	140.00	<.001	.99
	Wilks' Lambda	.01	2862.81	4.00	140.00	<.001	.99
	Hotelling's Trace	81.79	2862.81	4.00	140.00	<.001	.99
	Roy's Largest Root	81.79	2862.81	4.00	140.00	<.001	.99
	Root						
RACE	Pillai's Trace	.02	0.84	4.00	140.00	.51	.02
	Wilks' Lambda	.98	0.84	4.00	140.00	.51	.02
	Hotelling's Trace	0.02	0.84	4.00	140.00	.51	.02
	Roy's Largest Root	0.02	0.84	4.00	140.00	.51	.02
	Root						

a. Design: Intercept + RACE

## APPENDIX H: Multiple Linear Regression Results Excluding Extreme Scores

### Correlations

		MBI	AWS	ELS	WorkGrp
Pearson Correlation	MBI	1.00	.31	.57	-.16
	AWS	.31	1.00	.31	.06
	ELS	.57	.31	1.00	-.26
	WorkGrp	-.16	.06	-.26	1.00
Sig. (1-tailed)	MBI	.	<.001	<.001	.03
	AWS	.00	.	.00	.23
	ELS	.00	.00	.	.00
	WorkGrp	.03	.23	.00	.
N	MBI	144	144	144	144
	AWS	144	144	144	144
	ELS	144	144	144	144
	WorkGrp	144	144	144	144

### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.58 <sup>a</sup>	.34	.33	1.08

a. Predictors: (Constant), WorkGrp, AWS, ELS

### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	84.82	3	28.27	24.19	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	163.66	140	1.17		
	Total	248.47	143			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

b. Predictors: (Constant), WorkGrp, AWS, ELS

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	97.5% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial
(Constant)	0.86	0.82		1.05	.30	-1.00	2.73			
AWS	0.40	0.18	0.16	2.19	.03	-0.02	0.81	.31	.18	.15
ELS	0.79	0.12	0.51	6.73	<.001	0.53	1.06	.57	.49	.46
WorkGrp	-0.07	0.14	-0.04	-0.53	.60	-0.39	0.24	-.16	-.04	-.04

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

### APPENDIX I: Multiple Liner Regression Results Using Restricted Age

Multiple Linear Regression significance test results for participants ages 25 – 44.

Descriptors	<i>M</i> of MBI	<i>M</i> of AWS	<i>M</i> of ELS	<i>M</i> of WorkGroup	<i>N</i>
<b>25 - 34</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>26</b>
African-American	4.5	3.2	3.4	3.6	14
Caucasian American	3.9	3.2	3.3	4.1	12
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>21</b>
African-American	4.4	3.7	3.3	4.4	10
Caucasian American	5.0	3.4	3.2	4.2	11
<b>35 - 44</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>18</b>
African-American	4.1	3.1	3.0	4.0	8
Caucasian American	4.5	3.3	3.4	3.9	10
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>22</b>
African-American	4.4	3.3	2.9	3.8	10
Caucasian American	4.4	3.3	3.2	4.0	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>87</b>

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
1	Regression	67.38	3	22.46	21.26	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	87.70	83	1.06		
	Total	155.08	86			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

b. Predictors: (Constant), WorkGrp, AWS, ELS

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	97.5% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial
1 (Constant)	0.43	0.92		0.47	.64	-1.67	2.532			
AWS	0.09	0.22	0.04	0.42	.67	-0.40	0.59	.32	.05	.04
ELS	1.03	0.15	0.65	6.81	<.001	0.68	1.37	.66	.60	.56
WorkGrp	0.09	0.15	0.05	0.60	.55	-0.26	0.44	-.11	.066	.05

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

### APPENDIX J: MANOVA Results Using Restricted Age

MANOVA significance test results for participants ages 25 – 44.

Descriptors	<i>M</i> of MBI	<i>M</i> of AWS	<i>M</i> of ELS	<i>M</i> of WorkGroup	<i>N</i>
<b>25 - 34</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>26</b>
African-American	4.5	3.2	3.4	3.6	14
Caucasian American	3.9	3.2	3.3	4.1	12
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>21</b>
African-American	4.4	3.7	3.3	4.4	10
Caucasian American	5.0	3.4	3.2	4.2	11
<b>35 - 44</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>18</b>
African-American	4.1	3.1	3.0	4.0	8
Caucasian American	4.5	3.3	3.4	3.9	10
<b>Male</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>22</b>
African-American	4.4	3.3	2.9	3.8	10
Caucasian American	4.4	3.3	3.2	4.0	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>87</b>

#### *Box's M Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices<sup>a</sup>*

Box's M	12.13
<i>F</i>	1.15
<i>df1</i>	10
<i>df2</i>	34156.35
Sig.	0.32

a. Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

*Multivariate Tests<sup>a</sup>*

Effect		Value	<i>F</i>	Hypothesis <i>df</i>	Error <i>df</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.99	1415.18	4.00	82.00	<.001	.99
	Wilks' Lambda	.01	1415.18	4.00	82.00	<.001	.99
	Hotelling's Trace	69.03	1415.18	4.00	82.00	<.001	.99
	Roy's Largest Root	69.03	1415.18	4.00	82.00	<.001	.99
RACE	Pillai's Trace	.02	0.31	4.00	82.00	.87	.02
	Wilks' Lambda	.99	0.31	4.00	82.00	.87	.02
	Hotelling's Trace	0.02	0.31	4.00	82.00	.87	.02
	Roy's Largest Root	0.02	0.31	4.00	82.00	.87	.02

a. Design: Intercept + RACE

**APPENDIX K: Institutional Review Board Approval**

Dana Jones  
Joseph Fontanella

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FYxx-xx-210 A PREDICTIVE AND CAUSAL-COMPARATIVE STUDY EXAMINING EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION, WORKLOAD, SURFACE ACTING, AND INCLUSION ON MANAGERS

Dear Dana Jones, Joseph Fontanella,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording). The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

**Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB.** Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of

continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [xxxxliberty.edu](mailto:xxxxliberty.edu).

Sincerely,

*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*  
**Research Ethics Office**