

2022

Workaholism Development as a Self-Efficacy Behavior Among Black Women in the Workplace

Tiffany Nicole Johnson Lemon
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Tiffany Lemon

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Walden University
2022

Abstract

Workaholism Development as a Self-Efficacy Behavior Among Black Women in the

Workplace

by

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MPhil, Walden University, 2021

MBA, Regis University, 2006

BA, Spelman College, 2004

Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

Walden University

August 2022

Abstract

Understanding how workaholism develops in Black women and the role organizational culture plays in its development, specifically individuals who work in predominantly White organizations, is needed to address this phenomenon. Data were gathered from individuals who identify as Black women and are self-proclaimed workaholics who work in settings comprised predominantly of White employees. Understanding workplace culture and the events that may lead to behavioral changes has been limited, specific to the minority group of Black women. The key research questions investigated the development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations and the role organizational culture plays in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women. Using a phenomenological research design with a semi structured interview, the study captured the behavioral constructs of the participants with consideration to the behaviors that develop using the affective events theory (AET) within the framework of the research. It was determined within the research findings that: (a) organizational support from onboarding and beyond could mitigate the onset of workaholic behaviors, (b) trust within the workplace is paramount for authenticity, and (c) lack of representation puts additional pressure on minority employees and can lead to imposter syndrome. Researching and addressing the issue of disproportionate behaviors by race and gender resulting from organizational culture provided insight into necessary steps needed to improve workplace culture, which has the possibility to positively shift self-efficacy behaviors and reduce workaholism leading to positive social change.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Alfred D. Lemon and my children, A.J. and D.J., for supporting me on the many long days and nights while I maintained my pace towards completion. You motivated me in more ways than I can count. To my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Emmett D. and Gwendolyn M. Johnson, without you, there is no me, and subsequently, this would not have been achieved. To my brother, Emmett D. Johnson, Jr., your curiosity kept me curious and motivated me to persevere.

To all Black women who work tirelessly to pave the way for future generations, this is dedicated to you recognizing your power, your strength, your authentic self, and your seat at the table that is anchored in fairness, equity, and trust.

Acknowledgments

I am truly grateful for all individuals who allowed me to stretch myself and explore this vital topic for social and organizational culture changes for my dissertation. To my committee chair, Dr. Barbara Chappell, your patience, graciousness, and encouragement were unwavering. Dr. Cynthia Loubier-Ricca and Dr. Jane Coddington, I learned so much in this process and even in the discomfort, I was able to see the big picture for sustainable social change and necessary dialogue within the communities and organizations that will benefit from this research. Special thanks to my family, friends, and coworkers who would encourage me with subtle inquiries on my status or questions specific to my topic. There are not enough words to express how much I appreciate you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background

Diversity and inclusion departments within organizations have been a focal point in recent years in relation to the underrepresentation of Black Americans, particularly Black women, within the workplace and what the lack of minority presence means for organizational culture (Collins et al., 2020). This focus is the result of disparities explored in research pertaining to racial and gender inequality with respect to treatment within the workplace (Williams, 2020). Black Americans in the workplace became a primary focus during the implementation of regulations of affirmative action, which was implemented in the 1960s to eliminate institutional discrimination for minorities and women (Jackson, 2019). Affirmative action was reviewed by the Supreme Court and was challenged by Justice Clarence Thomas who initiated a more restrictive interpretation of the regulation by requiring that claims by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission only be pursued if the individual claims are explicitly proven (Jackson, 2019). Because individuals felt less protected and supported with this approach, minorities, specifically Black women, found themselves in a position to determine how they could be equally treated and measured alongside their counterparts since the judicial system was no longer willing to review cases that did not have the viable proof of discriminatory practices (Collins et al., 2020).

The setback in the legal protection of the minority group within the workplace affected how individuals approached work and their colleagues when faced with discriminatory behaviors and expectations (Jackson, 2019). Lee and Kramer (2016)

explored the acceptance of national cultures within organizational cultures and the impact that the different behavior expectations have on an individual in the work environment. They explained that either the diversity strategies within organizations can support the national culture of the individual without potential for workplace discrimination or the individuals can bring cultural enhancements to the organization. The cultural influence could alter how an individual interacts and works within their organization if they feel accepted and this type of influence convergence could have an adverse impact if the individual does not feel accepted in the work environment (Lee & Kramer, 2016). Dickens and Chavez (2018) explained that if individual expectations of acceptance and workload output of Black women in the workplace are not as equitable as their non-Black and nonfemale colleagues, there is a potential for behavioral shifts to develop as a coping mechanism. They highlighted that there is little exploration on how Black women as double minorities navigate the cultural climate based on perception of treatment, which may result in behavioral and even identity shifts in environments such as the workplace.

Problem

Due to the cultural imbalances, it is important to understand why certain behaviors are potentially more prominent in Black women (Collins et al., 2020). The behaviors of consequence explored include those that result from imposter syndrome that may lead to workaholism, or excessive working patterns, with workaholism being the primary focus of individuals in the double minority group. Collins et al. (2020) conducted research on imposter syndrome specific to the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, which focused on Black women as the minority in the workplace and the

onset of imposter syndrome that led to unique workplace behaviors due to a desire to fit within the culture. Khosrovani and Ward (2011) highlighted Black men and women and the imbalance of exposure, opportunities, and growth within their organizations compared to their non-Black coworkers. Likewise, Kirrane et al. (2018) explained that there could be a range of behaviors that lead to workaholism, causing an individual to become narrowly and obsessively focused on their career paths and lifestyle. Kirrane et al. also explained that workaholism could also be referenced as work addiction; however, there is no distinct group of individuals within a specific ethnicity as the primary focus of the study conducted. Shahzad et al. (2019) explained that there is a relationship of excessive working patterns, or workaholism, and specific behaviors that develop internal career aspirations and drive.

Pertaining to Black women, the relationship of career aspirations in tandem with workaholism might highlight lack of resources and support within the workplace in the quest to understanding what influences the development of the self-efficacy behavior. Dickens and Chavez (2018) noted that shifts in behaviors of Black women within the workplace might come because of workplace barriers. The unconscious and conscious nature of this behavioral shift may be a result of organizational culture, which causes Black women to experience behavior changes to be deemed fit for the role and ensure fair treatment with equal opportunity within the workplace.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand how workaholism develops in Black women and the role that organizational culture plays in the development of these

behaviors, with a specific focus on individuals who work in predominantly White organizations. This study may pave the way for additional research to be conducted to determine what types of organizational changes need to take place to shift the self-efficacy behavioral response to mitigate excessive working patterns and any implications of racial and gender pressures that lead to the behaviors. This research was conducted using semi structured interviews to address the gap in literature on the cultural context that causes the development of workaholism for Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. Email, social media outreach in private groups, and requests sent to organizations that have a demographic that consists of Black professional women were methods used to recruit participants.

Research Questions

RQ 1: How does workaholism develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations?

RQ 2: What role does organizational culture play in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women at predominantly White organizations?

Significance

The study addressed the gap in literature that currently presents a lack of understanding of the cultural contexts that lead to the self-efficacy behavior of excessive working patterns, or workaholism, of Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. The research focused on the self-efficacy behaviors and potential shifts in behaviors that are immediate response mechanisms to disproportionate cultural conditions in the workplace. Philippe et al. (2019) noted that excessive working patterns

result from a lack of fulfillment with willingness to grow within the organization, as well as a reflection of the psychological health of an individual as a byproduct of the job demands, and leadership styles. The compression of the social problem of racial and gender inequalities that may lead to excessive working patterns was considered throughout this study for an authentic view of how Black women alter their working patterns in response to their interpretation of treatment, fair or disproportionate, within the workplace.

Framework

The framework for this study was built upon the affective events theory (AET) and workplace activities that result in counterproductive cultural behaviors for Black women in the workplace leading to behaviors of imposter syndrome and workaholism as a coping mechanism. Reynolds Kueny et al. (2020) explained that AET uses an approach for understanding how certain events lead to behaviors in the workplace with attention to the emotions and circumstances that cause the change in behaviors. This is in line with Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy. Because excessive working patterns have an intrinsic design, Bandura's theoretical work has been referenced as a core element for understanding the drivers of individual behaviors. This study explored the responsiveness of Black Americans to workload in work environments where they are in the minority. The self-efficacy theory supported the investigation of behavioral patterns that result from underlying racial influences, both cultural and societal, within the workplace.

Supriadi et al. (2019) explored behaviors within the workplace encompassing a variety of behavioral theories that stem from individual motivators that may contradict

the overall organizational position within diversity and inclusion, supporting acceptance and fairness for all demographic types within the workplace. Because workaholism has an intrinsic design, counterproductive cultural behaviors were examined with respect to AET as a core element for understanding the drivers of individual behaviors. This study explored the responsiveness of Black women to workload in work environments where they are in the minority. Using the AET allowed the research to uncover underlying racial and gender influences, both cultural and societal, within the workplace.

Nature of the Study

A phenomenological research design was applied to this study to collect the data. The qualitative study design was supported with an investigation amongst Black women within work environments, where they were in the minority, who consider themselves to be workaholics. Outlook on behaviors was examined in the form of a qualitative interview and administered via teleconference for optimal interaction with no fewer than 10 and no more than 20 participants. The results of the research provided insight into which behaviors and factors lead to workaholism and what environmental attributes within the workplace, are responsible for this behavioral response.

This type of approach helped ensure that the specific experiences of the participants captured the cognitions and attitudes that are constructs of the AET reflective of the self-efficacy behavior of workaholism. Participants were asked to respond candidly about their experiences as Black women in a predominantly White organization without any repercussion or harm to the individual. This research design also supported the ability to identify the self-efficacy behaviors specific to workaholism because of imposter

syndrome in Black women who work at predominantly White or non-Black organizations.

Definitions

The following terms were important for this study and are defined as follows:

Bias: A discriminatory practice that is formed with the assumption that a specific behavior pattern is the accepted norm, creating a perception of lesser value for other groups. (Gilstein, 2018)

Identity shifting: The shift in a person's language or cultural behaviors, consciously or unconsciously, to mitigate the impact of discrimination. (Dickens et al., 2019)

Imposter syndrome: The feeling of being an academic or professional fraud, with the self-belief that one is not bright or worthy of the praise that is received, although their accomplishments and accolades are rightfully earned. (Edwards, 2019)

Organizational culture: Favorability for each single member within an organization that is positioned with the sharing of positive norms and values through workplace behaviors that consist of shared beliefs by shaping employee perceptions and understanding. (Khan et al. 2021)

Racism: A form of discrimination that impacts an individual's ability to gain employment or career advancement based on their identified race or ethnicity. (Whitaker, 2019)

Self-efficacy: An individual's belief or lack of belief that he or she can bring about a specific outcome or change serving as a catalyst for human endeavors, having an impact on how the individual approaches tasks. (Yancey, 2021)

Workaholism: Also referred to as work addiction, workaholism is classified as an obsessive-compulsive need to work that may result in physical or psychological symptoms because of neglecting other areas of their lives. (Ksiazak, 2019)

Scope and Delimitations

The population for this study consisted of Black women who work in predominantly White organizations and consider themselves to be workaholics. The employee should have worked within their field for two or more years and should be considered a minority within their current work environment. It was anticipated that the participants will work across a variety of industries which ensured my exploration captured the behavioral responses to their workplace environment and circumstances uniquely. Key findings of this study are transferrable to future investigations on behavioral responses, such as workaholism amongst minority groups within the workplace.

Limitations

Since COVID-19 is still present and due to the use of snowball sampling, there were anticipated limitations for one-on-one in person interviews. The plan was to conduct the interviews via teleconference, which would require both parties, researcher and participant, to have optimal internet connectivity. The research was very specific to demographic and the study focused on the double minority group of Black women. As a

Black woman who works in a predominantly White organization, I needed to ensure that the research did not delineate from the gaps noted in studies addressing the need for more exploration on the topic. To avoid conflicts of interest, I did not recruit participants from my organization or industry. Although open-ended, the questions within the interview were structured to ensure answers could not be misconstrued or lost in context given my ethnicity and gender likeness to the individuals that were being studied.

Summary

This qualitative study explored the workaholic behaviors that develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations and how the onset of these behaviors transpires. Through their experiences, the participants being studied were interviewed using open-ended questions that captured the cognitive and emotional mindset of the individuals rooted in AET. The exploration of this phenomenon was motivated by studies that exhibited a gap in literature but have investigated workaholism, racial disparities within the work environment, and self-efficacy behavior as well as affective events theory either collectively or exclusively, with the goal of understanding individual responses and behaviors within the workplace. The findings and opportunities for additional research within these studies will be explored further in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

Literature supporting the need for this research was sourced using three specific categories with search terms to support. The three categories include workaholism, racial and gender disparities in the workplace, and self-efficacy and AET. Selected articles relating to Black women in the workplace and excessive working patterns are described here.

The keywords searched were *affective events theory AND workplace, affective events theory AND workplace AND diversity, self-efficacy AND workplace, self-efficacy AND workplace AND diversity, self-efficacy AND workplace AND diversity AND women, workaholism, workaholic, workaholism AND race, workaholism AND racism, workaholism AND women, excessive working patterns, African Americans, Black Americans, Black Americans AND White Americans AND workplace, Black women AND work, workplace disparities, workplace, self-efficacy behaviors, disproportionate treatment, racial inequality, Black at work, behavior theory, cultural behaviors, counterproductive cultural behaviors, affective events theory, imposter syndrome, and Bandura* using the PsychInfo, PsycArticles, and Thoreau multi-database search. All searches were initiated to find peer-reviewed literature that was published within the past five years. Most of the literature addressed partial aspects of the research being conducted for the study, however, there were noted gaps in literature that this study seeks to address.

Workaholism

Throughout various studies on the topic of workaholism, the behavior has been synonymously categorized as work addiction or excessive working patterns. However, the specificities of the onset have been limited in research when capturing the essence of how the behaviors develop in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. The explanations on workaholism have mostly focused on groups that are not typically marginalized within their culture or workplace.

General Causes of Workaholism

Within the limited realm of studies on workaholism that focus on specific minority groups, Balkin et al. (2018) explored work addiction specific to the African American community. The study took into consideration aspects such as community support, career counseling, and mental health needs for an understanding of how African Americans manage work-life balance. The researchers explained that there is scarce information available regarding life-balance in minority groups. Balkin et al. explained that the obstacles for this demographic are vast, inclusive of wage disparities, workplace discrimination, and stereotypes. As a result of these obstacles, Balkin et al. noted that there are increased demands and pressures at work that prevent life-balance, which can make workaholism more prevalent within the demographic.

Kirrane et al. (2018) investigated the origins of excessive work behavior by identifying various contributors to the onset of the behavior rooted in addiction, traits, and lifestyle. The findings of the study highlighted the role of organizational culture as influence and the importance of the role of employee development. Kirrane et al.

highlighted that the addiction model and the trait theory approach have been dominantly utilized to determine which traits are associated with excessive working, including neuroticism, conscientiousness, narcissism, and perfectionism. Familial context was identified as a portion of the sociocultural landscape that impacts work behaviors. The researchers acknowledged that excessive working or work addiction stems from interactions between the individual and their environment and because of this, sociocultural processes are critical to consider from a theoretical point of view to determine which situations lead to workaholism.

Ljungholm (2015) dissected the constructs of workaholism resulting from external aspects with the notion that workaholism presents a negative influence on the work setting. The study focused more on the impact of workaholism and the impact of these behaviors within the workplace. Ljungholm noted that workaholics, or work addicts, have an internal drive to overextend themselves; however, they also noted that workaholism is driven extrinsically for self-value, as reliable and credible employees. Ljungholm identified workaholic employees as potentially intrepid, unhealthy, and individuals that struggle to achieve the highest level of excellence.

Kirrane et al. (2018) noted that there could be a spillover of behaviors where multiple roles are tackled with actions of the individual, which ties to the expectancy-value theory of achievement. Kirrane et al. explained that values, norms, and expectations for achievement are influenced by the individual's family of origin and internalized via relations, such as established parent-child interactions. Ljungholm (2015) examined excessive working patterns as a function of extrinsic and intrinsic behaviors with a focus

on organizational outcome and the employee's external drivers, however, the findings did not fully investigate the source of the internal drivers.

The extrinsic nature of the influences was examined in depth by Kirrane et al. (2018); however, further research was warranted to understand excessive working patterns as a function of intrinsic behaviors. By conducting semi structured interviews within the qualitative study, the researchers were able to delineate internal factors from sociocultural factors but were unable to source the internal causes of excessive working within the data. The behavioral reasons were reflected as motivation to work excessively as opposed to a behavior pattern of consequence. Kirrane et al. (2018) explained that the participant pool for this study was predominantly male within the corporate environment, and it provided limited insight on the role of gender with respect to the behavior of excessive working. The researchers emphasized the need for theoretical frameworks that take into consideration the array of factors that may serve as catalyst of excessive working or workaholic behaviors.

Falco et al. (2020) examined workload as the determinant of behaviors associated with perfectionism and workaholism. The study identified the core aspects of workaholism as a phenomenon associated with job and life satisfaction as well as job performance and presenteeism. Falco et al. provided three realms in which workaholism can be classified within the theoretical framework including behavioral patterns, a trait of personality, and an addiction for individuals that have an inner pressure to be highly involved with work with little enjoyment. Falco et al. noted that there are workaholics

that enjoy work as enthusiasts in their field with a desire to be involved and drive the business.

Dudek and Szpitalak (2019) explored workaholism as an inner desire to work constantly while also investigating how gender plays a part in the variables of perfectionism and self-handicapping. Their research highlighted the tendency for women to feel more overextended with work based on emotional factors that do not impact men, rooted in differentiating gender expectations and norms placed on individuals by society. Within the study, it was noted that Oates (1971) initially defined workaholism as a need to work continuously driven by an irresistible and uncontrollable desire. It was also noted within the study that there are three factors that coexist within workaholism, including affective, cognitive, and behavioral.

Falco et al. (2020) specified the distinct uniqueness of perfectionism as a personality trait that leads to workaholism, while also establishing that the behaviors of these individuals may result from processes driven cognitively and emotionally. The study examined how workload is a moderator between the perfectionist and the workaholic, noting that both ideals may be grounded in irrational beliefs that protect self-worth in avoidance of self-criticism. Falco et al. sought to understand the increase in workaholism in individuals with self-oriented perfectionism (SOP) and socially prescribed perfectionism (SPP) regarding workload. The researchers found that there was an association between the behavior in individuals with high levels of SOP that resulted from their perception of self-worth and how they viewed their performance from an internal stance. Falco et al. reestablished the connection between perfectionism and

workaholism and noted that there is an opportunity to investigate objective measures inclusive of potential drivers of stress within the workplace.

Impact of Workaholism

Blagoev et al. (2018) highlighted the detrimental sequence of events that are a consequence of excessive working because of potentially extreme work environments. The impact of this type of work pattern has an influence on how an employee may engage with other individuals, their families, and members within their own organization (Blagoev et al., 2018). The study explained that previous studies on extensive work regimens focus primarily on change initiatives with the influence of technology, and there has been little research to determine the issue of persistence and the reasons why the initiatives to resolve have lacked success. Blagoev et al. provided an explanation of the consequences of excessive working patterns without recognizing the causes of the behavioral phenomenon within the individuals studied.

Alessandri et al. (2020) investigated the link between workaholism and job performance, establishing that the typical position between the two indicated that the output of workaholism can lead to poor job performance due to a heavy work investment. The study supported the need for a review of organizational behavior of the individual as well as the relationship of behaviors in response to organizational resources. Alessandri et al. highlighted the significance of job demands that lead individuals to think about work-related activities beyond their committed time at work. The study reviewed workaholism with relation to job demands, however, the context of the participants within the study did not delineate employee characteristics that may support intrinsic

behavioral responses. Additionally, the study investigated the cost of workaholic behaviors to the organization without reference to the impact that these behaviors have on the employees as a catalyst or a result from other influences.

Beiler-May et al. (2017) researched workaholism specific to how the male and female genders respond to workload. The research focused on the item response theory (IRT) alongside gender theory and investigated self-reporting of workaholism between the genders, as well as the impact that this recognition of excessive working played on the individuals being studied. Beiler-May et al. noted that there are different outcomes that can result from workaholism in the work and nonwork environment, including higher levels of job stress and negative coworker interactions in the work environment, as well as family relationship issues and decreased level of life satisfaction in the nonwork environment.

Contrary to previous studies, Beiler-May et al. (2017) found that gender differences with respect to societal norms have an influence on how individuals self-report instances of workaholism. Although the participant pool was vast, both genders studied had very similar home environments and levels of education, which added further inquiry to the results of workaholism and the different approaches used for self-reporting by gender, indicating that there could be other factors that may play a significant role in how workaholism is self-perceived and self-reported in individuals that have unique backgrounds within their work and nonwork environments.

Racial and Gender Disparities in the Workplace

Research on Black women in the workplace has highlighted the disparities that face the group within the workplace and their homes as disproportionate treatment, wages, and career opportunities face the group. Most of the studies provided insight on disparities within institutions of academia. Hills (2019) highlighted racial and gender disparities prevalent amongst Black women in higher learning institutions because of race and gender expectations and perceptions, positioned within a race and gender matrix. The race and gender matrix provided context on Black women and how they are viewed as scholars within academia, however, the context of how Black women internalize the burdens faced were limited to the role and the treatment of the Black women and but did not explicitly address how they respond to the divide within the field.

Racial Disparities

Dickens et al. (2019) explored identity shifting among Black women as a reaction to workplace circumstance. The research indicated that the behavioral shifts that take place serve as a mechanism for Black women to circumvent discriminatory actions toward them in the workplace. There were three theories investigated in the research including identity negotiation theory, cultural contract paradigm, and ecological systems theory. Each of these provided context on how Black women interact within the workplace.

Mayer (2017) investigated the role of Black women in higher education institutions to understand the interrelation between gender and racial categories pertaining to women in leadership capacities. Using a semi structured interview,

participants spoke about their experiences in a predominantly White and male-dominated institution. The participants within the study highlighted the lack of visibility, hostility within the workplace, and the feeling of being undervalued and unheard. Mayer (2017) noted that self-worth was connected to the feeling of accomplishment and positive impact. There were two women participants that explained their desire to work hard as a strategy to transform the discriminatory viewpoint in the workplace, which tends to be viewed as being competitive, which further promotes an unhealthy work environment.

Dickens et al. (2019) highlighted that the shifts between gendered-racial and professional identities may be advantageous initially, however, this behavioral adjustment can be stressful and have an unhealthy impact on the individual's physical and psychological health. The authors noted that there is a tendency for Black women to over-engage leading to inauthentic or conflicted behaviors that clash with their cultural values. Williams (2020) highlighted the parallels of Black women in different work environments and the weight of culture and history that alters how they engage in the professional environment. The parallelism of work environment for Black women and the weight of culture and history within the study fell short of providing insight on how Black women develop and manage the behaviors because of the failed system. As a result, it can be assumed that the behavioral shifts and coping mechanisms are intrinsically driven.

Professional and social advancement were noted as benefits to identify shifting, where Black women take on the role as the token in predominantly White environments, however, the behaviors that are developed to achieve this status can have long-term

detriment (Dickens et al., 2019). Dickens et al. (2019) detailed the depths of stereotypes that shape how Black women are perceived in the workplace and suggested that an intersectional framework would be beneficial for leaders of organizations to understand the best approach to ensure that Black women can be authentic in the workplace without fear of judgment. However, the study did not take into consideration the self-efficacy behavioral shifts, as an intrinsic aspect, that take place as a precursor to identify shifting.

Mayer (2017) noted that dual discrimination experienced by the Black women studied was met with resilience as the leaders focused on their vision and navigated the best approaches to build themselves as equal leaders leveraging intrapersonal transformation through consciously applied strategies, beginning with working hard. The findings of this study were specific to the extrinsic factors that influence Black women in their institutions, however, the intrinsic responses and cognitive shifts were not reviewed in this research to understand how the women manage the disproportionate treatment for an increase in equitable treatment within their organization.

Assari and Lankarani (2018) provided a general overview of the experiences of Black Americans within the workplace, highlighting the racial disparities that plague the community of Black employees with a focus on socioeconomic status (SES). The authors noted that SES has a multitude of effects on the African American community and plays a role in perceived discrimination, which impacts accessibility to health resources, mentally and physically, as well as educational and professional level attainment, subsequently impacting income. The study focused on males as being the disadvantaged gender within the African American community and workforce. The researchers found

that gender did not alter the effect of SES racial composition in the workplace and the impact on perceived discrimination, however, there was evidence that African American males and females fall victim to the perceived discrimination derived from the workplace racial composition.

It has been noted that the mental health of African American men is worse than in African American women in the study conducted by Assari and Lankarani (2018), but there was no concrete evidence that this was solely due to perceived discrimination in the workplace. However, the findings suggested that racial composition in the workplace changes when there is increased exposure of African American workers to White counterparts in the workplace, which leads to an increase in perceived discrimination. The perception of this finding by African Americans, and particularly African American women, could be explored further. Additionally, the mental health of African American women, although noted as being worse than men was not expounded upon, leaving room for interpretation on how the mental health disparities align with the racial disparities and subsequent behaviors of the African American women within the workplace.

Gender Disparities

Williams (2020) explored the experiences of Black women in the workplace from a personal and political point of view, highlighting the significance of the roles that both race and gender play in the workplace. Using historical context, Williams (2020) explained how Black women's experiences within a variety of work environments have been shaped within America's discord with White supremacy to rationalize its existence

in relation to Black people, women, and economic groups. It was noted that the internalization of the historical ideals paved the way for modern-age work experiences.

Williams (2020) explained that the survival of Black citizens in America was rooted in the reliance of being able to predict the actions and temperament of White people, as would be the case for a survivor of a traumatic experience. This emotional toll has the potential to transfer into work experiences. Unhealthy competition with peers in the work force creates a dynamic that leads to mistrust and disappointment (Williams, 2020). One of the key contributors to this workplace emotion is relational aggression, which can occur on multiple levels in the workplace in the form of bullying, directly or indirectly (Williams, 2020). An individual's ability to cope with these dynamics will vary from person to person and may also be managed differently depending on circumstances.

Melonas (2021) explored how Black women cope through letter writing of celebratory and experiential messages as a form of self-care. The author exposed how difficult it has been historically for Black women to express themselves and not be perceived as problematic. Letter-writing among Black women was developed as a form of communication in spaces of volatility, due to fear of retribution and violence. Melonas highlighted how Black women had to mute themselves as slaves due to the fear of their ability to organize and form alliances to overpower their masters. The alternative form of communication was writing.

Melonas (2021) explained that Black women have been casted as being workhorses or working without ceasing and because of this, when a Black woman takes the time to write and be strategic, she is providing herself an opportunity to commit to a

specific goal or positive mindset as a form of self-care. It was explained that Black women are sought as a source of therapeutic care, which leads to a cyclical position of being the secondary focus of self and others. This secondary position limits the ability for Black women to outwardly promote the need of care for themselves and enhances the need for life-affirming messages to reiterate their value as a Black woman in the social and professional realms. The detail within this study was relevant to how Black women cope, but there was lack of information how this has been or could be used in the workplace.

Dudek and Szpitalak (2019) analyzed gender differences in three areas, workaholism, perfectionism, and self-handicapping strategies. By utilizing the Work Addiction Risk Test (WART), the researchers were able to assess the workaholic behaviors with five factors: (a) obsession/compulsion, (b) emotional arousal/perfectionism, (c) overdoing, (d) outcome orientation, and (e) self-worth. The researchers of this study noted that one of the main limitations was the lack of consideration to demographic variables that may play a critical role in the intrinsic drivers that lead to the five factors of workaholism. Dudek and Szpitalak found that women have a higher level of workaholism than men and as a result, there are other factors that must be referenced to understand the dynamics that lead to this compulsive behavior.

Drummond et al. (2017) highlighted the importance of employee experiences and the role of social support from supervisors at work and family members. It was the goal of the research to understand the cross-domains of work-to-family and family-to-work in

connection with job satisfaction, family satisfaction, and psychological wellbeing. There was a focus on impact of gender as well as location and family dynamic. Drummond et al. focused primarily on gender role theory (GRT) and highlighted that the initial foundation of this theory suggested that the primary domain for women was home and family and for men, work. By addressing the basis of GRT, the authors were able study the shift in thinking and behaviors of both genders that not only impact how they function at home, but also how they function at work and how organizations must reconsider methods of recruiting and maintaining employees based on their values, while also giving recognition to what motivates the employees to work. The demographics of this study only focused on gender, however, the research conducted could have provided additional depth if there was context on the racial mix within the samples, as 76% of the sample was female. Drummond et al. noted that this overrepresentation could have formed a limitation.

Imposter Syndrome and Identity Shifting

Black women have been forced to manipulate their identity to be seen in the workplace. Identity shifting and imposter syndrome have been used as coping mechanisms within the workplace. Dickens and Chavez (2018) explained that Black women shift their identity to be perceived as more acceptable by their colleagues. This behavioral shift creates a duality in the personality because the women also work to maintain their roles within their communities (Dickens & Chavez, 2018). McCluney and Rabelo (2019) reviewed conditions of visibility in four parts including precarious visibility or low distinctiveness with low belongingness, invisibility or low

distinctiveness with high belongingness, hypervisibility, or high distinctiveness with high belongingness, and lastly, partial visibility or high distinctiveness with low belongingness. All conditions of visibility were noted as being imposed on Black women for Black women to safely navigate the conditions and are not sought or solicited willingly. Management strategies would be effective to improve conditions of visibility for Black women in the workplace, and subsequently, their experiences (McCluney & Rabelo, 2019).

Collins et al. (2020) provided insight to the imposter syndrome that women of color succumb to in their professional lives. The researchers highlighted the importance of women and minorities in professional fields and how these groups can sometimes be underutilized. Collins et al. explained that imposter syndrome can lead an individual to live a double life with the feeling of non-belonging in groups which they may have the most commonalities, such as workplace and personal life. This can lead to behaviors that they believe will make them fit into the specific group or organization. Although the study was primarily focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) related careers, the implications of these behaviors can be universal when applying the emotions and beliefs to the specific racial and gender group, especially because the onset of imposter syndrome can start early in the adolescent age range (Collins et al., 2020).

Haskins et al. (2019) explained that imposter syndrome is a phenomenon that is recognized among individuals who believe their merits have been falsely procured through deception. The authors highlighted that the significant growth of education

among Black American women is met with a false sense of improvement on issues of systemic racism within higher education and other aspects of the women's lives. The study dissected womanist theories and the effect on imposter phenomenon (IP) to ensure a more culturally receptive environment for Black American students. It was determined that IP experiences have a physical and psychological effect on individuals who experience the phenomenon, inclusive of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Haskins et al., 2019).

McCluney and Rabelo (2019) explained that the intersectionality of gender and race play a role in how Black women are perceived at work and as a result, there is the onset of identity shifting to minimize their race and gender. It is intended for this dilutive behavior to lead to growth since there is a perception that Black women are deviant (McCluney & Rabelo, 2019). The authors delineated between the ambitious Black woman and the conformist by explaining that the ambitious Black woman may endure backlash unless they are assertive with their job-specific tasks only and if these women fail to keep their goals task specific, as to conform to a mammy role, they are sexualized, undervalued, and mistreated.

Imposter syndrome can stem from stereotypes that plague the individual over time and Collins et al. (2020) noted that embracing one's identity inclusive of race, gender, and professional status without the fear of consequence or backlash is the key to mitigating the behaviors of imposter syndrome. Through identity development, which was implemented in the study conducted by Collins et al. within the STEM field, there could be more opportunities for individuals to have access to resources to help them

develop the skills in an environment that not only cultivates their knowledge but supports the cognitive and cultural needs. An exploration of what resources are needed is justified to ensure the behaviors that are developed within imposter syndrome are addressed. Hills (2019) dissected the challenges within the Black community of scholars by investigating three areas of relevancy. The three aspects of the study covered the history of Black womanhood and the role of "Mammy" from a historical context, the Emilie Townes' notion that dictated communal lament within the practices of Black women for self-care and resistance against the racial and gender burdens, and the need for Black men to move and work in solidarity of understanding the burdens of their Black women counterparts. All three issues discussed provided insight on the divides that exist within the hierarchal levels of academia. Results of the study highlighted the dehumanizing behaviors that take place in the field of academia and the role that Black history plays on the perception of Black women as well as the treatment of Black women within the workplace.

Dickens and Chavez (2018) explored how Black women choose to alter behaviors to become more fit within their work environment. The authors explained that the barriers within the workplace for Black woman may lead to identity shifts as well as a change in speech and behaviors, both conscious and unconsciously, to fit in with the dominant group. The attributes behind the desire to shift include racial and gender discrimination, unequal pay, and misinterpretation or lack of understanding of cultural values that play a prominent role in how Black women coexist in the workplace.

Exploring the early onset of work behaviors by Black women in spaces designated for growth and enhancement, Haskins et al. (2019) reviewed the aspects that

drive the IP as early as college years for Black American women. Haskins et al. explored IP with respect to the socioemotional needs of Black American women, highlighting the opportunity for additional research exploring ways to help Black American women navigate oppressive environments successfully. The study addressed therapeutic and counseling methods as tactics to improve validation and mitigate performance doubts in Black American women. There was a focus on cultural expectations with respect to the necessary community support that would help navigate the cause of IP as well as eradicate the psychological consequences that result from this feeling of insufficiencies in Black American women.

Black women who experience identity shifts are responding to situational factors driven by the environment and the individuals around them, as if to cope (Dickens & Chavez, 2018). The authors noted that identity shifting could either be of benefit or problematic in the early stages of a Black woman's career. By conducting semi structured audio-taped interviews, the researchers found that there were stronger consequences to identity shifting for Black women who are early in their careers but highlighted the need for this behavior to manage the early stages of their career while also mitigating stereotypes that are associated with Black women. Additional research is needed to understand if the behavioral shifts truly help Black women manage their career outcomes.

Cultural Implications

Lee and Kramer (2016) investigated the interconnectedness between national and organizational cultures with a focus on diversity as a key factor within institutions. The authors explored cultural disparities within the workplace with a review of behaviors that

are affected by cultural expectations, rooted in the influence of national cultures. Within the study there were references to tight or loose national cultures. The authors found that national cultures that are loose will have organizations with more of a diverse culture. In opposition to this, tighter national cultures will have organizations that have a more distinct culture. Lee and Kramer were unable to address the factors that would connect national culture and organizational culture with a definitive point of view, however, there was context provided on cultural dimensioning within organizations and recommendations for future research to incorporate cross-cultural views for a better understanding of cross-cultural interactions within the workplace.

Erskine et al. (2021) explored Afro-Diasporic women within organizations and the challenges faced when seeking growth and leadership opportunities. The authors identified some of the barriers faced when looking to advance their corporate careers, inclusive of the black ceiling, concrete ceiling, and concrete wall. It was noted how all these barriers take an emotional toll on Afro-Diasporic women and alter how the women approach advancement within their careers. Afro-Diasporic women must mitigate patriarchy in organizations as well as the historical nature of White supremacy and its effect on behaviors established by their White counterparts. It was highlighted that the process in which Afro-Diasporic women work to achieve status in the workplace is in many ways unprecedented due to lack of individuals who look like them in senior positions, which is also applicable to the lack of Afro-Diasporic men.

The behaviors adopted by Afro-Diasporic women in the workplace became tactics of survival and coping while navigating white privilege and fragility (Erskine et al.,

2021). While this may be true, there was a lack of information explaining the path of how the behaviors are adopted in Afro-Diasporic women that experience the volatility of a work environment that is predominantly White. The authors explained that there are unconscious race stereotypes and favoritism that make White privilege difficult to eliminate. It was also noted that power possession is becoming increasingly problematic between groups as structural and material resources need to be distributed fairly, and with in-group favoritism, Afro-Diasporic women continue to find themselves at a disadvantage when vying for higher job levels. Among a group of women within this study, it was found that this type of disadvantage progresses into skills attained to thrive for corporate resilience, including emotional intelligence, authenticity, and agility. These skillsets shift behaviors for attainment of power currency and are tools used to navigate the barriers for Afro-Diasporic women within corporations.

Double-Minority Disparities

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018), Black women accounted for almost 7% of the workforce but are still underrepresented in leadership positions. Dickens and Chavez (2018) noted that the double marginalization of racism and sexism and obstacles that stem from educational and professional barriers become psychologically damaging for Black women. Motro et al. (2021) investigated the implications of the angry Black woman stereotype, a depiction of Black women being aggressive and hostile when interacting with other individuals, which could negatively impact their careers. The focus of the study was internal attributions and activations of the stereotype that lead to the workplace outcomes, such as performance evaluations.

Using the parallel-constraint-satisfaction theory (PCST), the authors highlighted the interpretation of Black women's behaviors by individuals who interact with or observe them. It was noted that stereotypes have an influence on how behaviors are interpreted by observation to align with individual expectations, according to PCST.

This type of parallel approach to observation and interpretation constrains the ability to form an opinion beyond the stereotype (Motro et al., 2021). This was explicitly detailed when aligning behaviors or responses at work to situations, such as anger due to being treated unjustly being misinterpreted as anger stemming from trait anger or personality. The authors highlighted certain aspects of the angry Black woman stereotype that are rooted in the historic nature of slavery and views the Black woman as a non-conformist when being held to the standard of working hard in a submissive manner. Another form of these stereotypes can be found in microaggressions, which are subtle yet insensitive comments. Based on the findings of the study, Motro et al. (2021) found that Black women may have unique challenges when navigating corporate workplaces. By researching the interaction of race, gender, and anger, the study found that Black women's anger is attributed to internal factors of the observer that lead to stereotype activation, and as a result can negatively impact performance evaluations and leadership capability assessments. The study discussed Black women's behavior with a narrow lens, focusing primarily on anger as the stereotype. This approach provided a limited point of view of the other stereotypes and emotions that lead to misinterpretation of Black women's behaviors in the workplace.

McCluney and Rabelo (2019) addressed visibility conditions within the workplace for Black women. The authors noted that marginalized employees are perceived, evaluated, and relegated in a distorted manner due to conditions of visibility. It was also highlighted that Black people have a battle with standing out at work from a social context that devalues their personhood and as a result perpetuates a prominent issue of belonging. Additionally, McCluney and Rabelo highlighted the impact that these conditions have on career succession for Black women, especially as work social circles predict career outcomes. There was significant focus on the psychological health and well-being of Black women within this study, with relation to their roles, but there was no detail provided on the self-efficacy behaviors that result in the feelings associated with visibility and belongingness, creating an opportunity for additional research on the critical and intrinsic aspects that lead to these feelings.

The duality of potential barriers for Black women was reflected by differences in treatment of this group due to race and gender, whereas White women only experienced unequal treatment due to gender (Bloch et al., 2021). It was also noted that Black men hold more management positions than Black women. According to the U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (EEOC), Black men and women only have a 2% share of all senior management positions. The study found that Black women have greater shares of management when the workplace has more women, minimized gender segregation and more employees in non-management roles. Additionally, it was established that Black men had greater shares of management in workplaces that

consisted of more men, more Black employees, was male dominated and minimized gender segregation.

Based on the population breakout by the 2015 U.S. Census of the groups studied, 30.6% White men, 31.4% White women, 7.6% Black women, and 7% Black men, these findings further indicate how limited the opportunities are for Black men and women to attain middle to senior level management positions in the current workplace climate. Bloch et al. (2021) did not reveal how the underrepresented internalize or manage the disparities. An exploration on how the minority groups perceive and react to the systemic breakout would provide further context on what behaviors exist or what behaviors need to shift to improve the metrics of managers by demographic.

Bloch et al. (2021) used data collected by the EEOC to examine Black men and women as well as White men and women and the effect of the characteristics of the workplace when determining the share of middle to senior level management positions within these four groups. Across all groups, it was noted that there is an overrepresentation of White men in middle to senior level management positions and underrepresentation amongst the remaining three groups within the study, which highlighted the ongoing social problem and the need for understanding power relations in the United States. Between genders, it was found that women were primarily in lower paying and lower status positions. Within the racial context, it was found that Black men are uniquely underrepresented in male-dominated work environments, but have an overrepresentation in women dominated environments, and although this elevates the status of these men, there are still social barriers that they may face in the workplace.

Self-efficacy Behaviors and Affective Events Theory

The theories of self-efficacy and affective events have been uniquely investigated within behavioral research at the workplace, however, there has been very little exploration on the theories together in a specific environment. Research that has been conducted as either highlighted one theory or the other and this aspect leaves room for additional research be conducted for an understanding of what events drive the development of self-efficacy behavioral responses.

Affective Events Theory

As a focus on project management, Chen et al. (2020) conducted a study to review the mechanisms that influence work-family conflict on psychological health and behavioral issues that reside in temporary projects, specific to the construction field. An exploration on AET focused on the causes of affective experiences that influence judgement as well as satisfaction within the job, ultimately forming organizational behaviors. The researchers highlighted workplace deviant behaviors (WDB) in multiple forms, leaving or taking excessive breaks and lack of temper management or acting rudely towards other members of the organization. There was a significant focus on emotional exhaustion that impacts the quality of life and work, and it was noted that this state of being is related to feelings of negativity tied to the responsibilities at work. These behavioral responses are key in viewing the subsequent outcomes, however, there was only a focus on emotions that lead to these behaviors and not circumstances relative to demographic or cultural influence that may be partially or fully responsible for these emotions.

Ashkanasy and Dorris (2017) reviewed the Affective Revolution as a subsequent movement of AET within organizations. AET has provided a dynamic approach to reviewing and studying emotions in the workplace with a focus on objects and events that impact employee emotions as well as the emotional impact on attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. It was explained that the responses to affective events, situations, or objects within the workplace that are perceived to be a threat or an opportunity for pursuance of personal goals stem from the moods and emotions that are tied to the unique affective states. The emotional status and actions that follow stem from ongoing interaction and learned behaviors that result in reactions to environmental stimuli including behavioral, cognitive, and emotional.

Ashkanasy and Dorris (2017) reviewed a five-level model with AET at the core (Figure 1). The first level of the model is the AET. The second level of the model acknowledges that workplace relationships are built upon individual differences. The third level of the model dictates that interpersonal perceptions create affective events and these perceptions stem from level two within the model. The fourth level of the model correlates with the processes that occur within the team affected by the second level of the model. Lastly, the fifth level of the model ties to organizational context, which serves as a major element in the third and fourth level of the model. The interconnectedness of the different levels indicated that there are varying degrees of how emotions within the workplace are managed and there are individual and organizational factors that dictate how an individual will respond to situations within the workplace. It was noted that emotions within the workplace exist within the interlocking phenomena across the five

levels of organizational analysis with cross-level effects, impacting the overall organizational effectiveness and the employee well-being. Applying this model to different degrees of gender and racial mixes within the workplace could provide additional context on how self-efficacy behaviors develop among groups within an organization.

Chen et al. (2020) explained that specific events at work lead to specific emotional responses, which shapes the attitudes and behaviors within the workplace. It was found that an employee's emotional resources and experiences are critical to the perception of passive job-related attitudes, as well as engagement. There are before and after activities that should be adopted to ensure emotional recovery for the individuals that may experience negative effects or stress. The study revealed that there are underlying aspects of negative experiences that link work-family conflict with workplace well-being, and subsequent deviant behavior.

An underlying issue that may impact the work-family conflict is the need for being always-on or ever present, also known as presenteeism, which is caused by a presumed expectation of the organization. Ferreira et al. (2019) explored presenteeism as a detriment to work-related outcomes. The authors outlined the two perspectives that presenteeism have been researched, inclusive of frequency and predictor variables, such as job demands, satisfaction, and affective motivational states which result in productivity lost. The second perspective, which was the primary focus of the study, reviewed the impact of health-related problems on productivity and the cost associated with the issues ensued. It was noted that employees that exhibit presenteeism may go to

work while ill and look for praise from their colleagues and supervisor. Likewise, it was noted that some employees fear disappointing their supervisors and are more willing to go to work ill to avoid workplace conflict, even if they exhibit lack of productivity. As this type of mental state could lead to emotional exhaustion, the researchers highlighted that there is a risk of increased emotional exhaustion due to the pressures of going to work while ill to not disappoint their colleagues and supervisor.

Presenteeism in the Ferreira et al. (2019) study was only a focus for team members that did not want to be viewed negatively when they were sick. Presenteeism can stem from a multitude of reasons and further research in understanding how this plays a role among various demographics would be critical for introduction of additional resources within organizations. The behavior of workaholism within the scope of presenteeism is another aspect that could be investigated regarding organizational culture and expectations that lead to the phenomenon.

Ferreira et al. (2019) explained that work engagement may be impacted by negative affect and when existing in tandem with emotional exhaustion, there may be behavioral experiences that impact the productivity of the employee. The research conducted proved that there needs to be a reduction in practices that lead to negative affect and emotional exhaustion to increase productivity, even with presenteeism. This type of shift can form as work engagement increases.

Philippe et al. (2019) investigated events and specific interactions within the workplace that could lead to psychological responses and eventual behavior shifts that may cause excessive working patterns. The authors explored psychological health in the

workplace that affects workers and organizations because of memories that may alter an individual's motivation and desire to work. Referencing the self-determination theory (SDT), Philippe et al. explained that psychological needs must be met for an individual to thrive and be motivated to the highest potential within the work environment. The psychological needs that should be met within the scope of this theory are autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Jahanzeb et al. (2020) conducted a study on anger in the workplace, bullying, and counterproductive work behaviors. It was explained that workplace bullying has multiple facets and outcomes which either lead to a change in work behaviors, emotional distress, and anger. The study focuses primarily on neuroticism, which is the tendency for an individual to chronically experience thoughts and feelings that are negative, making them more prone to emotional distress.

Jahanzeb et al. (2020) explained that neuroticism has a major influence on a person's ability to manage the stresses of bullying within the workplace. It was noted that the employees that scored high on neuroticism within the study and were victims of bullying also exhibited higher levels of anger. It was noted that the identities and the roles of the bullies within the study could prompt a varying degree of effects that impact the emotional and behavioral responses of the employees. It was explained that managers need to be strategic and intentional to eliminate bullying behaviors by creating opportunities for employees to share how they manage or fail to manage their frustrations regarding their treatment. This could come in the form of public discussion forums as well as private communication channels for employees with human resources available.

Self-efficacy Behaviors

Balkin et al. (2018) sought to understand the relationship between life-balance and workaholism among African Americans within the workforce. Balkin et al. found that African Americans would be more prone to workaholism when community support and intimacy in relationships were lacking. These extrinsic drivers provided insight to the self-efficacy behaviors that shift due to a lack of external support and connections. However, the researchers also noted that there may be other types of issues associated with lack of life-balance, inclusive of leadership, entrepreneurship, and work habits. As a result, Balkin et al. noted that other career constructs should be investigated for exploration of life-balance.

Brassey et al. (2020) investigated emotional flexibility among workers that have jobs which are fast paced, demanding, and require a high level of education. By conducting a pilot training on emotional flexibility, Brassey et al. reviewed brain functioning and the benefit of regulating emotions for engagement and effectiveness. It was the goal of the study to determine the improvement of general self-efficacy behaviors among workers that were associated with emotional flexibility.

Malinowska and Torkaz (2021) examined workaholism within two realms, drive to work and work enjoyment with respect to work and life values. Applying a value hierarchy, the study was developed to determine if life values predict work enjoyment or if work values predict work enjoyment. Based on the findings of the study, moral values negatively correlated with work drive and positivity correlated with enjoyment at work. Malinowska and Torkaz approached the topic of workaholism as a multi-faceted

phenomenon but chose to focus on the two entities of drive to work and work enjoyment with a significant focus on values from a psychological perspective. The study noted that there is a positive relation between work enjoyment and general self-efficacy, highlighting that people who expect the work activities to be successful enjoy their work and feel a drive to work excessively, which could lead to anxiety and lack of self-control. This intrinsic response was noted as having a correlation to individuals that have lower self-esteem, lacking a correlation with a drive to work, therefore minimizing the likelihood of excessive working in this group of individuals. The work behaviors studied within this research did not take into consideration an intrinsic design with relation to race or gender demographics within the workplace or society.

Individuals with higher education for applicability on the job tend to average higher with intrinsic work motivation (Brassey et al. 2020). Brassey et al. (2020) explained that stress management training was effective amongst government employees who had low levels of work-related self-efficacy but presented a high level of intrinsic motivation. The motivation to conduct the study stemmed from the advancements made in emotional flexibility that have proven to be successful in treating illnesses such as depression and anxiety. By addressing the root causes of the fast paced and presumably high stress environments, practices can be put in place to help employees improve emotional stability for better work experiences. Emotional flexibility in tandem with self-efficacy behaviors could potentially shift an individual's response to specific scenarios or workplace situations that causes them to respond in ways that could cause overexertion or counter-productivity.

Lloyd et al. (2017) assessed the most productive ways to mitigate work-related self-efficacy through stress management training (SMT). By reviewing testing methodologies, the researchers examined Bandura's theory of self-efficacy and coping mechanisms that develop within the workplace. The social cognitive theory of self-efficacy served as an integral piece to the research of understanding an individual's judgment to specific situations within the workplace. It was noted that SMT can be highly effective and improve the health of individuals that work in high-stress workplaces. SMT interventions were utilized within the study for an understanding of impact on psychological strain and emotional exhaustion. Alongside SMT, intrinsic work motivation and work-related self-efficacy were used as practices to determine the participant's behavioral responses and shifts from the psychological and emotional distress endured.

The SMT intervention within the Lloyd et al. (2017) study reduced psychological strain and emotional exhaustion within the participants, however, there was high attrition within the workplace studied and as a result, the findings, which were consistent with the hypothesis of the benefit of SMT intervention with employees, lacked viability given the varying circumstances for each employee within the study. Additionally, there were no gender or racial demographics explored within this study, which could have also played a role in how the intervention was received.

De Clercq et al. (2019) examined the perception of employees and the impact of ostracism within the workplace on job performance, that may be altered with self-efficacy behaviors. There was specific attention within the study on what organizations

can do to prevent workplace ostracism, with the notion that this behavior may present itself under a variety of circumstances. One of the primary outcomes examined within this study was the impact on job performance, which may be evident in behavioral patterns within the workplace.

De Clercq et al. (2019) highlighted that job level is an important factor of effectiveness of self-efficacy behaviors among employees. The authors noted that capability and motivation are aspects that may alter the perception of workplace ostracism. De Clercq et al. highlighted that ostracism negatively impacts work behaviors from a social context, but this also provides a need for understanding the social climate of the organization. The authors highlighted strained relationships from a social perspective can be stressful and have an impact on employee energy and interaction, which will reduce ability to complete job tasks and subsequently reinforce negative thoughts, impacting how the employee interacts with their colleagues. There was a lack of investigation on the underlying mechanisms that cause the ostracism and the response to the ostracism, inclusive of ability or motivation. In addition, while there was a reference to gender within the study, there was no racial context provided on how the participants perceived their place culturally within the workplace.

Khorakian and Sharifirad (2019) noted that self-efficacy is based in social cognitive theory and serves as a catalyst for individually prescribed effort through behaviors that lead to their desired outcome. It has been determined that there is a positive relationship between performance and self-efficacy, and it was noted that prior performance has an impact on an individual's self-efficacy also. The primary focus of

this study was aimed at exploring the link between subordinate implicit leadership theories (ILT) and the relationship of leader-member exchange (LMX) and self-efficacy as mediating roles through socio-cognitive mechanisms. The attachment of subordinates to their leaders was a moderating factor in understanding the LMX and subsequent self-efficacy behaviors that ensued, however, there was no detail on demographic and cultural differences that may be a factor in how LMX forms, especially if there are disparities amongst the groups being studied.

Influence of Leadership

Ferreira et al. (2019) explained that it should be the managers responsibility to incorporate interprofessional programs that will allow their teams to devise strategies that will reduce exhaustion, including, but not limited to the improvement of working conditions. An investigation on the self-efficacy behaviors that will support this type of programming, as a response to employee dynamic, would be critical for efficacious implementation.

Khorakian and Sharifirad (2019) provided a streamlined approach to investigating self-efficacy behaviors in response to leadership behaviors. Khorakian and Sharifirad explored ILTs, which are structures within schemas and cognitive realms that focus on the abilities and traits of business leaders with relation to the impact of the followers, or subordinates of these leaders. It was the goal of the study to investigate the LMX as a factor of job satisfaction, well-being, and affective commitment to further understand how LMX and self-efficacy mediate the relationship between the supervisor expectations and employee performance, however, the study lacked detail on the specifics of

demographic and potential cultural differences within the LMX network. Understanding the degrees of likenesses or differences with leadership could also provide insight to the onset of certain behaviors in the workplace.

The onus on leadership continues to be a focus when determining how individuals feel perceived or accepted in the workplace. Drummond et al. (2017) explained that the recent research supported the idea that priorities are shifting between genders in the workplace, with women placing a greater priority on their career while men are focusing more on engaging with their families. This shift is causing organizations to adopt employment standards that are more family friendly for both genders. An additional aspect of this shift was noted to have an impact on how supervisors engage with their employees to mitigate burnout that might result from work and family demands.

Ethical leadership was at the forefront of the study conducted by Mo and Shi (2017) with an emphasis on burnout, deviant behavior, and job performance. Mo and Shi highlighted how employees tend to emulate the behaviors of role models within their field to ensure the appropriate behaviors are exhibited. The authors also provided context on the idea that ethical leadership is important for gaining the trust of employees because when the trust is gained, the behaviors will follow suit. Likewise, surface acting is another tactic used to display behaviors or desirable images of what the employee believes their role within the organization should embody. The modification of the behavior is an adjustment of the outward appearance without changes to the inner feelings.

It was explained that employees take note of how they will behave in response to their leaders and the styles of their leaders. Mo and Shi (2017) noted that ethical leadership is linked to work-related outcomes, placing significant value on ethical leadership when managing employees. The authors main objective of the study was to understand the psychological mechanisms on an individual level that are impacted by ethical leadership. There was an emphasis on the importance of communication and the reinforcement of behaviors appropriate for the workplace, which can lead to ethical actions and prevent emotions that stem from behaviors deemed unethical. Although the study focused on the link between ethical leadership and employee behaviors, it was noted that additional research could support the understanding of how this behavioral adjustment impacts work attitudes.

Brender-Ilan and Sheaffer (2018) provided an exploration into counterproductive work behavior (CWB) to understand the mindset of employees that have either personal agendas that are egotistically driven, or legitimate goals, while also determining the impact of destructive leadership (DL) as a factor for behaviors that develop within the workplace. The impact of DL within the workplace can cause a magnitude of consequences, including high turnover, depleted well-being of employees, and poor individual employee performance. As a function of social change and psychological contracts, it was found that subordinates alter their behavior negatively to appease the organization and their supervisors. One of the hypotheses within the study dictated that higher perceived work autonomy is related to lower CWB. Another hypothesis within the study indicated that DL has a negative relation to self-efficacy (SE), and it was also noted

that consequently autonomy mediates the relationship between DL and SE. The study was conducted using employees from multiple occupations in the form of a survey.

Brender-Ilan and Sheaffer (2018) found that employees exhibit CWB's within organizations and as a result, the behaviors can be of detriment to the organization's success as well as the individual's work life. The researchers found that DL has a direct relation to increased levels of CWB and that DL has a negative impact on autonomy. Understanding the impact of leadership on behaviors that develop in the workplace played a critical role in the study for determination on how to improve performance in the workplace as well as employee motivation, while minimizing CWB and SE behaviors.

Leaders have a responsibility to ensure the work environment is conducive for optimal productivity and safe spaces for employees to thrive without external influences. Jahanzeb et al. (2020) noted that workplace bullying should be proactively eliminated through educational programs and that resources, such as counseling, should be made available to support all employee levels and all team members that are on the receiving end of bullying or behaviors exuded out of anger. The study focused on workplace bullying as a general phenomenon, however, there could be underlying reasons specific to differences in demographics that cause coworkers to bully, which could subsequently lead to self-efficacy behavioral shifts in the employees that are being bullied. Investigating bullying in the workplace with respect to self-efficacy behaviors among different genders and races could provide insight on how to further mitigate these practices.

Organizational Culture

Philippe et al. (2019) noted that there are specific factors that impact an employee's perception of need satisfaction and motivation at work. These factors include work environment and climate, organizational policies, styles of management, and coworker relationships, all of which should give an employee a roadmap to confidently choose their career path and freely convey their feelings while performing optimally in their specific role. Philippe et al. explained that job demands and resource availability affect the psychological needs and state of employees, and if not properly managed can lead to burnout.

Another aspect that could impact overall performance and job satisfaction is the memory of an event that occurred at work and can be activated or accessed in situations that have similarities to previous instances (Philippe et al., 2019). This memory activation can occur in either the supervisor to employee interaction or vice versa. One of the examples used in this study was criticism from a supervisor and the feeling and subsequent memory that this invokes on the employee. Long term, this type of interaction could lead to loss of motivation to work if memory reactivations occur in future situations. Philippe et al. (2019) noted that one of the main ways to alleviate the stresses that come with these memories is to resolve the concern through newly created self-defining memories. It was found that need satisfaction in the work memory provided a positive outcome for work satisfaction and self-determined motivation.

Summary and Conclusions

The major themes within the literature highlighted the increased focus on workaholism as well as the limitations of studies which lack insight to the development

of this behavior in individuals. There was also a noticeable lack of research in individuals that prescribe to certain demographics. Additionally, disparities within the Black community and amongst women in the workforce were highlighted as opportunities for continued research as well as obstacles within the previous research conducted, as representation was limited to non-existent.

Within the studies that focused on racial disparities, there was a lack of research pertaining to the behaviors that arise within the individuals impacted, which also minimized research on workaholism specific to these groups. The literature sourced provided sufficient context to build upon for an investigation on the development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations with respect to cognitive, motivational, and emotional responses and needs. Participant interviews were used for the exploration of this group for an understanding of the development of the behaviors, which will be detailed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This study was a qualitative exploration to understand the development of workaholism, as a self-efficacy behavior, in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations from their experience. Understanding the role of leadership, peers, and the organizational culture supported the goal of this study by determining how the individuals being studied develop the behaviors that lead to workaholism with an emphasis on AET. It was noted that there is a gap in literature for an understanding of the cultural context behind the development of workaholism in specific groups, notably minorities. While workaholism has been studied, previous research has supported examinations of the behavior itself; however, there was detail to uncover as it pertained to the development of the behavior.

This chapter is an overview of the steps and rationale used to investigate the behavioral development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. In this chapter, the research design is explained with detail on why the design was chosen. In addition, the role of the researcher and the chosen methodology will be provided as a reference of how the study was conducted. Lastly, the procedures for recruitment, participation and data collection will be shared for future study opportunities with an emphasis on ethics and trustworthiness.

Research Design and Rationale

Using a phenomenological research design, I explored the development of workaholism as a self-efficacy behavior in Black women who work in predominantly

White organizations and the role of organizational culture in the development of these behaviors within this specific demographic. The research conducted was rooted in the theoretical framework of affective events theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017) and self-efficacy behaviors (Bandura, 1997). These two theories were investigated using qualitative participant interviews to understand the behavioral factors that led to workaholism developed within Black women who work in predominantly White organizations.

Blagoev et al. (2018) conducted a study as an investigation of the consequences of workaholism, but there was a lack of detail behind the cause of this behavior. The research examined the requirements of the organizations that lead to the behavior, but the structure of the study did not examine how employees respond to these requirements through behavioral adjustments. This study emphasized the importance of exploring new theories that provide rationale behind individuals that experience workaholism. The participant interviews in this study used open ended questions to support the qualitative research design for the investigation of the factors that lead to workaholism in Black women in the environments where they are the minority amongst a more heavily weighted employee base of White individuals.

The study goals for this research were carefully considered and the questions were grouped to support the investigation of the research questions. The questions within the interview were clear and easy to navigate for the participants to allow the analysis of the data to be structured and divided into subsections, as needed. The methodology chosen supported the investigation of the workaholic behavior as a pattern predictor within this

specific demographic resulting from events explained by the participants within the interview.

Using interviews as data collection for this examination helped determine the intrinsic catalysts that lead to workaholism within the demographic being studied. Clark et al. (2020) explained that there are unexplored aspects to workaholism that should be investigated. Within their research, Clark et al. used the Multidimensional Workaholism Scale (MWS), which provided details on how motivational, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral factors lead to the excessive work behavior, or workaholism. This study examined the primary factors of self-efficacy behaviors to extract the most common aspects that result in workaholism amongst Black women in predominantly White organizations.

Role of the Researcher

The questions within the interview were open-ended to ensure optimal communication and the ability for the participant to expound as needed. The interview was administered with a clear introduction and instructions to ensure the data were collected in a nonbiased manner, ensuring that the questions were able to support the participants' point of view to align with the goal of the research. Because I identify as a Black woman and I work in a predominantly White organization, the interview was structured in a manner that strictly addressed the gaps in literature identified. Participants were not sought from the organization for which I work to mitigate conflicts of interest. The Zoom teleconference program was used to collect the data, allowing participants to provide answers in their preferred setting to mitigate stress.

Methodology

Participant Selection

One of the main objectives of the research was to address behaviors that develop in a minority group, Black women, within a corporate setting. The goal was to have between 10 to 20 participants for this phenomenological research, to ensure the experiences of the group were fully captured as it pertained to their cognitions and attitudes as constructs of AET. The participants were recruited using email, social media outreach in private groups, and requests sent to organizations that have a demographic that consists of Black professional women. These individuals identified as female and as African American or Black American, and they were within the minority ethnic group within their work environment. These sources ensured that the focus remained on Black women and their behaviors in organizations that employ predominantly White individuals.

A marketing flyer was created and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to be used for distribution. Private social media groups and bulletin boards were the primary points of distribution. Individuals that expressed interest to participate were emailed the consent form with available dates and times from which to choose. Each participant had awareness of the institution, my field of study, and the purpose behind this research specifically. The consent form explained the scope of the research outlining the purpose of the study within the noted framework and specifying approximately how much time would be needed to complete the interview. It was important for the participants to know that the design of the interview would ensure they could respond

candidly about their experiences without harm or consequence to them or their position within their organization. Because there was not a specific organization targeted and the criteria to participate was clearly outlined as Black female currently employed at an organization that is predominantly White, question four within the interview ensured the participants workplace demographic aligned to the needs of the study, therefore, there was no need to know the participants employer.

Instrumentation

A series of open-ended questions was used to understand the role of the participant within their organization, the environment in which they work, the work behaviors that they possess and the influences of these behaviors with details of specific events that may lead to the workaholic behaviors and the individual perception of why the behaviors form. The interviews were recorded using the meeting recording function in Zoom to capture the necessary details for coding the responses for assessment of experiences within the workplace and the development of workaholism. The answers and observed body language from the interview provided guidance from the participants of the actions and circumstances that lead to the development of workaholism. The questions that were posed throughout the interview focused on behaviors that are considered workaholic with a focus on motivational, cognitive, and emotional factors.

Procedure and Protocol

The COVID-19 pandemic was still a factor when assessing the best way to collect data. Because of this aspect, the sampling method was non-random when identifying the individuals for the interview. Snowball sampling was used to help ensure the collection

of data captured the point of view of participants that have similar experiences in similar networks. Similarities needed to exist amongst the participants, due to demographic and the categorization of the workplace behaviors as well as the work environment. Groves et al. (2009) explained that snowball sampling helped support exhaustive network analysis of individuals who have similar backgrounds. The use of snowball sampling prevented certain limitations that existed in the COVID-19 society.

The COVID-19 pandemic created a unique set of circumstances for consideration on how the participants were recruited. In addition, work behaviors have shifted due to changes in workloads during the pandemic and as a result, the study was conducted with nimbleness supporting the factors that might impact the participants, keeping in mind the potential workload of their daily role as well as the timeframe of the interview with respect to the guidelines prescribed by the IRB. The nonprobability sampling method supported a better reach of participants that ensured an efficacious investigation of the development of workaholism as a self-efficacy behavior in Black women.

Ethical Procedures

The IRB provided the approval number 04-05-22-0983562 on April 5, 2022, which allowed me to proceed with conducting the research. Adhering to the American Psychological Association (APA) Code of Ethics, ethical implications were considered to ensure that biases and conflicts were avoided during the research process. Participants were informed that the interview was being recorded for accuracy of information and that their names would not be published. The utilization of nonprobability sampling was carefully implemented to ensure that the participants were not connected to the research

administrator by profession or work affiliation. Since there has been proven efficacy in the exploration of workaholism as an individual behavior within the MWS instrument (Clark et al., 2020), the constructs of the interview took the factors of these scales as a guide for posing inquiry to the participants without bias, insinuation, or counsel.

Prior to the participant beginning the interview, they were provided with the interview process and made aware of the procedures being used to capture the data, the voluntary nature of the interview and any risks or benefits of participating, if applicable. The participant was also provided with a privacy statement and the opportunity to communicate concerns or questions regarding the process. The interview was curated in a manner that does not promote individual counsel or recommendations to ensure there was a fair and non-biased representation of the items within. There were specific details provided in the invitation letter and introduction of the interview for the participants to reference since the topic is sensitive in nature. Outlook on behaviors were examined in the form of an interview conducted using the teleconference platform, Zoom, with the option for participants to elaborate on their responses as needed. Workaholism continues to be investigated within industrial and organizational psychology and the theoretical framework of self-efficacy behaviors has been a catalyst used when investigating the phenomenon. With the examination of individual expectations and goals, workaholic behaviors were examined because of the self-efficacy behaviors that stem from events and circumstances solely in the workplace.

Measures were in place to ensure the participants were clear on the details of the study, its purpose, and the rationale behind the examination. Additionally, the

participants were made aware of how their responses would be used. Adhering to the IRB guidelines was critical to the success of the interview process. Transparency was critical for the participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016) to feel comfortable with participating with full understanding of the goal of the research and the implications on social change. The participants were provided with detail on workaholism and self-efficacy behaviors, as defined within the industry. The option to withdraw from the study was provided to the participants prior to and during the interview process without consequence.

Privacy was at the forefront of the research being conducted. Data will be shared ethically and with protection of the identity of the individuals participating (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The level of confidentiality used protected the participants identity, inclusive of their personal information, such as name and location, as well as the organization for which they work. The protection measures were explained extensively in the consent form for participation, which included my contact information in the event there were additional concerns that needed to be addressed.

Data Collection

Data were collected using Zoom for the recorded interview using a sequence of questions cadenced as a build to develop a trustworthy platform for the participant with an initial investigation on their role within the organizations to develop an understanding of their daily routines or interactions. Following this opening sequence of questions, the second section focused on work-life balance with an emphasis on their perception of their day compared to their non-Black colleagues. Estimated time for interview completion was 45 to 90 minutes. The participants had the opportunity to provide a brief statement at

the end of the interview for any additional details they felt would be relevant to share for the study. The alignment of the questions with respect to the theoretical framework supported the need for insight on how employees manage their emotions and goal expectations within their work environment as a minority. Participant perception of the organizational culture and leadership was also examined within the AET framework with continuous consideration on cognitive, motivational, and emotional factors that lead to the workaholic behaviors.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach. This method for analysis provided an interpretation of the events as perceived by the participants (Ungvarsky, 2020). Using the principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiographic psychology, the data analysis was guided by the participant responses with attention to the context of the individual experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2015). The principle of phenomenology within IPA was used to explore the ways in which the participants experience and interpret their situations unique to their circumstances. Hermeneutics is also a principle of IPA, and it was used to capture the interpretation of experiences and how these experiences translate into actions for the people who were being studied. Due to the potential uniqueness of the experiences, idiographic psychology provided an opportunity to explore the experiences on a case-by-case scale as opposed to a global assumption.

There were three phases implemented for the analytic approach of IPA. The first phase supported the review and rereview of the transcripts to capture the descriptive

elements of the data and accounting for observations that can be categorized as interpretative and conceptual. The following phase included the development of the themes annotated to support the case-by-case analysis overview capturing the unique experiences of each participant, inclusive of their thoughts and voices with an overarching examination of similarities and differences amongst the experiences shared. This phase provided a foundation for establishing themes that either aligned or varied across the experiences. Lastly, the third phase was a repeat of the first two phases to identify themes and patterns within each interview, which provided the opportunity for the themes to be relabeled and reconfigured as commonalities and differences became more apparent.

The construct of the qualitative study ascribed to the potential outcome (DeVellis, 2017). Using the IPA approach, the themes and categories that resulted from the responses within the interview were segmented into affective events theory and self-efficacy theory using the memo function within the MAXQDA Plus 2022 software, with affective events theory serving as the primary theory of focus for coding to capture themes and patterns in the participant responses. In addition to these buckets, it was anticipated that new themes would emerge, which would be analyzed either in tandem or separate of the theoretical framework assigned to the research as part of the third phase within the IPA. The IPA approach provided the opportunity to assess the overall interpretation of the experiences combined for an audit of accuracy when tying back to the accounts (Ungvarsky, 2020).

Categories of behavioral development, inclusive of personnel level, workload, and workaholic behavior were considered when the data were analyzed within the varying themes. Attention was given to job descriptions, mix of colleagues, time management, organizational expectations and support, as well as peer behaviors. The categories were pulled from the responses provided within the interview to align with the theoretical framework of the research being conducted. Since Zoom was used to collect that data, there was a transfer of the data into a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software, MAXQDA Plus 2022, to assist in organizing the data to extract findings and themes for ease of interpretation and conveyance of results upon completion of the research.

The exploration of the experiences of the participants supported the need to understand themes that were shared amongst the participants and how the themes manifested (Smith & Nizza, 2021). Alignment was necessary when determining how the constructs of the theory would correspond with the individual perceptions of the participants (DeVellis, 2017). Examining personal lived experiences provided the context needed to ensure the phenomenon and theory being examined amongst the Black women exhibited continuity in the workaholic behaviors with an examination of what causes them to develop.

There was a succinct overview of codes and themes derived from the categories established for review with reference to keywords that ensured my interpretation of the participants' responses was as accurate as possible. Using the framework of IPA supported the need to outline and align the participant experiences by determining the meaning and patterns that existed within the possible themes and behaviors described.

Within the categories and themes, I reviewed and refined within a table for alignment using the defined themes from the IPA approach for future reference on behavior patterns and insight to the experiences that lead to workaholism in Black women.

Summary

The participant interviews were constructed to support the research needed for investigation of the development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. The structure of the interview supported the need to address the gaps in literature and psychological studies using AET and self-efficacy behaviors as the theoretical framework. Due to the nature of the study and the circumstances of the current pandemic, COVID-19, a nonrandom sampling approach, snowball sampling, was used to procure participants. After potential participants were identified, an invitation to participate was emailed with a specified deadline for commitment and an outlined summary of the study.

Work motivation is rooted in factors that are both extrinsic and intrinsic (Maslow, 1999). The participant interviews captured the intrinsic elements while highlighting the extrinsic, or environmental aspects that lead to self-efficacy behaviors. The interviews also provided insight from the participants on the development of workaholism that may trigger behavioral shifts into workaholism. A properly constructed interview with sufficient time for participants to freely express their point of view allowed a full examination of the events that lead to workaholism, such as organizational culture, leadership or coworker behaviors, and individual expectations due to race and gender.

The interview format provided consistency in questions posed as well as ensured that the participants were provided with a safe and efficient research experience. Individual workload was considered to avoid strenuous timeframes that may add more stress on the individuals being examined. The AET was at the forefront of the interview to effectively review the behaviors that develop within the workplace due to the specified circumstances or events. An IPA approach was used to efficiently analyze and code the data procured. The goal of this study was to address the gap in literature that lacks focus on the minority group of Black women and workaholism. To support this, the validity of the organizational demographics was assessed to ensure the participants represent the intended group for the intended goal of the study. The questions that posed supported the needs of the research rooted in the phenomenon of workaholism and the theoretical frameworks of self-efficacy behaviors and affective events.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the onset of workaholism, as a self-efficacy behavior, in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. Rooted in AET and addressing the gap in literature, it was important to understand the cultural context that may lead to the development of workaholism within the specified group. The research questions that guided the study were the following:

RQ 1: How does workaholism develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations?

RQ 2: What role does organizational culture play in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women at predominantly White organizations?

This chapter provides the results of the interviews conducted with 16 participants. The participant pool, data collection and analysis processes are described. The findings of the research are organized according to the questions within the interview with respect to the research questions. This chapter also includes an evaluation for trustworthiness and a summary of the findings.

Setting

There were no personal or organizational conditions that influenced the experiences shared by the interviewees. The qualitative data collection method was a semi structured interview administered using the Zoom teleconference program. The interviews were the primary method for collecting the data necessary to address the research questions.

Private social media postings and a snowball sampling approach were used to recruit participants. There was an incentive offered for those that completed the process, which was a \$25 Amazon gift card. Within three days of posting the flier, there were 26 individuals that responded to the flier, of which 17 returned the consent form and 16 completed the interview. Individual interviews were conducted, and they lasted from 22 minutes to 80 minutes for each participant.

The interviews were recorded for audio with minor technical issues if internet connections were weak. The audio was loaded onto the Trint transcription application. Upon completion of the transcriptions, which took three to five minutes per interview, the audio and transcript were loaded into the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA Plus 2022.

Demographics

A total of 16 participants from 15 different organizations participated in the study. Two of the participants worked at the same organization and the second participant of the two was forwarded the flier from the initial participant from that organization. Of the participants, there was representation across multiple sectors including apparel, public sector consulting, retail, government, academia, corporate communications, legal, medical, finance, purchasing, architecture, and talent acquisition. There were two participants from the apparel industry, three participants within government, and two participants from the legal sector. The balance of the participants represented their field singularly.

Number of years within current organization was also collected in the study for each participant, which spanned from five months to 28 years. Important to note that all participants have been in their current field for a minimum of three years. Five (31%) participants have been with their organization less than three years, four (25%) participants have been with their organization three to five years, one (6%) participant has been with their organization for five to 10 years, and six (38%) participants have been with their organization for 15 years or more. All participants have been in their current field for a minimum of three years, however, two of the five participants that have been with their current organization for less than three years recently changed companies. This did not have an impact on the results as their previous work setting was similar to the environment that they are in currently. The work settings were similar because of the job function and demographically, the participants were still in the minority. Each participant was asked to speak about their experiences within their current work environment, however, during the discussion some of the participants wanted to speak about their previous work experience and were advised to stay within the current work experience.

Data Collection

A qualitative semi structured interview was conducted to explore the experiences of the 16 participants. The semi structured interview allowed the participants to provide candid responses that were used to identify themes from an affective events perspective to address the research questions. There were no unusual circumstances or variances in the data collection plan during the data collection process, and the interviews were the sole sources for the qualitative methods data collection.

Over a 13-day period, a total of 16 interviews were conducted and completed. The first interview was conducted on April 13, 2022, and the final interview was completed on April 25, 2022. Appendix A includes the data collection questions and protocol used to conduct the interviews.

The online conference platform, Zoom, was used to conduct, and record the interviews. This application provided the audio used for transcription in the application Trint. At the close of each interview, the final question provided the participant the opportunity to add detail to the research that they felt would be suitable to include with their information. Utilizing Trint and MAXQDA Plus 2022 supported the need to playback each interview for transcription accuracy. There were no instances of inaudibility, which allowed for efficient review and coding.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the IPA approach to ensure the interpretation of the events, as shared by the participants, captured any detail relevant to the phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiographic psychology of the study. This approach was guided by the responses of each participant with attention to their experiences which were unique to their individual circumstances (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Throughout the interview, member checking took place in the form of restating or summarizing the information being provided by the participant to track accuracy. By reading through the transcripts and listening to the tone of the responses, I was able to familiarize myself with the nuances that exist within the workplaces of the participants, which allowed me to understand their emotional space and capture recurring themes across the different

experiences. Any necessary points of clarification were sourced as part of the member checking process, which alleviated issues of understanding the transcription of the responses. As recurring themes and words surfaced, I created memo notations within MAXQDA Plus 2022, which provided a clear identification of patterns for determining commonalities or differences between the lived experiences of the participants.

As reflected in Table 1, the codes were categorized for an understanding of the individual and participant perception of organizational expectations identified as attributors to their workaholic behaviors. Additionally, workplace relationships, resources, and self-perceived behaviors were captured to determine the themes that lead to the continued behavior of workaholism. This included the participants' feedback on utilization of paid time off with respect to vacation time, sick leave, and mental health days. For context within the study results, hours worked in a week ranged from 40 to 70 hours. For the participants who stated they work 40 hours, it was noted that each tended to work in the evenings at home as well, therefore, from a qualitative lens it cannot be truly assessed that they do not work more than 40 hours. These participants were basing their hours on the expected time to work, and they consider themselves workaholics because of how their work behavior compares to their colleagues.

As I resumed the exploration of data for meanings and patterns, I manually generated a list of codes after extracting data from MAXQDA Plus 2022. The data were organized into meaningful groups and the codes were then sorted into emerging themes. Upon refinement of the initial themes, specific keywords were pulled from the participant

responses that were more frequently used during the interviews. Table 1 reflects the eight codes and themes that resulted from the data analysis.

Table 1

Codes and Themes

Codes	Themes	Keywords
Colleague Interaction	The ability to engage with and feel respected by coworkers authentically with an understanding of frequency of interaction at work and after work hours.	Inequivalent Common interest Group or Team Projects Leapfrogs
Purpose and Representation within Workplace	The perception of what it means to be Black and female in the workplace and the behaviors that ensue.	Perception Exhausting Minority Pressure Go-to-person Big Picture George Floyd Black History Month
Resources	Employee's perception of workplace and leadership support within their role for success and for the minority community within the organization.	Surveys Trainings Education Awareness

Workaholism: Work Behaviors and Workload	Employee perception of workplace perceptions and expectations of workload and work behaviors when compared to their non-Black colleagues.	Attitude Fun Stress Personality Standards Microaggressions Flexible Agreeable Emotionally Taxing Cultural Angry Black Woman Pressure Perfectionism Precision
Paid Time Off/Sick Days/Mental Health Days	The ability or desire to take time off for self without tending to work.	Advocate COVID/Pandemic Balance Self-care Teams Tired Burnout
Imposter Syndrome	The inability to receive deserved praise due to factors that are internal and external.	Downplaying Difficult Prove/Proving Promoted/Promote/Promotion Rewarded Praise Second-Guessing
Identity Shifting	The shift in behavior to be more accepted by colleagues and leadership.	Code-Switching Vernacular Nervousness Trust Tone Professional Personal Shift

Workplace Relationships	The employee's understanding of how workplace relationships evolve regarding how they may or may not feel supported or treated equally.	Networking Commonalities Differences Trust
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Colleague Interaction

All participants shared that their interaction with non-Black colleagues mostly occurs only when needed and specific to work related projects. However, Participant 5 explained that there is not much collaborating with their White colleagues and there is more comfort in communicating when outside of the workplace. This same participant explained that the motivation to engage with their non-Black colleague beyond the typical workday was in support of building the work relationship as their industry is driven primarily on relationships and it is important to maintain such to grow within the organization.

Participant 7 explained that they interact with their non-Black colleagues “Less so,” and that they tend to connect more with people of color. Participant 11 shared the identity shift of colleagues and how one colleague chooses to identify as White even though they are Middle Eastern. Participant 11 also highlighted the importance of trust and the ability to be authentic within the workplace by expressing how difficult it is to have both within their work environment.

Many participants explained that they do not want to build personal relationships with their coworkers in general because they do not want their colleagues to know how they live and what they can afford. Participant 2 explained, “I don’t have any friends at

work, I have colleagues, yeah, and I keep it that way intentionally. I've always felt like...if the people at my job knew...knew how I lived or what I had, they wouldn't give me what I earned." This type of mindset was not uncommon across the participants and as a result there is minimal social engagement between Black and non-Black colleagues.

Participant 15 noted that trust is also lost when coworkers can "leapfrog" from position to position without equal merit, which makes interaction uneasy and ingenuine. When asked about the greatest challenge as a Black employee in a predominantly White organization, Participant 15 stated, "You can't shine too much because it's intimidating. I was the only woman in the room, and I was a Black woman and most of the people in the room were White male. It's almost like you have to hide your shine. You can't know too much because it doesn't benefit you. Because bottom line is, then you're intimidating. The reputations Black women have is that we're aggressive. In when if we were White men, we'd be at the top of the heap."

Purpose and Representation Within the Workplace

Most participants shared that there is a tendency for their organization and its leaders to expect them to cover multiple jobs beyond what is in the job description. In addition to their daily job functions, many participants found that the lack of representation of same ethnicity and gender amongst coworkers also made them the face of diversity or the point person for diverse conversations within the workplace, especially during times of social unrest.

The death of George Floyd in 2020 was referred to 11 times and was brought up with consideration to the change in the behaviors within the workplace, highlighting

personal and professional inequities. Managing work during this time became even more complex as participants shared the added responsibility of shedding light on the Black experience to their coworkers. This added responsibility created more work, providing little relief for the self-proclaimed workaholics. With this added responsibility, the participants felt as though they were unable to be their authentic selves. The other issue with this tactic is that the social awareness for most of the participant organizations was only during times of crisis, therefore the approach to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion was not sustainable.

Resources

One of the most common themes from the participant responses was the continuous reference to minimal resources when placed in their role, inclusive of training as well as people. Participant 9 stated, “You have to figure out how to learn on your own and you end up working on the weekends...working late at night.” Most of the participants explained that they are stretched thin, and because they do not have the commonalities or the relationships developed with the majority or non-Black colleagues, they are less likely to benefit from resources that may exist. As a result, they find themselves working much harder to achieve the same results as their non-Black colleagues.

Workaholism: Work Behaviors and Workload

Over half of the participants explained how they use positivity within their everyday work behavior to deflect their true emotions and to ensure they are not being viewed as the angry Black woman. Motro et al. (2021) examined the effects of the angry

Black woman stereotype by studying the three-way interaction between anger, race, and gender and in this intersection, it was determined that performance evaluations and assessments of leadership capabilities were compromised, and biases were formed creating unique hurdles for Black women, even over the Black male counterparts.

Most of the participants also stated that they feel Black women are held to a higher standard than their colleagues. In addition, Participants 9 and 12 shared examples about their parents and how they were workaholics and as a result, they do not know any other way to behave within the workplace. Not only are generational expectations a factor, but leadership expectations are a factor also, as a few participants noted the lack of leniency and forgiveness toward them when compared to such given to their non-Black colleagues. Participant 14 explained that her non-Black colleagues can be more direct without being seen as rude or disrespectful, sharing the exact same sentiment that she may be feeling. Participant 10 noted that her non-Black colleagues tend to complain more, which creates an environment for sympathy towards these employees as well as one-sided treatment.

The participants noted that the work behaviors and workloads must be navigated with respect to the microaggressions and stereotypes that already exist within the workplace. Participant 11 explained that they feel as though they work and produce more with less reward and Participant 9 shared that not only was she producing more, but it was later revealed that she was getting paid less than her colleagues who were producing significantly less. Multiple participants shared that they have fewer chances to be mediocre or make mistakes compared to their non-Black colleagues.

Although most participants shared that they work harder and put more time in at work, it was a shared sentiment that most of the participants are more reserved at work due to lack of connections with their colleagues. This minimizes the opportunity for them to socialize and increases the amount of time and energy invested in work daily. While this is productive, a few of the participants noted that they find themselves overworking to prove their capability compared to their colleagues.

Paid Time Off/Sick Days/Mental Health Days

Most participants shared how they fail to take all their allotted time off from work. The lack of utilization not only had an impact on the individual, but also the perception of their families and coworkers. Participants 2 and 12 explained that time off in their profession is not paid but is discretionary, however, they also expressed the importance of taking the time off, when needed, to recover from the continuous pace of their roles. Participant 11 spoke about the importance of being intentional with vacation time, which was a stated desire for many of the participants upon the realization, during the interviews, that they do not use all their paid time off in the year. Twelve of the 16 participants shared that they do not use their full allotment of paid time off. Participant 2 stated, "If I left tomorrow, I would have no clue how much they owed me for unused vacation days because I don't clock them, I don't track them...But I don't think I'm ever truly on vacation." All the participants with 15 or more years within their organization shared that they feel as though they have more freedom to change their behavior of not using paid time off without caring as much about the judgement from others within the organization.

Participant 14 explained that they save their allotted paid time off “in case there's some emergency, but it's not for joy, it's not for pleasure that I'm saving it. You know, there's always something in the back of my mind.” This sentiment was shared across the participant pool and was also a tactic used with sick days. Many have accrued significant sick time. Participant 11 shared that she has accrued 640 hours of sick time and stated, “I literally never use my sick time. I had a procedure done last year where I used, I think a week off work with sick time and felt guilty about it, even though I was having a procedure and I still was like, ‘Oh my God, I'm going to be out.’” After explaining the guilt felt for taking sick days, Participant 9 stated, “I have a lot of people just take mental days as sick time. The sick part. Yeah, I'll take it if I'm like sick and even when I'm sick, I can have the doggone stomach flu. I still got that laptop. You know, doing whatever I need to do. Even if I have logged in sick time, I've still worked.” Participant 5 stated that if she does not feel well, she will not work well and because of this, she is very comfortable with taking sick days because, “I know that when I come back, I'm going to probably plow and work myself back into that same sicky space.”

Participant 4 stated, “I almost would rather take the sick day than a vacation day. Just to call out and be like, ‘You know what, I can't come in.’ I feel like the vacation days are premeditated, like they're preplanned and you know what's going on so you should have been here. I don't know where in the case of sick days. I could be like, ‘I'm not feeling well,’ and I've done that a couple of times to compensate for my mental health days.” Participants 2 and 3 shared that they would tend to save their sick days for kids or loved ones and when sick time would be needed for them, they would still report to work.

Most participants seemed to have a hard time justifying taking time off for themselves, especially when mental health days were discussed. The importance of mental health days was consistent across all participants, and Participants 1, 6, 10, 12, and 16 were all very comfortable with the idea of taking mental health days. However, the balance of the participants explained their desire to be more comfortable in taking the mental health days but felt challenged in doing so given the amount of work that needs to be completed in their respective roles. There was only one organization represented amongst the participants that puts an emphasis on the importance of mental health days and encourages their employees to take advantage of those days. Participant 12 explained that she believes in napping and will “cut the computer off, put the phone down, and lay down on the couch or on the bed and take a power nap.” The balance of the participants would need to lead by example and redirect the way in which the organization approaches mental health time off, either in days or certain times of the day.

Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome was clearly defined for the participants during the interview, and the participants each had clarity on how imposter syndrome presents itself in the workplace. Many of the participants explained how it is difficult for them to receive praise and they do not expect praise or reward for hard work. Participant 14 explained that they were recently told that they think too much before doing any action. Her response, “I feel like I have to think because I don’t want to go in a certain direction that is the wrong direction...In terms of imposter syndrome, I feel like I do a lot more research. I have to know the answer...I got to figure this out, but I already know it

because it causes me to second guess myself a lot more. I may have the information, I'm not as quick to come out with it because I feel like sometimes it can be invalidated." This participant struggled with the ideals of imposter syndrome, because she realized that she must overly prove her ability. This was a shared sentiment across a few participants, where it was stated that there is a constant need to continuously prove worth at work daily.

Participant 13 stated, "I just feel like I won't get that leadership position. I'm just going to be the one behind the scenes and part of the support group." Although she stated she feels like she deserves a leadership position, she did not feel she would be able to attain such within her current work environment. This level of doubt was also shared by Participants 10 and 14 also. Another element to this feeling is hearing accolades, but being passed for rewards and promotions, which misaligns the organizations actions with the praises that are being given. Participant 1 explained that the lack of promotion exacerbated the imposter syndrome thoughts by stating, "I never could get promoted, but I'm hearing all these accolades of the good job I do that makes me think that somebody has been positive...I think it was just dumb luck drop ins, two degrees and I got my certification. I do know imposter syndrome and I know it's real. And I think of it, and I know I've experienced it because I'm like, 'Are you really that good?' Because it's not manifesting in a tangible way." The lack of tangibility for individuals who find themselves going over and beyond had a visible impact on the participants that shared this sentiment.

Identity Shifting

Identity shifting was also clearly defined for the participants during the interview, however, upon hearing the definition of identity shifting, Participants 2, 4, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 16 all referenced code switching as being the synonym to identity shifting and noted that this is more the commonly used phrase in the African American community.

Santiago et al. (2021) explained that code switching within the workplace can be used as a survival technique for Black employees by allowing boundaries to be broken, allowing the non-Black colleagues to feel more comfortable in a collaborative setting. This reference further opened the dialogue to the lack of moments for authenticity within the workplace and feeling forced to shift identities.

Participants shared how they sometimes find their subject matters and tone changing when speaking with White colleagues within the workplace. Participant 8 explained that if they did not change their tone, then their coworkers would not trust her to do the work. Participant 1 shared, “I can remember putting a lift in the voice, so it doesn’t sound as heavy.” Participant 14 shared a time when her supervisor, who is also a Black female, noticed how her tone changed when engaging with a White male leader in the organization. This participant acknowledged the intentionality behind the change and explained that she did not want him to repeat things that she said in her usual tone, which could be perceived as mocking.

Participant 15 stated, “I think code switching is totally important. I think inside and outside of the world of work.” This was a shared sentiment and was noted that identity shifting, or code switching, is a standard professional and personal behavioral

response for Black people in general due to the pressures of society. A couple of the participants stated that they feel uncomfortable with being truly authentic, while others explained that they may shut down as opposed to shifting if they are unable to connect to people within the workplace. This can sometimes come as a result of second guessing one's ability to perform in their role. The death of George Floyd also served as a turning point for some in this behavior. Participant 16 stated "When George Floyd got killed, I said to myself and others that I am no longer code switching and I don't feel like I need to code switch. I don't even know why I was thinking I need to do it in the first place."

Participant 7 responded to the question regarding identity shifting in the workplace by saying, "I think any Black person in corporate America would say that they do identity shifting. It's just an unconscious thing." However, this same participant also stated, "I think that the more I move up the corporate ladder, the less I care. I am aware that I am doing it because I think at a certain point that I am who I am and this is who I am, in terms of slipping into vernacular." Participant 8 stated "I definitely shift for our White counterparts...my tone and how I may be talking or the conversation I choose to have." Participant 6 noted that their reason for identity shifting "is because I don't think they would understand, and I don't want to have to explain."

Participant 2 explained, "I'm not convinced that those who are successful have been able to maintain their true self throughout their entire journey, that somewhere along the way for some period of time, whether it be back-to-back days or today for this interview, for this job or in this role until they got to know me, I did this. It is part of what has to be done to find ourselves successful. So I am proud that I've mastered it now, but I

think it's part of the reality and I think that if we're all honest with ourselves, and really think about it, there are times when we took away our authentic selves to get where we are going to be, which is pretty sad when you think and when you say it out loud and you have a conversation about it. I think it's something that we subconsciously have done and learned to do."

Workplace Relationships

Workplace relationships were broken into different segments to understand the workplace dynamic amongst colleagues of same race and gender as well as the dynamic amongst non-Black colleagues. Understanding how the participants interacted with the Black and non-Black colleagues throughout the workday and beyond the workday provided additional context to the expectations that they place on themselves to be productive and network for collaboration while managing expectations of growth and workload as a single entity.

Participant 1 stated that she interacts with her non-Black colleagues throughout the day "cautiously." She stated, "I know what I believe and at any point in time if the story is repeated, I'm going to be the bad guy." Participant 4 stated that she is "very guarded." A few participants shared that they have positive interactions. Participant 8 stated, "I actually try to stay positive. I don't want to come across as disgruntled...I'm always positive and speak, and chipper." Participants 4 and 11 referred to this behavior as a deflection to not be perceived as the angry Black woman or angry Black girl. Participants 2, 7, 9, 11 and 14 explained that they interact with their non-Black colleagues the same way they interact with their Black colleagues. For interaction with

Black colleagues, it was also a mixed response. Only two participants stated that they interact with their Black colleagues often or on a regular basis.

Interaction outside of work was limited and has been reserved for team building outings and holiday-type gatherings. Participant 13 explained that she has engaged with her non-Black colleagues approximately twice, once at a Christmas party and the other time at a Spring picnic. The answers given across the board exhibited an overall lack of desire to really engage with colleagues during and after work for most of the participants. However, Participant 9 provided context on the importance of personal relationships within the workplace and how to position the relationships for professional mentorship and sponsorship. She attributed much of her success to these types of relationships built, in addition to her output of work and always-on approach to her workload. People vouch for her because of the amount of work she willingly takes on and how she has trained herself with limited resources. The relationships did not necessarily yield training, however, her work ethic yielded attention of decision makers, which further catapulted her growth within her organization.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The participants were aware of their freedom to be transparent and willing to participate in the study without coercion and were aware that the study was to focus solely on their experiences within the workplace. In the event participants did not have an answer to any question posed, they were free to move on to the next without consequence. Participants were provided the purpose, methodology, and sample research

questions prior to the study as part of the consent form. To ensure the information provided was accurate, member checking occurred throughout the interview process in the form of restating or summarizing the information being provided by the participant.

Transferability

The findings of the study are transferable for researchers who want to conduct similar research with either a different minority group, specific business sector, or individuals with specific range of tenure. The experiences shared by the participants within this study may or may not be transferred to individuals within either of the different areas specified. The current findings should be expounded upon to enhance the transferability of the research conducted.

Dependability

There was a participant tracker to ensure the scheduling of the interviews did not pose conflict throughout the data collection process. The tracker included confirmation of consent form receipt, scheduled interview time slot and date, and confirmation that the incentive was sent post the completion of the interview. For data analysis, each participant noted within the tracker was assigned a number in order of when their interview took place, which was then transferred into the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA Plus 2022, to ensure the answers corresponded with the individuals and their specific characteristics noted throughout the interview.

The transcripts developed, using the software identified in Chapter 3, were used to support the development of codes, categories, and themes. A coding system was developed within MAXQDA Plus 2022 that supported the categorization of the themes

and codes and a grouping of the findings that led to the subsequent themes. This system for organizing the codes and themes ensured that there was consistent data procurement when reviewing the multiple responses throughout each interview for each question posed.

Confirmability

Neutrality was essential to the efficaciousness of the interviews. The purpose of this study was to explore the development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations and the role that organizational culture plays in the behavioral developments of the double minority group. Because I identify as a Black woman, it was essential for me to minimize biases by ensuring the participants knew that I was actively listening to them, but not influencing their answers or expounding upon their responses.

Results

Data collected from the interviews were reviewed and evaluated for responses that could have misaligned with the study. There were no incompatible cases found in the analysis of the data. Upon organizing the data into codes, three themes emerged to address the research questions with respect to AET:

RQ 1: How does workaholism develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations?

RQ 2: What role does organizational culture play in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women at predominantly White organizations?

Theme 1: Organizational Support from Onboarding and Beyond Could Mitigate the Onset of Workaholic Behaviors

Theme one emerged from research question one in addressing how workaholism develops in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. The development of this theme was rooted in the participants' sentiments on paid time off and lack of resources. Participants 3, 5, 6, 7, and 10 expressed the level of self-expectation that is placed on Black women to work hard to prove worthiness to themselves and the organization. Participant 3 stated, "It's a shame, but it's the same throughout many industries that you're only as good as your work today. And so, we find ourselves constantly having to prove ourselves. And my example is I've had three bosses in my whole tenure and two of them were in a three-year period recently. And my most current boss didn't meet me for one year." The feeling of doing a multitude of work but being invisible was a factor in the subsequent behaviors that led to workaholism. Participants 11 and 15 spoke about the invisibility aspect. Participant 15 stated, "If a White woman comes into [a role], it's almost that you become invisible...if someone White comes into the organization and their kind of like slotted in like this higher position, and it's not necessarily because they know what they are doing."

Having genuine connections and not feeling forced to take on everybody else's workload were the two most prominent challenges stated by the participants. These two essential aspects start with the onboarding inclusive of clear expectations for qualifications and continuous employee engagement for ways of working. Without an establishment of these criteria at the start, a cultural divide could further highlight a

disparate work environment and put more pressure on the employee to overperform to stay afloat.

Theme 2: Trust within the Workplace is Paramount for Authenticity

The research findings suggested that authenticity is vitally important to Black women in the workplace, however, the findings also suggested that there are limited opportunities for Black women to be their true selves. Not being able to show up authentically in the workplace implies trust issues. The cultural elements that cause employees to revert to thoughts that could be categorized as imposter syndrome or shift their identity are important to highlight within the workplace and will allow the Black female employee to not feel judged when speaking to exhaustion or even potential burnout.

Participants 2, 6, 7, 10, and 14 reflected on the importance of authenticity in the workplace and the desire to be authentic with their colleagues and leadership. Participants 10 and 16 referred to the need for genuine connections within the workplace. Authenticity and genuineness support a well-rounded experience within the workplace. Participant 6 explained that they choose to shut down and not be as vocal in certain situations if they cannot be their authentic self and in addition to shutting down, they channel their energy on “being really efficient at work.” This was a catalyst for theme two, which lends an answer to research question two in seeking to understand the role organizational culture places in the self-efficacy behaviors for Black women in predominantly White organizations. Participants 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 16 each provided context on working harder. Participant 16 stated, “We, as in Black people, we’ve been

told we have to work ten times harder.” Participant 15 explained, “We're brought up to work hard, even if our ancestors worked hard with their hands, we work harder with our minds, and then we have to show up perfectly.” Being stigmatized by their own family and community with this notion plays an equal part in how the colleague perception factors into the workaholic and other self-efficacy behaviors that develop.

Theme 3: Lack of Representation puts Additional Pressure on Minority Employees and Can Lead to Imposter Syndrome

Due to lack of representation, Black female employees are playing dual and, in some cases, triple roles to be able to support future generations of Black women in the workplace. Participant 7 stated, “I’m a big proponent of lift as you climb, but it’s exhausting.” Participant 11 explained that the lack of diversity within her organization automatically positions her as the go-to person for minority groups, especially Black women when issues arise. She stated, “I have this other layer where I’m like, you know, I’m a Black woman...and I feel a lot of pressure because one, I want to make sure that I’m representing us well, and that I know that that’s a bad thing that a lot of us carry. Like, we don’t have to represent our entire race. I don’t have to represent all black women. And it’s when people see me. I know that’s what they see. But also trying to make sure that I do things in a way where I’m not seen as an angry Black woman, which could be why I’m so optimistic and cheerful, because I try to make sure that I’m always seen as, you know, someone that people can work with or whatever...all of those things compounded each other and at the end of the day, I’m tired...It’s a very stressful position to be in. I will say that I love my job, but it’s stressful.”

When there is a lack of diversity within the workplace, senior leadership tends to lean into the underrepresented group to proof messaging or to brainstorm with on social sentiment. Regarding statements from the CEO during social unrest, Participant 7 stated, “Talking to the CEO and reviewing...I have to use this time in my position to help other people. That is a burden that other people don’t have to do. They just have to worry about themselves and making themselves better.” Showing up in spaces that are not afforded to the general employee base was prevalent in many of the responses from the participants and one of the key elements that was shared was the need and the desire to prove worth within the workplace. Participants 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, and 15 each shared the importance of having to prove themselves as a double minority within the workplace. This also supports research question two in understanding the role of organizational culture.

While sharing that her greatest challenge in the workplace was being heard as the only African American female in the room, Participant 3 shared instances where she has been belittled and had no true voice at the table while still needing to prove herself to leadership. When speaking to her perseverance, she stated, “I wasn’t going to let them win and I wanted to show my boss that I could handle the job because I had just gotten into the position maybe three years prior. And so, I have to prove to all of the powers that be that I could handle it.” These types of events have led to workaholism.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided an overarching review of the research findings. The study included 16 participants from 15 different organizations. The data were collected using an interview of 20 questions. Upon completion of the interviews, the data were

transcribed, and the transcriptions were loaded into the data analysis software MAXQDA Plus 2022 for coding and categorization for the development of the themes. Three themes resulted from the findings to answer the research questions.

RQ 1: How does workaholism develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations? The onset of workaholism results from lack of proper onboarding and resources via relationships that could support the employee in a manner where they can most efficiently work and thrive without trying to overcompensate or work during paid time off and sick days. By acknowledging employee expectations and aligning them with organizational expectations in the onboarding phase, the employee will have a better scale of how to operate and interact with their colleagues for the most productive work behaviors. Providing employees with clear ways of working, which are equitable and measurable for all, while addressing expectations of workload, work behaviors, and work hours will help employers assess if workaholism can be mitigated.

RQ 2: What role does organizational culture play in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women at predominantly White organizations? Organizational culture plays an important role in how Black women perform and tackle workload in predominantly White organizations. Trust coupled with representation of the minority groups are essential to the behaviors that result from expectations, interaction, and development. Motivation being sourced from lack of support has the potential to be toxic, however, the individuals within this study filter this motivation into workaholic behaviors to prove capability even when rewards and promotions are not being provided.

Taking on ad hoc tasks in the arenas of diversity, equity, and inclusion in addition to being the face for representation adds a layer of complexity when understanding the workload for the double minority group beyond their daily job responsibilities.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the experiences through a phenomenological exploration of Black women who are self-proclaimed workaholics and work in predominantly White organizations. Rooted in the affective events theory, the study was conducted to bring awareness to the phenomenon of workaholism in Black women and understand how the onset of workaholism develops due to specific events as a behavioral response within the workplace. There were three findings that emerged from the study, which answered the research questions posed.

RQ 1: How does workaholism develop in Black women who work at predominantly White organizations?

RQ 2: What role does organizational culture play in the development of self-efficacy behaviors for Black women at predominantly White organizations?

The first finding was that organizational support beginning at the onboarding phase and continuing throughout the employee's tenure could help mitigate the onset and continuum of workaholic behaviors, inclusive of support for the employee to take paid time off and sick time without feeling obligated to work during these times. The second finding was that trust within the workplace is essential for Black women to feel comfortable with being their authentic self around their non-Black colleagues within the work environment. Lastly, the third finding indicated that lack of representation for the demographic puts an additional strain, pressure, and work on the double minority group of Black women and has the potential to lead to imposter syndrome.

Interpretation of the Findings

Three findings emerged from the data collected to provide answers to the research questions. Included in this section is an interpretation of the findings related to the three themes discovered and an overview of how these findings tie back to the previous studies conducted on the behaviors of Black women in the workplace, workplace culture, and the onset of workaholism as a self-efficacy behavior. Many of the studies conducted previously either focused on a single entity of the three mentioned, but there was a limited view of the onset of workaholism specifically in Black women. The findings support a more extensive review of the development of the behavior for this double minority group with respect to the events that cause the excessive working pattern.

Although workaholism in African Americans was explored by Balkin et al. (2018), it was noted that life-balance, impacted by workload, needed further exploration. The first finding provides insight on some of the root causes behind the lack of life-balance and the support needed to overcome. The second finding focuses on trust within the workplace, which aligns with the employee's ability to be authentic. The finding supports the insight provided by Mo and Shi (2017), as it was noted that ethical leadership leads to increased trust and this trust directly impacts employee behaviors. Lastly, the underrepresentation was a catalyst for the development of this research and Drummond et al. (2017) expressed the importance for organizations to reassess their recruiting processes to mitigate gender disparities and support work-life balance within the workplace. The recruitment reassessment suggested would occur while forming alignment with employee values and supporting the motivational factors that ensure

sustainable productivity, with acceptance at work being the primary focus. The third finding within this research supports the idea of improving minority representation, with a narrower focus on Black women specifically.

Finding 1: Organizational Support from Onboarding and Beyond Could Mitigate the Onset of Workaholic Behaviors

The findings suggested that workaholism results from expectations that Black women tend to place on themselves with respect to performance and perception of performance and expectations of the organization. Proper onboarding, providing the employee with a clear outline on organization expectations could help curb some of the self-inflicted behavioral patterns of workaholism. An employer taking the responsibility to acknowledge equitable expectations will provide the employee with the necessary insight to manage workload and collaborate with colleagues in a manner that is productive for entire teams and departments or functions. Black women employees should be able to recognize and acknowledge their workaholic behaviors with respect to the factors that they see as hindrances to work in a healthier manner. In addition, organizations could provide additional resources to ensure the employee does not feel obligated to work during vacation or sick time, while also acknowledging the importance of mental health days throughout the course of the year.

Accessibility to Resources

Lack of resources spanned from people to training with respect to individual bandwidth. Some participants also shared that there seems to be a lack of training within their organizations to mitigate exclusion and microaggressions. There were experiences

shared by participants of having to prove themselves within the work environment when comparing their own expectations of work to their peers, especially as it pertained to leadership and how they approached expectations of workload management and how they respond to non-Black employees. This type of sentiment could be categorized as the good old boy workplace mentality. Opengart and Germain (2018) studied diversity intelligence specific to female pilots and the roadblocks faced for this minority group within the field. The authors highlighted the cultural and organizational issues that come because of the good old boy mentality, specific to presence of role models, support systems, and assistance with cultural shifts, highlighting the importance of organizations increasing the recruitment efforts and retention of women and minorities in non-traditional occupations and industries. This type of cultural organizational shift would support an improvement of resources for Black women in the workplace also.

Finding 2: Trust within the Workplace is Paramount for Authenticity

Trust is the catalyst for building a work environment that promotes authenticity and genuineness. In the workplace, Black women are hesitant to engage or interact in ways that will allow their non-Black and Black colleagues to build a trustworthy relationship. A lack of trust creates distance between all affected parties and further creates a cultural divide within the organization. Both imposter syndrome and identity shifting are consequences of an inauthentic work environment. Racial and gender disparities were highlighted as a gap in literature with respect to behavioral shifts that take place for Black women to feel comfortable being authentic in the workplace

(Dickens et al., 2019). Addressing trust issues would be a significant step in bridging the gap between trust and authenticity for Black women in the workplace.

Leadership and Colleague Trust

Mayer (2017) explained the importance of understanding how women manage disproportionate treatment with a desired goal of increased equitable treatment within the workplace. The research conducted in this study suggests organizational cultures that do not nurture and genuinely highlight individual contributions tend to force individuals to perform in a more survivalist manner. Wright et al. (2007) highlighted survivalist tactics amongst Black women in Britain who were marginalized within academia and explained that the strategy was usually employed to counter and resist experiences that reflected racism and sexism allowing them to leave their sector maintaining their dignity and selfhood. Williams (2020) likened the survivalist behavior to the traumatic experiences rooted in the history of America and the need to predict the reactions and temperament of White people, and in this case, White colleagues, which leads to a work environment that lacks trust and is fueled primarily with competition. For most of the participants within this study, the job is being done to maintain one's position, however, there is little to no true connectivity to the organization's objectives, because there is a barrier of trust. Due to lack of trust, the self-proclaimed workaholics studied found it easier to focus on extreme outputs of work, as opposed to building relationships that could potentially make their daily task completions easier and more productive.

The survivalist tactics align with the feedback from all participants who stated that they were more prone to connect with Black colleagues outside of work. Cultural

differences were referenced as a reason behind the inability to connect with non-Black coworkers on a more personal level. The motivation to engage with Black colleagues and non-Black colleagues beyond the typical workday adds another aspect of working beyond the typical workday to maintain relevancy.

Importance of Authenticity

Authenticity within the workplace has been studied throughout the years to develop an understanding of the ramifications that result from discretionary behaviors (Ostermeier et al., 2022). Ostermeier et al. (2022) explored authenticity with respect to the belongingness theory and how increased engagement within the workplace evolves because of altruistic and sportsmanship behaviors. Organizations have an opportunity to foster a collaborative workspace that allows employees to be their truest self. The differences of the individuals could potentially bridge the cultural gaps within the organization that lead to behavioral shifts and different work behaviors amongst the different ethnicities.

Finding 3: Lack of Representation puts Additional Pressure on Minority Employees and Can Lead to Imposter Syndrome

Finding three has implications on workplace pressures as well as personal pressures. Black female employees within the study shared the expectations from their parents and grandparents, as well as the translation of these expectations within the work environment. The Black women studied have obligations for self, family, and workplace. It was perceived by many of the participants that their presence is a form of representation for the greater community of Black women and because of this, they take

on more projects that are within their job scope as well as projects that span beyond because there are few others, if any, that identify as Black women within their organizations. Falco et al. (2020) associated workload with perfectionism and workaholism. Not only did the participants take on more work to prove worthiness, but they also became obsessed with the work being done to ensure perfection, increasing their hours and energies spent on projects and tasks. This behavior stemmed from the pressures of being in the minority within their work environment but feeling the need to represent the entire demographic of Black women.

Psychological Consequence of Lack of Representation

People can identity shift even more when they do not exhibit deeper skin pigmentations on the surface. As shared by one of the participants, there were coworkers within her workspace that passed as Caucasian, although their ethnicity was not. Passing as another race is not a new tactic and has played a part in African American history over the years, causing setbacks for groups within the race as well as creating a deeper issue within the community called colorism (Stockstill & Carson, 2022). This highlights a flexibility of a behavior for other people of color that is not afforded to Black people, and as a result, plays a part in how the participant behaves within the workplace and chooses to interact with their colleagues. Not only does this impact an individual's approach to work, but it also plays a part in how managers rank employees and make salary recommendations, adding another complexity to the psychological and behavioral responses that may develop. Albuja et al. (2018) noted that the multiracial approach to this is called contextual racial presentation and creates tiered statuses within the

communities comprised of people of color, which enhances the psychological consequences and behaviors that ensue.

Employer Responsibility

To reduce the pressures that exist within the workplace, which could subsequently reduce the workaholic behaviors, organizations have an opportunity to have an employee base that is representative of society. Having more representation will deisolate the individuals that are being challenged in meetings. While this may not solve the conflict within the meeting setting, it may help the individual navigate adversity in a different manner and adopt healthier behavioral responses, as opposed to working excessively as a tactic to prove worthiness. This aligns with the research conducted by Assari and Lankarani (2018) which provided an overview of the impact of workplace racial composition on Black male and female employees and the perceived discrimination. Brown (2019) explained the opportunity for representation and integrated training in professional development to help offset the behaviors and responses that result from the negative interaction stemming from cultural differences.

Limitations of Study

There were two primary limitations within the study specific to target population. Although there was a minimum requirement for years of experience for participation, there was no tenure requirement within the participant's current organization. As a result, the experiences shared were from individuals that although they have been in their fields for three or more years, the span of time in with current organization ranged from as little as six months to as long as 28 years. This plays a part in how the participant perceived

either their workaholism or how their interaction within their organization had evolved. This aspect created a generalization that could have been more succinct if the study focused on individuals that are either within the first three years of their career or adversely, individuals that have 15 or more years in their career. The other limitation was the vastness of job sectors represented. While there were many commonalities and an ease to connect the themes and subsequent findings, there is more room to understand the dynamic of workaholism in Black women in specific fields or industries. As a basis for this study, having the variety of job functions included does support transferability in the future.

A limitation to the data analysis was the type of member checking that was used. Member checking was conducted as part of the interview process by restating or summarizing the response provided from the participants, more specifically when clarification was needed (Harper & Cole, 2012). However, to enrich the data analysis step, sharing the transcription summary with each participant would have ensured the most optimal member check and would have allowed the participants to refine any responses that they felt were either inadequate or did not represent fully what they were trying to convey.

Recommendations

The findings and limitations of this study could be explored further in future research opportunities. A phenomenological research design was used to conduct the qualitative study using interview questions to explore the experiences of Black women who work in predominantly White organizations. The experiences shared reflected the

daily interactions and workplace culture that may increase workaholism for the participants. An ethnographic qualitative methodology or a case study could further enhance the research opportunities for this topic. In addition, a focus group of individuals who identify as Black or African Americans and are the minority within their workplace would provide additional insight to the experiences shared amongst the participants. Results from this study could also be tested quantitatively using a group of women within a specific race, including but not limited to Black women.

There was a mix of tenure and occupations within the participant pool. This approach provided a general overview of the onset and continuum of workaholism with respect to workplace culture. Conducting the study with individuals that have a specified number of years worked or individuals who work in a specific sector could provide even richer insights for understanding how workplace culture can evolve to help Black women decrease their workaholic behaviors. To investigate the evolution of the onset of the self-efficacy behavior of workaholism, future research could explore the difference between how the workaholism behavior becomes increasingly easier or more difficult to manage overtime. This could be supported with future research on workaholism in Black women who have been in their career for less than three years and research on workaholism in Black women who have been in their career for 15 or more years. The additional research could provide insight on how the self-efficacy behavior becomes increasingly easier to navigate due to tenure. Understanding the management of workaholism could provide additional insight on how Black women should navigate promotions and other growth factors within a role as the tenure increases. Cox (2012) explained the importance of peer

involvement with respect to the promotion and tenure processes in academia, which lends itself to findings one and two of this research as peer involvement could be anchored in trust and representation. The cultural factors within the workplace and colleague mix play a role in how Black women employees assess their ability to advance in their careers and plays a part in how they choose to manage their workload and work behavior.

Additionally, studying Black women who work in the same field could yield data regarding the onset of workaholism because of organizational culture within a specific sector. More studies are needed to understand workplace culture and the level of engagement of Black women with their colleagues with attention to potential disparities that may exist within the workplace as an extrinsic element which leads to workaholism as the behavioral response. Future research could also be conducted to understand the onset of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly Black organizations to assess the root cause and if cultural representation plays a part in the behaviors of these individuals.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research study was to explore the experiences of Black women who work in predominantly White organizations and the onset of workaholism in these women as a self-efficacy behavior. The results of this study might increase awareness of the thoughts that Black women have in a variety of work settings and the standards that they hold themselves to in tandem with the standards that they perceive are being projected on them by their respective organizations. Organizational leaders may choose to assess their current diversity outlook, barriers of

trust within the workplace, and the type of support that is needed during the onboarding of new employees and the retention of existing employees to directly reduce the behavioral response of workaholism.

This study revealed that many Black women place an insurmountable pressure on themselves to be perfect at their jobs at the start, with little room for error. This stems from family expectations as well as the lack of resources that are provided to them when compared to their non-Black counterparts. Tokenism and racialized gendered socialization, as described by Dickens et al. (2019), play a part in the added pressures Black women experience when they are not in a workplace that fosters inclusivity. The research also revealed the importance of authenticity for Black women and how the ability for Black women to be authentic in the workplace parallels trust. Lastly, this study provided a distinct overview of how companies lack representation, especially in management levels and beyond. This lack of representation places additional pressure on the Black women employees to appear more resilient than their counterparts, resulting in workaholic behaviors.

To address the behavior of workaholism, organizations have an opportunity to assess the workplace culture and understand the personnel dynamics through high-quality listening circles with the support of the diversity, equity, and inclusion departments. Itzchakov and Kluger (2017) explained the benefits of high-quality listening, which should be integrated across all functions and departments within the workplace, as it allows an individual to elaborate on an event, establish an emotional connection to the event, and become more self-aware of the details of the event. This type of high-quality

listening provides the individual with the reassurance that they are attention worthy, which could increase personal growth (Itzhakov & Kluger, 2017) and potentially reduce counterproductive work behaviors, such as workaholism. If a diversity, equity, and inclusion department does not exist, organizations should consider an investment into the department to serve as a resource to all employees for improvement of workplace culture and individual behavioral responses resulting from workplace culture.

Conclusion

This qualitative study explored the experiences of Black women who work in predominantly White organizations and the development of workaholism as a self-efficacy behavior, with a specific interest in organizational culture rooted in the affective events theory. The research findings revealed that: (a) organizational support from onboarding and beyond could mitigate the onset of workaholic behaviors, (b) trust within the workplace is paramount for authenticity, and (c) lack of representation puts additional pressure on minority employees and can lead to imposter syndrome.

Future research could focus on a continued qualitative exploration, ethnographic or case study, as well as a quantitative analysis within more specific organizational sectors and more specific tenured groups, early career or late career. The current study showed that the onset of workaholism in Black women is formed from a variety of complexities ranging from family expectations, lack of workplace relationships and diverse representations within the workplace, as well as lack of trust. All of which create an intrinsic response on how to maneuver workload and responsibility, resulting in workaholism. More studies are needed to understand if tenure and a shift in workplace

culture can reduce the onset of workaholism. Future research should also be considered to evaluate the development of workaholism in Black women who work in predominantly Black organizations. The additional insights from each follow-up would help provide insight on how to further improve work environments for Black women while reducing the onset of workaholism within this demographic.

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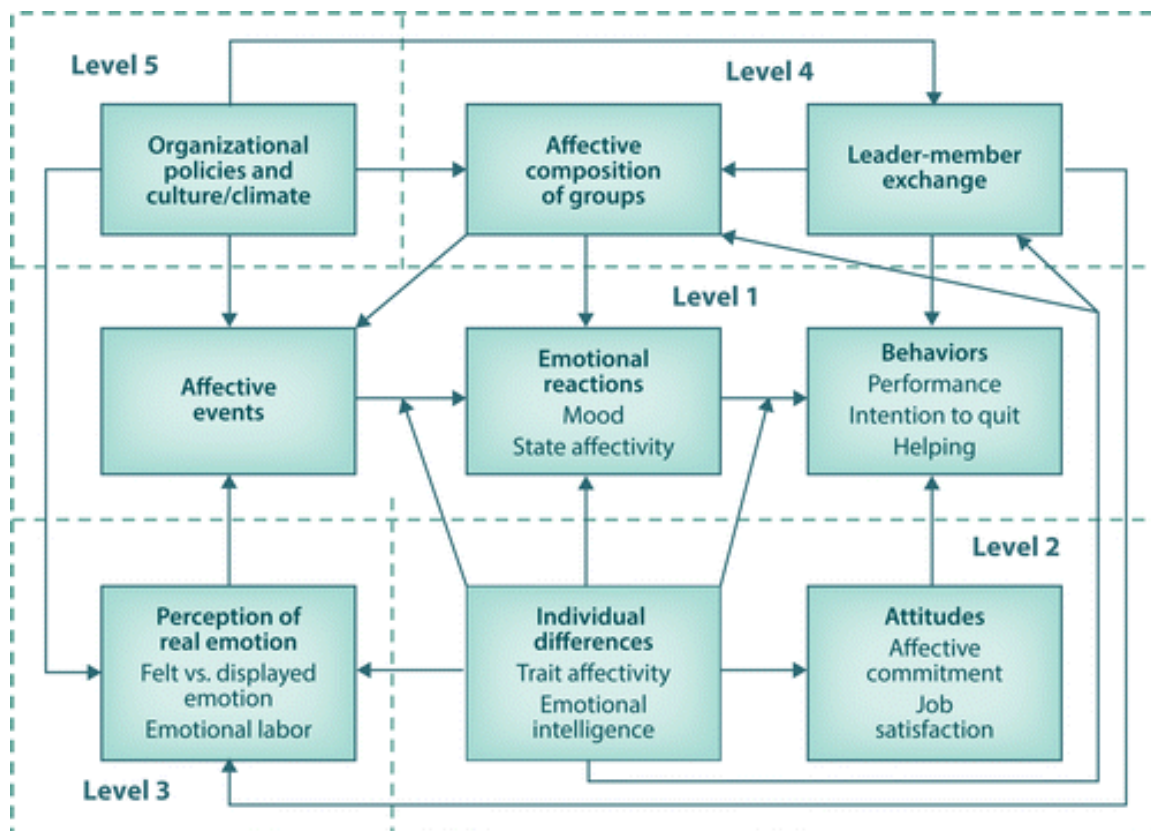
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Figures

Figure 1*Cross-Level View of Emotions: Five Levels of Analysis*


 Ashkanasy NM, Dorris AD. 2017.
 Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav. 4:67–90

Figure 1. A cross-level view of emotions at five levels of analysis (Ashkanasy 2003).

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Data Collection Questions

Interview Opening:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me regarding work time management for Black women who work with White employees predominantly and the development of workaholism. Prior to starting, please know that this is not only research to me, but it is a journey that will hopefully provide insight to experiences shared by other members of society. The research will provide further understanding on the intrinsic and behavioral responses to the work environment of Black women who are self-proclaimed workaholics. I appreciate the personal experiences that you are willing to share with me.

As mentioned, we are here to talk about your experiences. Let us begin with some information about your field and how long you have been with your organization.

Interview:

1. How many years have you been with your company?
2. What are some of the functions of your job?
3. How many hours do you work in a week?
4. How many people do you interact with daily and what are their ethnicities?
5. What is your greatest challenge as a Black employee in a predominantly White organization?
 - a. Prompt: Tell me about a time that you felt either challenge was too much to overcome.
 - b. Prompt: What motivated you to persevere during these challenging times?

6. Approximately, how many other Black people work in your organization or department?
 - a. Prompt: What are their genders?
7. What does it mean to you to be in the minority within your organization?
8. What comes to mind when you think about what it would take to succeed and grow within your company?
9. What observations do you have regarding your work behavior compared to your non-Black colleagues?
10. What are some key differences you observe in how you manage your workload compared to how your non-Black colleagues manage their workload?
11. What are some of the pros or cons that you have observed when considering diversity within the current work environment?
12. Imposter syndrome is the self-belief that one is not bright or worthy of praise received within the workplace. What types of thoughts have you adopted that could be categorized as imposter syndrome?
13. Identity shifting is the shift in a person's language or cultural behavior to mitigate negative outcomes of discrimination. What experiences have you had with identity shifting?
14. Tell me about an experience in which you felt you were working equally to your non-Black colleagues.
 - a. Prompt: How did that make you feel?
15. How do you engage with your non-Black colleagues throughout the day?

16. In your time with the company, how do you decide when you will use your paid time off?
- a. Prompt: Do you find that you are using days because you have them to take or because you forgot to take them?
17. In a pre-Covid work setting, how comfortable were you with taking sick days?
18. How comfortable are you with the idea of mental health days?
- a. Prompt: What are your thoughts on the importance of mental health days?
19. How often do you engage with your Black colleagues outside of work?
- a. Prompt: How often do you engage with your non-Black colleagues outside of work?
 - b. Prompt: If you engage with either or both, what are your motivating factors for interacting with them beyond the typical workday?
20. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me before we conclude the interview?

Conclusion:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me regarding your experiences. Please know that this information will be valuable for the continued exploration and understanding of workplace behaviors, specifically workaholism and its development in Black women who work in predominantly White organizations.