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STRESSED AND CONFUSED: AN EXPLORATION INTO CITIZENSHIP FATIGUE AND
THE DARK SIDE OF WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP

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STRESSED AND CONFUSED: AN EXPLORATION INTO CITIZENSHIP FATIGUE AND
THE DARK SIDE OF WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP

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STRESSED AND CONFUSED: AN EXPLORATION INTO CITIZENSHIP FATIGUE AND
THE DARK SIDE OF WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP

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ABSTRACT

This two-essay study investigated two growing areas of interest related to employee stress: citizenship fatigue and the dark side of workplace friendships. Essay 1 hypothesizes that person–organization fit is negatively related to citizenship fatigue and that citizenship fatigue is positively related to turnover intentions and negatively related to organizational commitment. Essay 2 hypothesizes workplace friendships are negatively related directly to psychological detachment and work–life balance while positively related to emotional exhaustion. Both studies applied the conservation of resources (COR) theory and utilized a cross-sectional research design of employees from diverse organizations in a midwestern town collected over Time 1 and Time 2. The relationships of the constructs were analyzed via regression analysis and the PROCESS macro in SPSS. Essay 1 had all hypotheses supported, while essay 2 had none. Suggestions for future research and implications for practitioners are provided.

Keywords: Citizenship Fatigue, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Workplace Friendship, Psychological Detachment, Well-Being, Exhaustion, Work–Life Balance, Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory, Border/Boundary Theory

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Stressed and Confused: An Exploration into Citizenship Fatigue and The Dark Side of
Workplace Friendship

Workplace environments and workplace stress have been studied and featured in headlines for decades. However, headlines often reflect contradictory thoughts. For example, one headline may talk about the importance of employees going above and beyond at work, while the next headline highlights employee stress is increasing at an alarming rate. Another headline may call for workplaces to increase flexibility for employees, while the next headline highlights a need for employees to create separation between work and non-work life. How are employees to interpret such contradictory headlines? This two-essay study addresses some of these contradictions and examines specifically what impacts citizenship fatigue, how employees cope with citizenship fatigue, and what impact workplace friendships have on employees.

Research Motivation

In the contemporary workplace, employees frequently check emails on personal devices, take work home, and receive messages during off hours. Work has become more flexible as boundaries between work and non-work life have blurred (Wepfer, Allen, Brauchli, Jenny, & Bauer, 2018). This workplace flexibility has a positive correlation with people working more than in the past (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Concurrently, workplace stress in the United States is reaching alarming rates and is an increasing problem, with some estimates showing a \$300 billion per year impact on the U.S. economy (Brussard, 2019). Stress has gained more attention on the world stage, as well. The World Health Organization (WHO; 2019) classified burnout, a consequence of unaddressed workplace stress, as a work-specific syndrome in the 11th edition of the *International Classification of Diseases*. Stress has adverse outcomes for both individuals and organizations. For example, employee stress is an antecedent to and

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negatively related to turnover intentions (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Huffman & Olson, 2017).

Workplace stress has been studied for decades in academic research. The conservation of resources theory is an individual-level theory that helps explain how individuals deal with stress (Hobfoll, 1989). This theory centers around the idea of an individual's desire to possess, protect, and create resources to help deal with stress (Hobfoll, 1989). In short, employees need resources to minimize stress in the workplace. Resources are "objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies valued in their own right, or that are valued because they act as conduits to the achievement or protection of valued resources" (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 339).

Actions employees take at work may appear, intuitively, to positively impact employees, and thus help manage stress. For example, going above and beyond at work, known as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), is shown to help employees obtain more favorable supervisor reviews (Whiting, Podsakoff, & Pierce, 2008). Additionally, forming workplace friendships is shown to reduce tension and increase trust between the two close friends when compared to less close friends (Bridge & Baxter, 1992; Olk & Elvira, 2001). However, it appears that these actions may not be as positive as initially thought.

Research Problems

Research has reported feelings of depletion and employees experiencing a cost associated with engaging in OCBs (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013). Research has shown that there are downsides associated with being a good soldier. When these employees feel as if the resources they expend to be good soldiers are not returned or supported, something known as *citizenship fatigue* can set in (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey, & LePine, 2015). Bolino et al.

(2015) identified citizenship fatigue as a new construct in the stress and OCB literature.

Citizenship fatigue is “a state in which feeling wore out, tired, or on edge is attributed to engaging in OCB” (Bolino et al., 2015). In short, it is stress produced by being a good soldier.

Bolino et al. (2015) ended their paper by calling for further examination of how employees cope with citizenship fatigue. The first essay in this study examines how employees cope with citizenship fatigue.

Further, there has been a growing interest in understanding the dark side of workplace friendships (Methot, Lepine, Podsakoff, & Christian, 2016; Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018).

Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) called for a more in-depth understanding of how workplace friendships produce adverse outcomes. Methot et al. (2016) commented that little knowledge exists associated with how workplace friendships might harm employee outcomes. The second essay in this study looks at exploring what negative impact workplace friendships have on employee outcomes.

Research Contributions

This study contributes to the vast body of knowledge on OCBs and stress and the growing body of knowledge on workplace friendships. Specifically, the construct of citizenship fatigue is relatively new and understudied, thus providing opportunities to expand existing research and take incremental steps in addressing gaps identified by Bolino et al. (2015).

Additionally, the results of this study have important implications for the evolving literature on workplace friendship. As previously mentioned, there has been an increased interest in the dark side of workplace friendships. A review of the literature showed that there is a need first to understand how workplace friendships produce adverse outcomes.

Research Questions

The first essay's primary construct of interest is citizenship fatigue. The first essay looks at antecedents and consequences of citizenship fatigue. Specific research questions (RQs) for the first paper include:

RQ1: What are the impacts of person–organization fit on citizenship fatigue?

RQ2: What are the impacts of citizenship fatigue on turnover intentions and organizational commitment?

The second essay's focal construct is workplace friendships; the essay explores the construct's antecedents and consequences. Specific RQs for essay two include:

RQ3: What are the impacts of workplace friendships on psychological detachment, emotional exhaustion, and work–life balance?

RQ4: What are the impacts of psychological detachment on emotional exhaustion and work–life balance?

This document is organized into two essays. The first essay looks at the citizenship fatigue construct, while the second essay looks at the workplace friendship construct. Each essay contains unique introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, hypothesis development, methods, results, discussion, limitations and future research, and conclusion sections.

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ESSAY 1: ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF CITIZENSHIP FATIGUE: A
CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES ARGUMENT

ABSTRACT

This essay identifies factors that impact citizenship fatigue and identifies how employees cope with citizenship fatigue. Specifically, the essay addresses how person–organization fit impacts citizenship fatigue. The essay also addresses how citizenship fatigue impacts turnover intentions and organizational commitment. This essay hypothesizes that person–organization fit is negatively related to citizenship fatigue and that citizenship fatigue is positively related to turnover intentions and negatively related to organizational commitment. This essay applies the conservation of resources (COR) theory and utilizes a cross-sectional research design. This essay employs surveys of employees of diverse organizations in a midwestern town collected over Time 1 and Time 2. The relationships between the constructs of interest are analyzed via regression and the PROCESS macro in SPSS. All hypotheses were supported, and academic and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: Stress, Citizenship Fatigue, Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory, Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Essay 1: Antecedents and Consequences of Citizenship Fatigue: A Conservation of Resources
Argument

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has been one of the most studied constructs in organizational sciences and is thoroughly embedded in the fields of organizational behavior (N. P. Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). The concept of OCB is known as “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988, p. 4). Employees going above and beyond voluntarily have generally been seen to have positive impacts on the organization and even on the individuals themselves (Organ et al., 2006; Whiting, Podsakoff, & Pierce, 2008). However, more recent research has indicated that there are downsides to employees engaging in OCBs. Research has reported individuals experiencing feelings of depletion and the sense of a cost associated with engaging in OCBs (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013). Research has shown that there are downsides associated with being a good soldier. Specifically, when these employees feel as if the resources they expend to be good soldiers are not returned or supported, something known as *citizenship fatigue* can set in (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey, & LePine, 2015).

Bolino et al. (2015) identified citizenship fatigue as a new construct in the stress and OCB literature. Specifically, citizenship fatigue is defined as “a state in which feeling wore out, tired, or on edge is attributed to engaging in OCB” (Bolino et al., 2015, p. 57). In short, it is stress produced by being a good soldier. At the end of their paper, Bolino et al. (2015) called for an additional examination into other constructs that impact and affect citizenship fatigue, and they also called for an examination of how employees cope with citizenship fatigue. With the

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numerous papers addressing OCBs, it is surprising to find a dearth of papers addressing the citizenship fatigue construct and how employees deal with citizenship fatigue.

The purpose of this essay is to heed the calls laid out by Bolino et al. (2015) and take steps towards addressing these gaps. First, this essay examines how person–organization (PO) fit impacts citizenship fatigue. Next, this study reveals how employees cope with citizenship fatigue by determining the impact citizenship fatigue has on both turnover intention and organizational commitment. Since citizenship fatigue is a type of stress, this study applied the conservation of resources (COR) theory in its theoretical framework and hypothesis development. A review of the existing literature on stress in the workplace revealed that the COR theory is a prevailing theory utilized in such contexts.

This essay contributes to the vast body of knowledge on OCBs and stress. The construct of citizenship fatigue is relatively new and understudied, thus providing opportunities to expand existing research and take incremental steps in addressing gaps identified by Bolino et al. (2015). Further, this essay contributes to the existing body of knowledge related to essential employee attitudes, employee turnover intentions, and organizational commitment. Bolino et al. (2015) noted, “employees who experience citizenship fatigue feel frustrated or underappreciated” (p. 57). If employees feel this way, how does it impact their attitudes (e.g., turnover intention and organizational commitment)? Research has shown that the attitudes under investigation in this study (i.e., turnover intention and organizational commitment) impact employee behaviors such as voluntary turnover (Albrecht & Andreatta, 2011; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). Therefore, practitioners need to determine if fatigue will impact these employee attitudes. If it does, then strategies can be enacted to manage these employee attitudes appropriately. This essay addresses the following two questions:

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1. What are the impacts of PO fit on citizenship fatigue?
2. What are the impacts of citizenship fatigue on turnover intentions and organizational commitment?

This essay is organized in the following sections. The literature review focuses on the constructs of PO fit, OCB and citizenship fatigue, turnover intention, and organizational commitment. The theoretical model is developed, along with the theoretical background and statement of the hypothesis. Next, the essay lays out the methods utilized. Finally, the essay concludes with results, discussion, limitations and future research, and conclusion sections.

Literature Review

Person–Organization Fit

Human behavior can be driven by the interaction between people and their environments (Terborg, 1981). This idea can be traced back to the 1930s in psychology (Lewin, 1938). This work transitioned into the business and organizational domains and was primarily labeled as PO fit as early as 1957 (Argyris).

Contemporary literature of the PO fit construct can be traced back to when Kristof (1996) noted that the construct was attracting attention from both scholars and practitioners, yet was lacking a cohesive, consistent definition. Upon review of existing conceptualizations and historical implications of the construct, Kristof (1996) defined PO fit as “the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both” (pp. 4–5). As noted by Kristoff (1996), this definition explicitly focuses on the fit between the employee and the entire organization, not components of the organization, such as the job or supervisor.

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While there are different ways to measure PO fit, a standard method is measuring the value congruence between employees and the organization (Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003). Thus, Kristof and colleagues revised the definition of PO fit to be when people and organizations share similar foundational values and goals (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). This definition allows for consistency in research and appears to be the most commonly accepted definition of PO fit. Specifically, PO fit is often discussed as one of two types of fit: supplementary fit, where employees and organizations share similar values and goals, and complementary fit, where either the organization meets the needs of the employee or vice versa. Supplementary fit has been the primary focus of most studies associated with the PO fit literature (Boon & Biron, 2016), and thus this essay focuses on the supplementary fit.

As noted by Verquer et al. (2003), work attitudes such as organizational commitment and turnover intentions are some of the most commonly studied variables in PO fit studies. Verquer et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 21 studies that had evaluated PO fit and work attitudes and found sizable relationships with organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Precisely, Verquer et al. (2003) identified a negative relationship between PO fit and turnover intention and a positive relationship between PO fit and organizational commitment. Further, Verquer et al. (2003) also commented on how PO fit may impact the stress employees feel at work. Siegall and McDonald (2004) explored this relationship and found that PO fit was strongly associated with burnout, an elevated form of stress in response to a job, specifically finding a negative relationship existing between PO fit and burnout. Studies have recently concluded that if managers want to improve the employee experience at work (e.g., reducing work-related stress and reducing turnover intentions), then focusing on improving the PO fit is essential (Gould-Williams, Mostafa, & Bottomley, 2015).

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Edwards and Cable (2009) identified that PO fit between an employee and the organization has a positive impact on the trust that employees place in the organization and organizational members. This trust can manifest itself in the behaviors of the employees. Hoffman and Woehr (2006) complemented the Verquer et al. (2003) study by conducting a similar meta-analysis focused on the relationship between PO fit and behavioral outcomes, such as OCB; their results showed a positive relationship between PO fit and OCBs. Jin, McDonald, and Park (2018) looked at how PO fit and extra-role behaviors (called *followership behavior* in their study) are related, utilizing the COR theory. They determined a positive relationship between PO fit and extra-role behavior, which leads to a negative relationship with turnover intentions.

The construct of PO fit is a well-established construct and appears in a variety of settings within the business and organizational research domain. The PO fit construct has an impact on many vital outcomes for practitioners and scholars, such as employee work attitudes (e.g., turnover intention and organizational commitment) and behaviors (e.g., OCBs). These work attitudes and behaviors are impacted by how employee personal goals and values fit those of the organization (Edwards & Cable, 2009).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Citizenship Fatigue

The concept of OCB is known as individual behavior that is considered above and beyond that is not directly related to a formal reward system and overall promotes an efficient and effective organization (Organ, 1988). An employee who engages in OCBs can be thought of as a good soldier or good corporate citizen, as they are going above and beyond their assigned duties. Examples of OCB could be offering to assist coworkers with their work, coming in on the weekend to work, mentoring a new employee, or taking on additional job duties and tasks.

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There are benefits to both the employee and the organization when one exhibits OCBs. For example, an employee can be more favorably evaluated by a supervisor when engaging in OCBs (Whiting et al., 2008). Additionally, OCBs impact an organization's productivity, efficiency, customer satisfaction, and turnover, as reported in a meta-analysis of OCBs and their organizational consequences (N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2009). To summarize, there are numerous positive outcomes associated with OCBs, as employees who go above and beyond can get ahead in their careers as they also positively impact their organizations.

However, some research has indicated that there appears to be a dark side associated with OCBs. Specifically, engaging in OCBs can take a toll on employees, causing stressed and role-overload, as now they are going above and beyond their regular duties (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). Because employees are now busier with their above and beyond duties, they experience work-family conflict (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). Further, research has reported on feelings of depletion and employees experiencing a cost associated with engaging in OCBs (Bergeron, 2007; Bolino et al., 2013).

As stress and additional negative consequences appeared in OCB research, citizenship fatigue was defined as "a state in which feeling worn out, tired, or on edge is attributed to engaging in OCB" (Bolino et al., 2015, p. 57). Bolino et al. (2015) also stated that citizenship fatigue is a different and explicit construct compared to felt stress, role overload, and burnout, as these constructs are often associated with the actual job tasks and duties. Citizenship fatigue is similar to these constructs but is a type of stress associated with going above and beyond via OCBs and does not have to do with core job tasks.

Applying the COR theory, Bolino et al. (2015) looked at what factors impact citizenship fatigue. They found that the relationship between OCB and citizenship fatigue is strong and positive when perceived organizational support is low; additionally, they found a strong and negative relationship when the quality of team member exchange is high, and pressure to engage in OCB is low (Bolino et al., 2015). Finally, they found that a negative relationship exists between citizenship fatigue and future OCBs (Bolino et al., 2015). The authors suggested future research should focus on additional influences of citizenship fatigue and on how employees cope with citizenship fatigue (Bolino et al., 2015). In a recent paper, OCBs were evaluated via specific profiles of employees, thus representing a spectrum of employees who engage in OCBs (Klotz, Bolino, Song, & Stornelli, 2018). This study evaluated how these different profiles of OCBs experienced citizenship fatigue; the findings from this paper showed that employee profiles with the highest levels of OCB are not necessarily associated with the highest levels of citizenship fatigue, and surprisingly the lowest levels of citizenship fatigue were experienced by those who engaged in very high levels of OCBs (Klotz et al., 2018). Therefore, scarce information exists related to how different employees deal with citizenship fatigue. However, upon review of further literature, little to no research has filled these gaps or thoroughly investigated the citizenship fatigue construct. This essay addresses both gaps initially laid out by Bolino (2015), specifically, what influences citizenship fatigue and how employees cope with citizenship fatigue.

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is a construct of interest to many social science researchers, as it is not only a cognitive process but is an antecedent to actual voluntary turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000; Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino, 1979; Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978). Turnover

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intention is defined as the “final cognitive decision-making process of voluntary turnover” (Steel & Ovalle, 1984, p. 673). Turnover intention would include thoughts of quitting, intention to search for another job with another company, and intention to quit (Carmeli & Weisberg, 2006). Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) looked at antecedents of turnover intentions and determined a relationship between stress (an antecedent) and turnover intention. Huffman and Olson (2017) conducted a study which supported Grandey and Cropanzano’s (1999) study when it determined that a significant and positive relationship between stress and turnover intention exists.

Chen, Hui, and Segó (1998) argued that lower levels of OCBs are good indicators of an employee’s turnover intention, and ultimately turnover. Their study concluded that a negative relationship exists between OCBs and turnover intention (Chen et al., 1998). In a meta-analysis, N. P. Podsakoff et al. (2009) concluded the same, further supporting this relationship. An employee’s perception of human resource practices in an organization can also impact an employee’s turnover intention. Specifically, there is a positive relationship between employee’s perception of high-performance human resource practices (such as ability-enhancing practices, motivation-enhancing practices, and opportunity-enhancing practices) and intent to remain with the organization (Kehoe & Wright, 2013).

Relationships between turnover intention and other constructs of interest in this current study were previously identified. To summarize, research has indicated that turnover intention manifests itself when employees experience stress and when lower levels of OCBs are present (Chen et al., 1998). Further, turnover intentions are important to recognize within employees as these intentions often manifest themselves in voluntary turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000). Because turnover is often viewed as a negative outcome for organizations, this construct is of importance to both organizational researchers and practitioners.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been the focus of many organizational studies (Klein, Becker, & Meyer, 2009). Nevertheless, there appears to be some difficulty associated with defining and conceptualizing the construct consistently. One of the primary reasons for this difficulty is the application of commitment to different disciplines. While open to debate, commitment was defined by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) as “a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets” (p. 301).

Meta-analyses of commitment have shown different studies measure different components of organizational commitment (Lapointe, Vandenberghe, & Panaccio, 2011). Specifically, there are three types of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). First is affective commitment, which represents an employee’s organizational commitment centered around identifying with the goals and values of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). The second type of commitment is known as normative commitment, which is commitment via feelings of obligation toward the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Finally, continuance commitment is a commitment via the cost associated with leaving the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) called for a core essence of commitment; Mercurio (2015) helped identify this core essence and determined in a meta-analysis that affective commitment is commonly cited as the measure of commitment that shows the most substantial relationship related to work outcomes, leading this to be pushed as the core representation of organizational commitment. For this reason, this essay focuses primarily on affective commitment when referring to organizational commitment.

There are specific organization-relevant outcomes related to organizational commitment, such as turnover and OCB. For example, studies have shown a negative relationship between

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organizational commitment and turnover and organizational commitment and absenteeism (Albrecht & Andreetta, 2011; Mercurio, 2015; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Further, a positive relationship exists with OCBs (Mercurio, 2015; Meyer et al., 2002). Organizational commitment helps the employee and the organization form a bond, specifically helping the employee feel more stable, secure, and as if he or she belongs within the organization (Mercurio, 2015). This bond can help to reduce employee stress, specifically burnout and emotional exhaustion (Schmidt, 2007). Research also has shown that employee stress negatively impacts organizational commitment (Jamal, 1990; Sager, 1994). Organizational commitment has many essential outcomes for organizations and managers.

These crucial outcomes of organizational commitment have also encouraged authors to look at the antecedents of organizational commitment. Meyer et al. (2002) conducted a meta-analysis and concluded that antecedents of organizational commitment include demographic variables, individual differences, work experiences, and investments. Specific findings from this study included external locus of control (an individual difference) being negatively related to organizational commitment and self-efficacy (another individual difference) having a positive correlation (Meyer et al., 2002). For findings related to work experience, role ambiguity and role conflict were negatively correlated with organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 2002).

Organizational commitment is applied in many different settings in academic research, yet many organizational scholars have pointed to affective commitment as a primary way to define and measure organizational commitment (Mercurio 2015). This type of commitment has many vital antecedents and consequences as it relates to organizations, such as turnover and employee stress, two constructs of interest in this essay.

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

Figure 1 shows the research model used in this essay and is followed by an explanation of the theoretical framework and hypothesis development.

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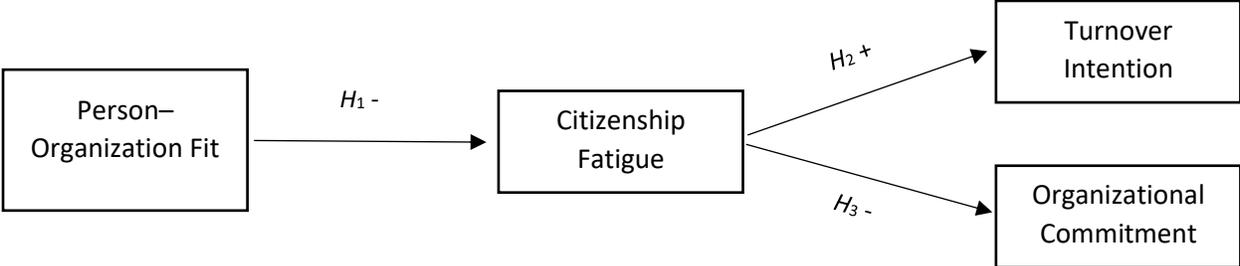


Figure 1. Research model for Essay 1.

Conservation of Resources Theory

Hobfoll (1989) proposed the COR theory in terms of explaining how individuals deal with stress. This theory centers around individuals and their desires to possess, protect, and create resources, which helps individuals deal with stress (Hobfoll, 1989). Resources are “objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued in their own right, or that are valued because they act as conduits to the achievement or protection of valued resources” (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 339).

According to Hobfoll (1989, 2001) and COR, when people have resources that help them deal with stress, stress is less likely to occur. According to Hobfoll (1989), the opposite is true, as well; when resources are lost or there is a threat of resources being lost, stress is more likely to occur. Additionally, if employees expend resources but do not receive a resource gain in return, stress is more likely to occur and will leave the employees with fewer resources for future demands (Hobfoll, 1989). When fewer resources are available, individuals will try to conserve the remaining resources and maintain a defensive posture (Hobfoll, 1989). In short, according to Hobfoll’s (1989, 2001) COR theory, individuals need resources to deal with stress, and when resources are not present, stress is more likely to occur.

Person–Organization Fit, Citizenship Fatigue, Turnover Intention, and Organizational Commitment

Hoffman and Woehr (2006) conducted a meta-analysis focused on the relationship between PO fit and behavioral outcomes, such as OCB; their results showed a positive relationship between PO fit and OCBs. Jin et al. (2018) used COR theory to determine how PO

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fit and extra-role behaviors (or followship behaviors) are related, utilizing the COR theory. They determined a positive relationship between PO fit and extra-role behavior (Jin et al., 2018).

Citizenship fatigue is “a state in which feeling wore out, tired, or on edge is attributed to engaging in OCB” (Bolino et al., 2015, p. 57). For employees to experience citizenship fatigue, they must first engage in OCB, behavior that is considered above and beyond their current role duties (Bolino, et al., 2015). According to Bolino et al. (2015), when perceived organizational support (how much an employee feels supported by the organization) is lower, more citizenship fatigue is present. Referencing COR theory, Bolino et al. (2015) explained this happens because “when employees who engage in OCB lack organizational support, there is more likely to be a net loss of resources for going above and beyond the call of duty; therefore engaging in additional discretionary behaviors is likely to be even more draining” (p. 59). Thus, employees who experience a resource loss are likely to experience citizenship fatigue.

The concept of PO fit is negatively related to citizenship fatigue. Utilizing COR theory, Siegall and McDonald (2004) found a negative relationship between PO fit and burnout, a type of stress. In two recent studies, Kiazad, Seibert, and Kraimer (2014) and Mackey, Perrewé, and McAllister (2017) concluded that PO fit can identify as a personal resource with regards to COR theory. Specifically, PO fit is considered a psychological resource (Kiazad et al., 2014; Mackey et al., 2017). As an example, PO fit allows for employees to better understand and anticipate the behaviors made within an organization, as the employee and organization share similar values (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). Additionally, PO fit is generally viewed as positive and valuable, which helps provide stress-resistance potential (Edwards, 2008). Based on the definition of citizenship fatigue and its use with COR, citizenship fatigue is a type of stress. According to

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COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), when an individual's resources get depleted and not restored, this can lead to stress. Therefore:

H₁: The levels of PO fit are negatively associated with the levels of citizenship fatigue.

N. P. Podsakoff et al.'s (2009) meta-analysis examining consequences of OCBs concluded there is a negative relationship between OCBs and turnover intention. According to Bolino et al. (2015), a negative relationship exists between citizenship fatigue and future levels of OCBs. Therefore, one can logically support that citizenship fatigue, a type of stress, has a negative relationship with turnover intention. Strengthening this argument, research also has shown that different types of stress are antecedents to turnover intention (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Huffman & Olson, 2017).

When employees experience citizenship fatigue, research has shown it can be due to a lack of resources, such as perceived organizational support (Bolino et al., 2015). According to COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), individuals conserve and protect the resources they have when experiencing stress. Further, a stressed-out employee will take a defensive posture (Hobfoll, 1989). This scenario may manifest itself in the employee looking for a situation where resources can be returned or restored to the employee (Hobfoll, 1989). For example, if an employee puts in extra time into a project, the employee will look for this resource (time) to be returned in the future (e.g., leaving early on another day). If the employee does not receive this resource back in the future, the employee would likely take a defensive posture and conserve the resource. In this example, the employee could not volunteer to put in extra time on a future project and look to leave work early on their own to restore the depleted resource of time. Therefore, if an employee is experiencing citizenship fatigue and thus experiencing stress, he or she will take a defensive posture, conserve existing resources, and look to restore depleted resources. Thus:

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H₂: The levels of citizenship fatigue are positively associated with the levels of turnover intention.

Organizational commitment can be thought of as a bond between the individual and the organization (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). This bond can help reduce employee stress, specifically burnout and emotional exhaustion (Schmidt, 2007). This argument is supported by research that supports organizational commitment is negatively related to different types of stress and outcomes of stress (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). Research also has shown that employee stress negatively impacts organizational commitment (Cole & Bedeian, 2007; Jamal, 1990; Sager, 1994; Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). Based on the amount of research conducted in a variety of settings, there appears to be clear negative relationships between employee stress and organizational commitment.

Wright and Hobfoll (2004) stated that in order for organizations to have highly committed employees, the organizations would need to provide employees with the necessary resources. According to COR theory, employees experience stress when they do not possess the necessary resources to deal with stress (Hobfoll, 1989). This stress results in employees trying to conserve their existing resources and taking a defensive posture towards the organization (Hobfoll, 1989). Therefore, since citizenship fatigue is a type of stress:

H₃: The levels of citizenship fatigue are negatively associated with levels of organizational commitment.

The concept of PO fit has been identified as a personal resource with regards to COR theory (Mackey et al., 2017). Therefore, when fewer resources are available for an employee to deal with stress, stress is more likely to occur (Hobfoll, 1989). Thus, a hypothesized negative

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relationship exists between PO fit and citizenship fatigue. Additionally, if an employee is experiencing citizenship fatigue, a type of stress, he or she will take a defensive posture, conserve existing resources, and look to restore depleted resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Therefore, a hypothesized positive relationship exists between citizenship fatigue and turnover intention, and a negative relationship exists between citizenship fatigue and organizational commitment. Considering the previously stated hypotheses and their arguments:

H₄: PO fit has an indirect relationship with (a) turnover intention and (b) organizational commitment through citizenship fatigue.

Methods

Sample

The population examined in this essay is employees from various organizations who work 20 or more hours per week. Studying individuals within only one organization would have had a negative impact on the study's external validity, and therefore members of various organizations were used. Sampling employees working 20 hours or more in their organizations has been a standard used in prior research for organizational behavior constructs (e.g., Wepfer, Allen, Brauchli, Jenny, & Bauer, 2018), and thus, this sample group was used in this study. Additionally, the selected sample frame ensures employees have regular contact with their organizations (via working a minimum of 20 hours per week), thus allowing measurement of specific constructs of interest.

This study used a convenience sample. The sample frame was students enrolled in business courses within the school of business at a midwestern college. This sample was selected due to the fact that the average age of students in the school of business is 26, and most

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students are working while attending school. For example, some are working in the manufacturing sector, while others are working in the service field, such as hospitality. Some are working in front line positions, supervisory positions, and departmental management roles. In addition to convenience, utilizing working adults as the sample also follows prior research where similar constructs were investigated (e.g., Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011). The researcher has relationships with multiple faculty members within the school of business and thus leveraged these relationships to increase the number of participants.

The targeted number of completed surveys was 285. This number is above the number suggested by Soper's (2018) power calculator, and thus should be sufficient. Soper's (2018) power calculator identifies the minimum sample size required in a study based on a number of factors, such as anticipated effect size and number of variables. Adhering to statistical power of a study helps increase the rigor of a study, as power represents the ability to adequately evaluate the study's hypothesis sufficiently (Devlin, 2018). This sample size is also supported by common statistical knowledge related to the sample size needed to analyze data using the data analysis techniques used in this study (PROCESS macro in SPSS). Specifically, either a sample of 200 or five times as many observations as variables used is acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). Therefore, the sample target of 285 is acceptable. A response rate of 20% was anticipated for this process. This estimate was based on the researcher's experience working with the anticipated sample frame. In previous studies looking at similar constructs (Bolino et al., 2015), a response rate was as high as 78%. In total, 206 usable surveys were collected, yielding a 15% response rate. This number is still in the acceptable range with respect to power based on Soper's (2018) power calculator and based on sample size knowledge (Hair et al., 2019).

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According to Rogelberg & Stanton (2007), low response rates can undermine the external validity of a study and produce misleading results. Thus, non-response bias was minimized by conducting three rounds of follow-up reminders to non-responders (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). Rogelberg and Stanton (2007) also commented on how respondents must be interested in the topics at hand. The survey questions were focused on employee attitudes and behaviors related to their work, and thus the researcher believed the employees would find the topics interesting. Additionally, established scales were utilized in this study, helping to implement the benchmarking analysis technique in dealing with non-response bias (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). The established surveys did not contain controversial or embarrassing questions regarding the respondents' attitudes. Finally, respondents were assured that their responses would be anonymous and confidential.

Data Collection

A cross-sectional research design focused on participants at the individual level was used in this essay. Cross-sectional data were used as this has traditionally been the research design when studying the constructs in question (e.g., Bolino et al., 2015). A cross-sectional design is appropriate as this study looked at variation in participants over a single point in time (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Data were collected from participants using an electronic survey. Surveys were used as they can efficiently and effectively assess participants by pinpointing concerns, observe long-term trends, and monitor impact, among other uses (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). Further, surveys were used as these have traditionally been the data collection tools used for the constructs of interest in existing research (e.g., Bolino et al., 2015; Jin et al., 2018).

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Common method bias is “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent” (P. M. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003, p. 879). These errors can lead to issues of validity and inaccurate conclusions. Applying suggestions provided by P. M. Podsakoff et al. (2003) to deal with common method bias, this study utilized existing measurement scales, provided clear and concise instructions, and communicated the protection and anonymity of respondents and their data. Further, this study measured the constructs of interest at two separate times. The PO fit and citizenship fatigue was measured at Time 1 (T1). One week later, turnover intention and organizational commitment was measured at Time 2 (T2).

Social desirability bias is when a survey respondent answers questions that would generally be perceived to be endorsed by others (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In other words, survey responses are artificial in that the respondent is focused on providing answers that are more socially acceptable instead of honestly answering the questions. This would thus cause inaccurate responses to the survey. To help reduce social desirability bias as suggested by Bryman and Bell (2015), existing scales were utilized and anonymity of responses was guaranteed to participants at the onset of the surveys.

Internal validity helps to determine how confident a researcher can be that an independent variable impacts a dependent variable (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Many of the threats to internal validity are related to an experimental research design and thus not applicable in this current essay. Bryman and Bell (2015) explained when cross-sectional data are utilized, it is challenging to infer causal relationships. As such, this essay is not making causal claims but instead is looking at correlational relationships that exist between constructs of interest.

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External validity refers to how much the results of a study can be extrapolated and generalized to a population from which the sample was drawn (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The sample represents working adults in the United States, representing various organizations. The sample was selected due to the external validity of the frame (e.g., participants representing various organizations). Further, the college where the participants attend school is in a midwestern town with a population of around 70,000. While this is not considered a large city, the physical location of the city has characteristics of an urban and rural setting. With that said, the sample is still a convenience sample. When non-random methods of sampling are employed, external validity can more easily be questioned. This issue is addressed later in the limitations section.

Variables

All variables used in this essay were measured from existing scales from peer-reviewed academic research, increasing the validity and reliability of the results. Variables were measured at two points in time and were self-reported by participants. Specifically, the independent variable construct of PO fit was measured with an existing scale from Bright (2008). This survey contained four items and was measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). A sample question from this measurement scale is, “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.” The construct of PO fit was measured at T1. The mediating variable of citizenship fatigue was measured with an existing scale from Bolino et al. (2015). This survey contained six items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). A sample question from this measurement scale is “because of going the extra mile for my organization, I feel ‘on edge’ about various things.” Citizenship fatigue was measured at T1. The dependent variable of turnover intention was measured with an existing

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scale from Moynihan & Pandey (2008). This survey contained one item measured on a 5-point Likert scale. A question from this measurement scale is, “How often do you look for job opportunities outside of this organization?” While a one-item scale is not ideal in the sense that reliability figures cannot be determined, one item measures for turnover intention are well established in prior literature to measure the construct (Bertelli & Lewis, 2013; Choi, 2009; Kim & Wiggins, 2011; Moynihan & Pandey, 2008; Wynen & de Beeck, 2014). Turnover intention was measured at T2. The final dependent variable of organizational commitment was measured with an existing scale from Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). This survey contained 15 items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). A sample question from this measurement scale is “I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.” The construct of PO fit was measured at T2. This study’s control variables were age, gender, tenure with organization, and level within company. These control variables were utilized due to their previous use in similar studies (Bolino et al., 2015; Jin et al., 2018). All measurement scales are in the appendix.

Procedure

Instructors within the school of business at the college were asked to voluntarily participate in the distribution of the survey to the potential participants (students). In exchange for their time, participants were offered extra credit; they were also offered an alternative assignment if they wanted extra credit but did not wish to participate in the survey. Participants were informed that they were not required to participate. Instructors were informed of the study, its purpose, and the directions and instructions for them to follow if they decided they wanted to provide this opportunity to their students.

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Each participating instructor distributed instructions for participants online in their course's learning management system. All instructions and distribution material were created by the researcher to ensure consistency in direction distribution. There were three rounds of instructions spanning the course of three weeks.

The first week's instructions had three purposes. First, to inform participants of the opportunity. Second, to provide an overview of the logistics of participation. Examples of the logistics needing explanation include but are not limited to how the survey would be distributed over two weeks and the fact that participants would obtain a unique code to match T1 and T2 surveys. The third and final purpose of the first week's instructions was to get participants to sign up to participate in the study itself. Participants signed up by sharing their school email addresses, where the survey was distributed during both weeks two and three.

The second week's instructions were distributed via email to participants. These instructions contained an official script and the study's URL to the appropriate Qualtrics survey. The script contained all needed directions for completion of the survey, including institutional review board required disclosures and explicit communication following all ethical guidelines (e.g., no penalty for discontinuing). Week 2's survey measured PO fit and citizenship fatigue (T1 measurement). Participants were sent reminder messages on Wednesday and Friday to complete the week's survey. Also, instructors who were offering this opportunity to their students posted reminders in each class's learning management system. All reminder messages were developed and implemented by the researcher.

The third week's process followed the same format as the second week's process. Week 3's survey measured turnover intention and organizational commitment (T2 measurement). Participants were given a unique code used to match their surveys from T1 and T2. Upon

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completion of the T1 and T2 surveys, participants were provided an electronic certificate of completion which was to be turned in to their instructors for their extra credit.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected from this essay were evaluated using regression on SPSS software. The data were collected and entered into SPSS software. The data were cleaned, utilizing a listwise deletion technique to deal with any missing variables. Next, Cronbach's alpha was calculated via SPSS to determine internal reliability of the measurement scales via factor analysis. Upon maximizing alpha levels and ensuring all alpha levels were higher than .70 but ideally .80 (Nunnally, 1978), regression analysis was used to evaluate the variables to test the hypothesized relationships among them. Regression is appropriate in this essay as the research questions associated with this study are concerned with determining the relationship between different variables. Regression helps to determine relationships between different variables (Wooldridge, 2016). Further, regression analysis has been used in similar studies addressing the constructs of interest (Bolino et al., 2015).

Finally, to test for mediation in the model, the PROCESS macro in SPSS was utilized (Hayes, 2017). PROCESS uses an ordinary least squares (OLS) analytical framework which helps to identify indirect effects in mediation models (Hayes, 2017). Bootstrap methods are implemented in the PROCESS macro as this helps infer both unmediated and mediated models. Bootstrapping is utilized to help test hypotheses when the distribution of data is unknown (Einarsen, Skogstad, Rørvik, Lande, & Nielsen, 2016).

Results

The following chapter provides a statistical analysis of the cross-sectional survey collected at two points in time. Upon cleaning of the data via listwise deletion, 206 usable surveys were analyzed. This number is an acceptable number with respect to statistical power, as 200 surveys or five times the number of variables in the study were needed (Hair et al., 2019; Soper, 2018). The chapter describes the results extracted from the data analysis process via SPSS 27, including factor analysis and the PROCESS macro.

Factor Analysis

All survey instruments used in this essay came from established scales from peer-reviewed journals. Internal consistency represents how much each item on a scale measures the same construct (Devlin, 2018). To conduct a test of internal consistency a factor analysis was conducted. The factor analysis determined which survey questions to include in the analysis of data, along with establishing a measurement of internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha. In terms of what is considered an acceptable alpha level, many cite a .70 level as appropriate, but it is ideal for the alpha to be .80 or greater (Nunnally, 1978). Factor analysis in SPSS was used to identify the items for each of the constructs, along with their corresponding Cronbach's alpha score. Table 1 displays the factor analysis results for all constructs. Note that the turnover intention construct was measured using a one scale item, and thus a corresponding Cronbach's alpha score could not be computed. One item measures for turnover intention are well established in prior literature (Bertelli & Lewis, 2013; Choi, 2009; Kim & Wiggins, 2011; Moynihan & Pandey, 2008; Wynen & de Beeck, 2014).

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Table 1

Factor Analysis Results for Study Constructs

Scale Items	Factors			
	Person– Organization Fit ($\alpha = .838$)	Citizenship Fatigue ($\alpha = .939$)	Organizational Commitment ($\alpha = .951$)	~ Turnover Intention ($\alpha = n/a$)
My values and goals are very similar to the values and goals of my organization.	.894			
I feel a strong sense of belongingness to my organization.	.866			
What this organization stands for is important to me.	.850			
I often lack energy because I go beyond my job duties at work.		.931		
I feel worn out because I go beyond the call of duty for my organization.		.926		
Doing so much for my organization leaves me mentally or physically exhausted.		.923		
Volunteering to take on extra tasks and assignments at work has left me feeling drained.		.898		
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.			.913	
This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.			.889	
I find that my values and the organization’s values are very similar.			.874	
I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.			.868	
I really care about the fate of this organization.			.847	
I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined.			.830	
Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.			.830	
For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.			.808	
Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization’s policies on important matters of relating to its employees.			.795	
How often do you look for job opportunities outside of this organization?				~ n/a

Note. ~ = One item scale used for construct measurement. Original adopted scales found in the appendix.

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Table 2

Descriptive Statistics, Variable Correlations, and Significance Levels

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Variables							
			Person–Organization Fit	Citizenship Fatigue	Org Commitment	Turnover Intention	Age	Gender	Tenure with Org	Level in Company
Person–Org Fit	3.8786	0.91233	1	-.362**	.772**	-.515**	.014	.089	-.154*	-.197**
Citizenship Fatigue	3.1201	1.09814		1	-.617**	-.389**	-.048	-.065	.002	-.097
Org Commitment	4.9444	1.47902			1	-.652**	.034	.069	-.128	-.100
Turnover Intention	2.8107	1.14256				1	0.00	.117	.110	-.090
Age	1.95	0.999					1	.136	-.441**	-.187**
Gender	1.74	0.438						1	.013	-.002
Tenure with Org	3.49	0.860							1	.212**
Level in Company	2.56	0.754								1

Note. Age (1 = 18–24, 2 = 25–34, 3 = 35–44, 4 = 45–54, 5 = 55–64, 6 = 65+); Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female); Tenure (1 = 12+ years, 2 = 8–11 years, 3 = 4–7 years, 4 = 0–3 years); Level in Company (1 = Top management, 2 = Supervisory Position, 3 = Employee without a supervisory function, 4 = Trainee/intern). All measurement scales can be found in the appendix.

p* < .05, two-tailed; *p* < .01, two-tailed.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all variables included in this essay are found in Table 2. When looking at the construct of interest in this study, citizenship fatigue, the construct was negatively associated with PO fit ($r = -.362, p < .01$), organizational commitment ($r = -.617, p < .01$), and turnover intention ($r = -.389, p < .01$). In contrast, age, gender, tenure with organization, and level within company had minor and insignificant relationships with citizenship fatigue.

To test hypotheses H_1 – H_3 (examining the relationships between PO fit, citizenship fatigue, turnover intention, and organizational commitment) and H_4 (PO fit has an indirect relationship with turnover intention and organizational commitment through citizenship fatigue), a simple mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS per Hayes (2013). Bootstrapping was set to 5,000 resamples. A significant and negative relationship was then found between PO fit and citizenship fatigue ($b = -0.4625, p < .001$), supporting H_1 . Citizenship fatigue was positively related to turnover intention ($b = 0.2646, p < .001$) and negatively related to organizational commitment ($b = -0.1972, p < .01$), supporting H_2 and H_3 , respectively. Regarding mediation, there was a significant unconditional indirect association established between PO fit and turnover intention through citizenship fatigue ($b = -0.122$; 95% BCa CI = -0.20 – 0.05), thus supporting H_{4a} . Finally, there was a significant unconditional indirect association established between PO fit and organizational commitment through citizenship fatigue ($b = -0.09$; 95% BCa CI = 0.027 – 0.17), thus supporting H_{4b} . Therefore, all results were consistent with this study's theoretical predictions.

Discussion

Numerous studies have incorporated OCB, making it an extremely popular construct in organizational behavior literature (N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2009). Therefore, it was surprising to find a dearth of papers related to the construct of citizenship fatigue. Based on the suggestions by Bolino et al. (2015), this essay highlights specific constructs that both impact citizenship fatigue and also help identify how employees deal with citizenship fatigue. By applying the COR theory, the four hypotheses in this essay were supported. The construct PO fit was negatively related to citizenship fatigue (H_1), citizenship fatigue was positively related to turnover intention (H_2) and negatively related to organizational commitment (H_3). Finally, the PO fit was shown to have an indirect relationship with turnover intention and organizational commitment through citizenship fatigue (H_{4a} and H_{4b}).

These findings support and align with prior research applying Hobfoll's (1989, 2001) COR theory. Specifically, when employees have the resources they need to deal with stress, stress is less likely to occur (Hobfoll, 1989). In this essay, resources needed to deal with stress were represented by PO fit and stress was represented by citizenship fatigue. This was in line with Mackey et al. (2017) when they determined that perceptions of organizational fit can be considered a resource in the context of the COR theory and thus have a favorable effect on employee stress. Next, when employees experience stress, they are likely to conserve resources and maintain a defensive posture against the organization and conserve resources (Hobfoll, 1989). In this essay, when employees experience citizenship fatigue, they maintain a defensive posture by reducing their organizational commitment and conserving their resources by looking for jobs elsewhere (i.e., turnover intention). These findings are supported by research recently

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done that states stress negatively impacts different types of organizational commitment (Garg & Dhar, 2014; Saadeh & Suifan, 2019).

The findings of this study contribute to the vast literature associated with employee stress and OCB. Specifically, the construct of citizenship fatigue is relatively new. In the first paper to identify citizenship fatigue as a construct, Bolino et al. (2015) stated the need to better understand what impacts citizenship fatigue and how employees deal with citizenship fatigue. The framework developed in this paper shows both an antecedent and consequences associated with this new construct. Therefore, this paper helps to incrementally expand this new area of the OCB literature, as called upon by Bolino et al. (2015). Knowing that PO fit impacts citizenship fatigue within the context of the COR theory, scholars can conceptualize further antecedents of citizenship fatigue.

Further, because “employees who experience citizenship fatigue feel frustrated or underappreciated” (Bolino et al., 2015, p. 15), this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by showing how employee attitudes are impacted by citizenship fatigue. Both turnover intentions and organizational commitment were identified as consequences of citizenship fatigue. Since research has shown that the attitudes investigated impact employee behaviors such as voluntary turnover (Albrecht & Andreetta, 2011; Griffeth et al., 2000), this is critical knowledge for both scholars and practitioners.

This paper also provides further evidence that the citizenship fatigue construct is distinctly different from other forms of stress in the workplace (e.g., role overload, burnout), but still can be explained within the context of other forms of stress via the COR theory. With a dearth of existing papers on citizenship fatigue, this type of triangulated support for this new construct is beneficial.

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Related to these findings from a practitioner perspective, it appears that PO fit is an essential resource for helping employees reduce stress and maintain loyalty to their organizations. Therefore, it is critical that practitioners avoid hiring employees quickly for the sake of hiring employees and take the time to invest in hiring processes that can better identify PO fit. These specific hiring practices are beyond the scope of this current essay. By having a good PO fit, managers are more likely to find employees who may not get tired of going above and beyond and experience citizenship fatigue. This, in turn, will help employees to remain committed to their organization and reduce the likelihood that employees will be looking for jobs elsewhere. In short, by reducing citizenship fatigue, employees are more likely to stay with an organization. This, in turn, saves time and money for companies in both the short and long term. Finally, by reducing citizenship fatigue, which is shown to have a negative impact on future occurrences of OCBs (Bolino et al., 2015), organizations are more likely to have employees who engage in OCBs. As previously mentioned, there are numerous benefits for organizations and individuals who engage in OCBs.

Limitations and Future Research

This essay contributes to the existing body of knowledge and has practical implications for practitioners; however, no study is without its limitations. For example, in this essay there was no specific target industry. Data collection and results were generated from multiple organizations in the Midwest of the United States. In addition, the sample of the essay was extracted from a location that would not be considered rural, but not considered urban either. Therefore, future studies can confirm that this study's findings are generalizable to specific industries in specific regions of the United States or other countries.

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Regarding the temporal aspects of measurement, this essay measured at T1 and T2. This type of measurement can lead to fewer individuals participating in surveys at T2 than those who participated at T1. Participants were provided with three reminders at each point in time, but with a temporal aspect of measurement, there is always a possibility of a participant dropping off. Additionally, since cross-sectional survey data were collected, causal claims cannot be made regarding the results of the essay. In addition, the sample did come from a college in the midwestern United States. While the sample included students who were an average age of 26 years old and working, these are still students and other scholars have called into question the use of students in sampling (Sears, 1986). Therefore, future studies can replicate and extend the findings of this essay in a setting where students are not part of the sample. Also related to the methodology of the essay, a convenience sample was used. When a convenience sample is employed, external validity can come into question. This also aligns with the aforementioned recommendation to utilize a non-student sample that uses random selection.

Since the construct of citizenship fatigue is so new, the recommendation by Bolino et al. (2015) can still be applied for future studies. Specifically, future studies can attempt to identify additional constructs that impact citizenship fatigue and find ways in which employees cope with citizenship fatigue. Also, in the context of the COR theory, finding other ways in which an employee would maintain a defensive posture and/or conserve resources when confronted with citizenship fatigue would likely provide promising findings. The dearth of existing papers related to citizenship fatigue provides many interesting research opportunities in the future and it is hoped that future scholars can build off the existing framework in this paper to better refine the understanding of citizenship fatigue.

Conclusion

Citizenship fatigue is a relatively new construct associated with one of the most common constructs in organizational behavior literature, OCB. Therefore, one would expect to find many papers associated with citizenship fatigue, a type of stress. A quick review of the existing literature will indicate that little is known about citizenship fatigue. This essay took a step in better understanding citizenship fatigue by applying the COR theory and laying out a framework to better understand antecedents and consequences. Findings in this essay indicated that when employees experience citizenship fatigue, they are more likely to have turnover intentions and be less loyal to their organizations. Before relying too heavily on specific individuals who exhibit OCBs, which is all too easy, practitioners need to consider the consequences associated with employees becoming tired of being the good soldier.

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Appendix

Measurement Scales

Person–Organization Fit (Bright, 2008)

1 = *strongly agree*, 5 = *strongly disagree*

- 1) My values and goals are very similar to the values and goals of my organization.
- 2) I am not very comfortable within the culture of my organization.
- 3) I feel a strong sense of belongingness to my organization.
- 4) What this organization stands for is important to me.

Citizenship Fatigue (Bolino et al., 2015)

1 = *strongly agree*, 5 = *strongly disagree*

- 1) Because of going the extra mile for my organization, I feel “on edge” about various things.
- 2) I feel worn out because I go beyond the call of duty for my organization.
- 3) Doing so much for my organization leaves me mentally or physically exhausted.
- 4) I often lack energy because I go beyond my job duties at work.
- 5) I am tired of going beyond the call of duty for my organization.
- 6) Volunteering to take on extra tasks and assignments at work has left me feeling drained.

Turnover Intention (Moynihan & Pandey, 2008)

5 = *constantly*, 4 = *very often*, 3 = *sometimes*, 2 = *not very often*, 1 = *never*

- 1) How often do you look for job opportunities outside of this organization?

Organizational Commitment (Mowday et al., 1979)

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1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*

- 1) I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
- 2) I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
- 3) I feel very little loyalty to this organization (reverse).
- 4) I would accept almost any type of assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
- 5) I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.
- 6) I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
- 7) I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work were similar (reverse).
- 8) This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
- 9) It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization (reverse).
- 10) I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined.
- 11) There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely (reverse).
- 12) Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters of relating to its employees (reverse).
- 13) I really care about the fate of this organization.
- 14) For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.
- 15) Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part (reverse).

Control Variables

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Identify your age:

- 1) 18–24
- 2) 25–34
- 3) 35–44
- 4) 45–54
- 5) 55–64
- 6) 65+

Identify your gender:

- 1) Male
- 2) Female

Identify the group which you belong to within your company:

- 1) Top management
- 2) Supervisory position
- 3) Employee without a supervisory function
- 4) Trainee/intern

How long have you been with your organization?

- 1) 12+ years
- 2) 8–11 years
- 3) 4–7 years
- 4) 0–3 years

ESSAY 2: IS FRIENDSHIP THE BEST SHIP OF ALL? AN EXPLORATION INTO THE
DARK SIDE OF WORKPLACE FRIENDSHIP

ABSTRACT

This essay investigates two growing areas of interest: the dark side of workplace friendships and the integration of work and non-work life. Specifically, in this essay, the relationship between workplace friendship and psychological detachment and overall well-being (represented by emotional exhaustion and work-life balance) is investigated. This essay hypothesizes that workplace friendships are negatively related directly to psychological detachment, emotional exhaustion, and work-life balance. Further, this essay also hypothesizes that psychological detachment is negatively related to emotional exhaustion and positively related to work-life balance. This study applied the conservation of resources (COR) theory and the border and boundary theories and utilized a cross-sectional research design collecting data at two points in time. Employees from diverse organizations in a midwestern town in the United States were utilized as the sample population. The relationships of the constructs were analyzed via regression analysis. No hypotheses were supported and academic and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: Workplace Friendship, Psychological Detachment, Well-Being, Exhaustion, Work-Life Balance, Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory, Border/Boundary Theory

Essay 2: Is Friendship the Best Ship of All? An Exploration into the Dark Side of Workplace
Friendship

“I love all my children equally,” said Lucille Bluth in *Arrested Development*. While Lucille may feel this way, one look around a contemporary workplace will hint that employees do not all feel the same about their coworkers. Observation of employees reveals that some have strict work-related relationships with coworkers while others have actual friendships with coworkers. Becoming friends with a coworker may begin to blur the boundaries between work and non-work life; as this blurring occurs, we know that work has become more flexible (Wepfer, Allen, Brauchli, Jenny, & Bauer, 2018). This workplace flexibility has a positive correlation with people working more than they have in the past (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010), which means more time spent interacting with coworkers. A recent Gallup study revealed that 30% of participants reported having best friends at work (Rath, 2006). Workplace friendships are defined as “a nonromantic, voluntary, and informal relationship between current coworkers that is characterized by communal norms and socioemotional goals” (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018, p. 3). When one thinks of the word friendship, there are usually positive associations with this word. Indeed, there has been extensive support for the positive impacts of workplace friendships. For example, employees who have friends at work report higher levels of engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction (Rath, 2006).

However, while the literature has established positive outcomes associated with workplace friendships, there is a growing interest in understanding the dark side of workplace friendships (Methot, Lepine, Podsakoff, & Christian, 2016; Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). Specifically, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) called for a more in-depth understanding of how workplace friendships produce adverse outcomes. Methot et al. (2016) commented that little

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knowledge exists of how workplace friendships might harm employee outcomes. Additionally, due to the aforementioned blurring of work and non-work life, there has been increased conversation both by practitioners and scholars about how this blurring impacts employee well-being (Wepfer et al., 2018). The interest by both practitioners and scholars in the outcomes associated with blurring of both work and non-work life, along with interest in the dark side of workplace friendship, provides an interesting opportunity for research. Methot et al. (2016) appear to agree, as they concluded their paper by calling for future research looking at workplace friendships in the context of work and non-work life blurring.

By applying the conservation of resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the border and boundary theories (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000), this essay addresses these gaps. First, this essay examines how workplace friendship impacts psychological detachment from work. Next, this essay determines how psychological detachment impacts overall well-being, represented by emotional exhaustion and work–life balance. Finally, this essay examines the relationship between workplace friendships and employee exhaustion and work–life balance. The COR theory and the border and boundary theories have been commonly utilized in the existing literature related to the constructs of interest.

The results of this essay have important implications for both practitioners and scholars. As previously mentioned, there has been an increased interest in the dark side of workplace friendships. A review of the literature shows that there is a need to first understand how workplace friendships produce adverse outcomes. This essay takes a step to close this gap. Once a greater understanding of how workplace friendships produce adverse consequences, both practitioners and scholars can then take steps to minimize these adverse outcomes.

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This essay extends the literature on the integration of work and non-work life and the overall impact on employees' well-being. There appear to be few papers that look at actual integration of work and non-work life (as opposed to intentions to integrate or not integrate) and the impact on general well-being (Wepfer et al., 2018). From a practitioner's perspective, a better understanding of how workplace friendships impact employees' overall well-being (specifically exhaustion and work–life balance) can help managers develop specific strategies that will benefit their employees more holistically.

This essay is organized as follows. First, the literature review focuses on the constructs of interest: workplace friendship, psychological detachment, and overall well-being (made up of employee exhaustion, and work–life balance). Second, the theoretical model, theoretical background, and hypothesis development are presented. Third, the essay identifies the methods used in the study. Finally, the essay then ends with results, discussion, limitations and future research, and conclusion sections.

Literature Review

Workplace Friendships

Friendships are prevalent throughout our lives, playing a role in both our personal and professional lives. This prevalence has prompted social scientists to study friendship for decades (Fehr, 1996), both inside and outside of the work setting. This body of work on friendship has helped us understand that friendships are unique compared to other relationships in at least four ways. First, friendships are a voluntary relationship (Adams & Blieszner, 1994; Fehr, 1996). For example, one selects friends but not relatives. Second, friendship is informal in the sense that there are not prescriptive steps and procedures to follow (Adams & Blieszner, 1994). This

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informality differs from a mentor–mentee relationship one may have at work where there can be policies and procedures to follow, thus making it more formal. Third, friendships have communal norms, meaning one provides support based on the needs of friends, not providing support based on what has been provided (M. Clark & Mills, 1979). Finally, socioemotional goals are present in friendships, where a primary focus and motivation of the friendship is to promote well-being through belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Due to the multifaceted contexts and disciplines in which friendships have been studied, definitions of friendships are numerous. This essay utilizes the previously mentioned definition set forth by Pillemer and Rothbard (2018).

The studying of workplace friendships has revealed a range of positive and negative outcomes for individuals and organizations. In terms of positive outcomes, being a friend with a coworker appears to produce less tension between the two parties when compared to the tension between less close friends (Bridge & Baxter, 1992). Olk and Elvira (2001) determined a higher level of trust between workplace friends than nonworkplace friends, supporting the idea that friends are less cautious in their communication with each other (Sias & Cahill, 1998). Relationships with peers have also been shown to increase information sharing and mutually provide emotional support, in turn developing long-term friendships beyond that of the working relationship (Kram & Isabella, 1985; Sias, 2005). More recently, studies have shown that employees who have more friendships at work are more productive than those who do not have friends, have higher retention rates, are more engaged, and have higher levels of job satisfaction (Rath, 2006). Further, relationships can help to increase creativity within the workplace (Lu et al., 2017). This stream of research stretches decades back, identifying many positive impacts of workplace friendships.

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However, this positive focus on friendship has spawned a growing body of research focused on the dark side of workplace friendships. Several studies have identified tensions that exist when workplace friendships are present (Ingram & Zou, 2008; Methot et al., 2016). These studies are in contradiction to studies which have shown that less tension can exist between two friends. Further, escalation of tension can lead to socially undermining or betraying each other (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002; Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998). Additionally, if a coworker feels left out of a workplace friendship clique, subgroups can form, impacting performance-related issues (Carton & Cummings, 2012). Workplace friendships can deter individuals from always focusing on job-related tasks (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). Specifically, due to the communal norms that exist within a workplace friendship, one's attention may be pulled in the direction of the needs of the friend, such as listening or providing advice (Methot et al., 2015). The attention that a friend may need is usually unplanned (e.g., showing up to one's office to discuss a challenging issue) and thus can further impede one's ability to focus on job-related tasks (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). Pillemer & Rothbard (2018) also argued that the closer the friendship, the more distracted one will be from job-related tasks. In their paper, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) called for more structure and understanding related to the dark side of friendship. This essay takes a step to further this understanding.

As it relates to the constructs in this study, there appears to be a gap connecting workplace friendships and psychological detachment. Further, a study of a temporary work setting (a summer camp lasting a total of 45 workdays) identified a negative relationship between team friendships and emotional exhaustion (Kruger, Bernstein, & Botman, 1995). Due to the temporary nature of the job setting, one can argue that a more permanent work setting may provide better generalizability of the results. Upon review of the literature, this also remains a

gap. Closely related, Methot et al. (2016) utilized the COR theory and found a positive relationship between workplace friendship network size and exhaustion. These two studies (Kruger et al., 1995; Methot et al., 2016) presented conflicting results and thus provide an opportunity for clarification through this essay. These conflicting results may have been impacted based on the settings in which the studies took place (e.g., permanent and nonpermanent workplace settings). Finally, upon reviewing the literature linking workplace friendships to work–life balance, there appears to be another gap; little, if any, research appears to exist on this topic. A recent study showed that despite perceived constraints regarding time, employees make time for friendships, blurring the lines between work and life (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). Thus, this is an opportunity to examine these understudied relationships.

The friendship literature reveals a rich construct of study which spans numerous disciplines. The workplace friendship literature showcases a construct that promises many positives (e.g., emotional support) and, more recently, the negatives (e.g., less focus on job-related tasks) of workplace friendships, which have been of particular interest to researchers. The literature has examined friendship utilizing theories such as the COR theory and the border and boundary theories. Despite this richness in the literature, gaps remain, specifically as related to shedding more light on the dark side of workplace friendships and the relationship with psychological detachment, exhaustion, and work–life balance. All are evaluated in this essay.

Psychological Detachment

Psychological detachment (also referred to simply as detachment) is “a state where one mentally disconnects from work and does not think about work-related issues when away from the job,” or in simpler terms switching off from work (Sonnentag, 2012, p. 114). Sonnentag (2012) specified that this can only happen when one is away from the job and must include being

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physically away from job-related activities (e.g., not taking a work-related phone call) and mentally away from work (e.g., not thinking about a work-related conflict).

A review of the literature shows that psychological detachment spans various areas of psychology, including organizational, health, and family psychology. This span communicates the construct's importance to overall well-being and job-related outcomes. For example, detachment has been considered essential for individuals as they recover from work and feel restored (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). Studies also have shown that when employees psychologically detach in the evenings, the employees experience many positive benefits on that day. For example, employees experience lower levels of negative affect and higher levels of positive affect (Feuerhahn, Sonnentag, & Woll, 2014) and overall better sleep quality (Clinton, Conway, & Sturges, 2017; Sonnentag, Binnewies, & Mojza, 2008; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007) on days they psychologically disconnect.

Psychological detachment is often paired with border and boundary theories. These theories discuss how individuals create, manage, and move across boundaries between the different domains (primarily work and life) in one's life (Ashforth et al., 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000). Further exploration of these theories is discussed in later sections in this essay. Within the detachment and border and boundary theories, a number of studies have looked at how an individual manages the boundaries in life, falling on a continuum of integration or segmentation (Derks, van Mierlo, & Schmitz, 2014; Hahn & Dormann, 2013; Park, Fritz, & Jex, 2011; Wepfer et al., 2018). Integration and segmentation refer to how much an individual keeps work and family roles separate (Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006). Integration occurs when an individual's boundaries are flexible (the employee determines where and when to work) and permeable (domains are easily entered into, either physically or mentally; Kossek et al., 2006; Nippert-Eng,

1996). In other words, integration is when individuals mix work and personal life, blurring the two. Segmentation occurs when an individual's boundaries are inflexible and impermeable and an individual maintains strict boundaries between domains (Kossek et al., 2006; Nippert-Eng, 1996).

When evaluating studies involving both psychological detachment and integration and segmentation, patterns emerge. Specifically, an individual's preference for segmentation is positively related to psychological detachment (Hahn & Dormann, 2013; Park et al., 2011). More recently, a study found a negative relationship between actual integration and recovery activities (often a larger category to which psychological detachment belongs; Wepfer et al., 2018). Finally, there appears to be no explicit connection between workplace friendship and psychological detachment. This essay fills this gap.

General Well-being: Emotional Exhaustion and Work–Life Balance

When reviewing organizational behavior literature associated with well-being, two types of well-being emerge: general well-being and work-related well-being. As the name suggests, general well-being relates to constructs associated with one's life in general, such as anxiety or depression. In turn, work-related well-being is related to work-specific constructs, such as job satisfaction or work engagement (Wepfer et al., 2018). General well-being is more of a holistic psychological analysis of an individual. General wellbeing has been identified as consisting of both affective and cognitive evaluation of lives (Diener, 2000) and was thus utilized in this study. As in previous studies, general well-being's affective and cognitive components are represented by emotional exhaustion and work–life balance, respectively (Wepfer et al., 2018).

Emotional Exhaustion

The construct of emotional exhaustion (also called exhaustion) dates back to the 1970s as one dimension of the multidimensional construct burnout (Maslach, 1976). Of the multiple dimensions of burnout, exhaustion has been the most commonly cited in academic research (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). The definition of exhaustion is “feelings of being overextended and depleted of one’s emotional and physical resources” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 399).

Emotional exhaustion has become a significant construct of interest to researchers due to its essential outcomes for both individuals and organizations (Halbesleben, Wheeler, & Rossi, 2012). Exhaustion has appeared in the literature related to many disciplines, such as nursing, education, and business. One specific example is that exhaustion has been found to have a positive relationship with stress-related health outcomes for employees (Maslach et al., 2001). Further, exhaustion is positively related to turnover intentions and negatively related to organizational commitment, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003).

Antecedents of emotional exhaustion are abundant in the literature. Task complexity, working harder, and internal locus of control all have a positive relationship with exhaustion, while supervisor support and job autonomy have a negative relationship with exhaustion (Ito & Brotheridge, 2003). Further, Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) conducted a meta-analysis concluding that a lack of psychological detachment is related to poor well-being. In explaining these outcomes, many studies have used the COR theory as a theoretical frame.

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As previously stated in the review of the friendship literature, one study identified a negative relationship between team friendships and exhaustion in a temporary work setting, a summer camp lasting a total of 45 days (Kruger et al., 1995). More recently, Methot et al. (2016) also utilized the COR theory and found a positive relationship with workplace friendship network size and exhaustion. Additionally, exhaustion has also been paired with content from the border and boundary theories, as well. For example, studies have looked at the impact of either integration or segmentation on emotional exhaustion (e.g., Wepfer et al., 2018). In the Wepfer et al. (2018) study, recovery activities had a negative relationship with exhaustion.

Exhaustion has been extensively studied, identifying implications for both individuals and organizations. The COR theory and border and boundary theories have been applied to understand this construct better, and it has been previously determined that there are existing relationships between exhaustion and psychological detachment while there appear to be few studies that have examined the relationship between workplace friendships and exhaustion. This essay addresses this gap.

Work–Life Balance

Historically, work–life balance and other constructs such as work–family conflict or work–family enrichment have been synonymous (Allen, 2013). More recently, studies have begun utilizing work–life balance as a unique construct (Kossek, Valcour, & Lirio, 2014). These studies have cited that unlike work–family conflict or work–family enrichment, work–life balance does not link work and family (Greenhaus, Collins, & Shaw, 2003; Kossek et al., 2014). Instead, work–life balance is an overall individual assessment of compatibility between the different work and non-work (e.g., family, friends) roles in life (Allen, 2013). This definition is thus based on the individual’s perception of how well he or she balances the multiple roles in life

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and does not attempt to prescribe what balanced means (e.g., 50% time spent on work role and 50% time spent on non-work role). Upon review of the current literature, this definition appears to be most accepted and studied recently (Haar, Russo, Suñe, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2014; Russo, Shteigman, & Carmeli, 2016) and was thus used in this study.

Work–life balance has an important impact on our lives. Specifically, prior research has shown work–life balance is positively related to life and job satisfaction, as well as negatively related to depression and anxiety (Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska, 2009; Haar & White, 2013). Prior research on antecedents of work–life balance has shown a negative relationship with work hours, work demands, and family demands and a positive relationship with interactive quality time with children, supervisory support, and job autonomy (Haar, Sune, Russo, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2019; Milkie, Kendig, Nomaguchi, & Denny, 2010; Valcour, 2007). Additionally and not surprisingly, when personal time is infringed upon by work, individuals experience lower levels of work–life balance (Kossek et al., 2014).

Explicitly related to this essay, Wepfer et al. (2018) determined that, more generally, recovery activities are positively related to work–life balance. Research also has shown support for individuals who prefer to segment work and life as having higher levels of work–life balance (Mellner, Aronsson, & Kecklund, 2014). Looking beyond preferences to segment or integrate work, the actual integration of work and life produces lower levels of work–life balance (Li, Miao, Zhao, & Lehto, 2013). Finally, in a recent study, Wepfer et al. (2018) found an indirect relationship of actual integration impacting exhaustion, through recovery activities.

Within this border and boundary theories literature, and even more specifically within the integration and segmentation literature, there appears to be little content associated with friendship. In a recent paper, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) called for future research to

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investigate workplace friendships and the connection between border and boundary theories, specifically suggesting using the integration and segmentation framework as an argument. This essay fills this gap and makes that argument.

Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis Development

Figure 2 details the research model used in this essay; this is followed by an explanation of the theoretical framework and hypothesis development.

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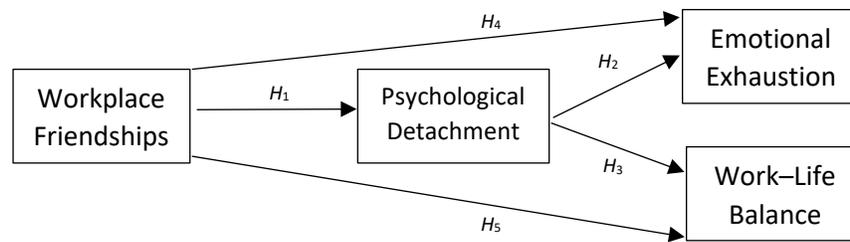


Figure 2. Research model for Essay 2.

Conservation of Resources Theory

Hobfoll (1989) conceptualized the COR theory which helps to explain how individuals deal with stress by demonstrating that individuals have the desire to possess, protect, and create resources. Resources are “objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies valued in their own right, or that are valued because they act as conduits to the achievement or protection of valued resources” (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 339).

When individuals are in a stressful situation, they need resources to negate the stress (Hobfoll, 1989). Additionally, when resources are not present, stress is more likely to occur (Hobfoll, 1989). For individuals, if resources continuously get expended but not replenished, the employee will experience stress and will take a defensive posture to try and conserve remaining resources to help deal with future demands (Hobfoll, 1989). Further, when individuals have their resources expended and not replenished, they may also look for opportunities to get their resources restored elsewhere (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). In sum, the COR theory is an individual-level theory that states that individuals need resources to deal with stressful situations.

Border and Boundary Theories

To better understand a world in which the lines between work and non-work (often referred to as family or life) domains were blurring, Nippert-Eng’s (1996) book helped to further develop border theory, which was suggested by S. C. Clark (2000), and boundary theory, originally put forth by Ashforth et al. (2000). It is human nature to develop and maintain boundaries (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Developing these boundaries around work and life is no exception. The boundaries that we create around work and life help us understand which roles we need to carry out, as well as how to interact with others (Ashforth et al., 2000). Yet crossing

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between boundaries can cause conflict and be a challenging process (Allen, Cho, & Meier, 2014). Boundary and border theories help us understand these boundaries, specifically relating to work and life domains.

Boundary theory's main focus is the different ways people create, maintain, or change boundaries, helping them to classify the world in which they live (Allen et al., 2014; Ashforth et al., 2000). The boundaries between work and life domains are cognitive, physical, and behavioral, which helps one differentiate between domains (Ashforth, et al., 2000). These boundaries can range from keeping work and family separate to blending work and family. Further, transitions from boundaries can be macro or micro (Ashforth et al., 2000). Macro transitions focus on large changes that are often permanent (e.g., a promotion) (Ashforth et al., 2000). Micro transitions frequently reoccur (e.g., commuting home) (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Border theory is a theory about work–family balance and suggests balance can be obtained, for example, based on factors such as the strength of boundaries between work and non-work domains (S. C. Clark, 2000). S. C. Clark (2000) also suggested that borders are crossed daily—physically, temporally, and psychologically—often facilitated by domain members (e.g., a spouse).

To determine the strength of a border or boundary, one must consider three factors (Ashforth et al., 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000). First, the flexibility of the domain refers to spatial and temporal restrictions on the job—the more flexible, the lesser the boundary or border (Ashforth et al., 2000). Second, permeability is how much one domain can enter another, either physically or psychologically—the greater the permeability, the lesser the boundary or border (Ashforth et al., 2000). The third is border blending; when permeability and flexibility are present, the

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blending of a border can occur (Ashforth et al., 2000). All three of these factors determine border strength.

While different scholars produced these two theories, much of the literature has viewed these not as two competing theories, but as two interpretations and extensions of Nippert-Eng's (1996) work (Allen et al., 2014). Much of the literature has adopted the term boundary instead of border, and thus, the term boundary will be used in this research moving forward. In summary, these two theories illustrate that individuals form boundaries around the different domains in life, and these boundaries can be developed, sustained, and crossed by individuals.

Workplace Friendships, Psychological Detachment, Emotional Exhaustion, and Work–Life Balance

Studies have shown that friendships can deter individuals from always focusing on job-related tasks (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). Specifically, one can direct his or her attention to the needs of a friend, such as listening or providing advice. The attention that a friend may need is often unplanned (e.g., showing up to one's office to discuss a challenging issue) and can thus further impede one's ability to focus on job-related tasks (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). Pillemer & Rothbard (2018) also argued that the closer the friendship, the more distracted one will be from job-related tasks. This distraction will ultimately mean less time to complete work-related tasks, and thus, the employee has less time to get work done. Having less time to get work done will increase the employee's workload (for example, now needing to get eight hours of work done in seven hours). An increased workload is an antecedent to workplace stress (Colligan & Higgins, 2005), which is an antecedent and negatively related to psychological detachment (Sonnentag, 2012).

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The COR theory states that employees need resources, such as time, to deal with workplace stressors, such as increased workload (Hofoll, 1989). When these resources are not present or not replenished, an employee will experience higher levels of stress (Hofoll, 1989). In the example of an employee being interrupted by their workplace friend, the employee being interrupted may experience an increased workload (e.g., a stressor) due to not having enough time to complete work-related tasks at work. To replenish the lost resource (time) to deal with the stressor (increased workload), the employee may take work home to compensate. When an employee brings work home, he or she is crossing borders and boundaries between work and non-work life. Research utilizing the border and boundary theories has shown that boundary crossing is negatively related to psychological detachment (Barber & Jenkins, 2014).

Further, referencing both the definition of friendship and what constitutes a strong border, one can deduce that workplace friendships can produce weak borders between both work and non-work life, thus causing one to integrate work and life. Having a workplace friend show up in one's office will blur the borders; which domain is one operating in? This sudden blurring of borders between work and non-work can be troublesome for individuals. Studies have shown that the integration of work and life are negatively related to recovery activities (e.g., psychological detachment; Wepfer et al., 2018). Considering all this:

H₁: Workplace friendships are negatively associated with psychological detachment.

The link between psychological detachment and overall well-being has been well established in research. Yet, this link has not yet been looked at in the context of workplace friendships. Related to the constructs making up overall well-being (exhaustion and work-life balance), Wepfer et al. (2018) identified recovery activities, such as psychological detachment, as having a negative relationship with exhaustion. This study confirmed a previous study that

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identified psychological detachment as being negatively related to emotional exhaustion (Fritz, Yankelevich, Zarubin, & Barger, 2010). Additionally, prior research has highlighted a negative relationship with work hours and a positive relationship with interactive quality time with children, as these relate to predictors of work–life balance (Milkie et al., 2010; Valcour, 2007). An increase in work hours means an individual has less time to psychologically detach from work, as the individual is at work more. An increase in interactive quality time with a spouse and children allows for an individual to not think about work-related items and thus helps to psychologically detach. Sonnentag and Fritz (2015) conducted a meta-analysis, concluding that a lack of psychological detachment is related to poor well-being. Further, recovery activities have been negatively related to exhaustion and positively associated with work–life balance (Wepfer et al., 2018).

As previously expressed for Hypothesis 1, workplace friendships will create an integration of work and life. Previous studies utilizing border and boundary theories have emphasized that an individual's preference for segmentation is positively related to psychological detachment (Hahn & Dormann, 2013; Park et al., 2011). Additionally, the actual integration of work and life has a negative relationship with recovery activities (Wepfer et al., 2018), such as psychological detachment. Individuals with preferences to segment work and life experience higher levels of work–life balance (Mellner et al., 2014). Similar to exhaustion, the actual integration of work and life produces lower levels of work–life balance (Li et al., 2013). Therefore, it is proposed:

H₂: Psychological detachment is negatively related to exhaustion.

H₃: Psychological detachment is positively related to work–life balance.

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A study of a temporary work setting (a summer camp) appears to be one of the earliest studies associated with workplace friendship and exhaustion (Kruger et al., 1995). In the study, workplace friendship was negatively related to exhaustion (Kruger et al., 1995). The temporary workplace setting must be taken into consideration when evaluating the results for external validity. A more recent study looked at this same relationship but in an environment that was more generalizable, as the participants came from permanent jobs; specifically, Methot et al. (2016) determined that multiplex network size (where a multiplex friendship is a workplace friendship) is positively related to exhaustion.

According to the COR theory, individuals need resources to cope with stress, and resources can be physical, temporal, informational, or something else (Hobfoll, 1989). When individuals do not have access to these resources or do not have expended resources replenished, they are likely to experience stress, which is an antecedent that is negatively related to exhaustion (Toppinen-Tanner, Kalimo, & Mutanen, 2002). In the context of the COR theory, prior studies have determined the effort a workplace friendship requires (e.g., time, energy, attention) drains an individual's resources due to the desire to maintain and improve the social bonds (Martínez-Íñigo, Poerio, & Totterdell, 2013; Methot et al., 2016). Additionally, these relationships create feelings of obligation and responsibility (Methot et al., 2016). As previously stated, individuals who have workplace friendships are likely to experience more workplace interruptions and thus have less time to complete work-related tasks. Since there is less time to complete work-related tasks, and time is a resource that when depleted, causes stress, it can, therefore, be inferred that:

H₄: Workplace friendship is positively related to exhaustion.

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Previous research has done little in terms of identifying a relationship between workplace friendships and overall well-being or subcomponents of well-being, such as work–life balance. Yet, a recent study showed that employees are making time for friendships, thus blurring the lines between work and life (Pedersen & Lewis, 2012). Studies looking at general friendship (not workplace friendship) have identified a positive relationship between social activities, such as seeing friends, and overall well-being (Sonnentag, 2001). Additionally, in a recent paper, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) called for future research to investigate workplace friendships and the connection between border and boundary theories, specifically suggesting using the integration and segmentation framework as an argument.

As previously argued, work friends impact one’s ability to manage the borders of work and life, such that workplace friendships create an integration of work and life. Consider the workplace friends who go out for drinks after work. This time away from work has a chance to turn into a forum to discuss work-related issues, thus causing the integration of work and life and extending the work-related hours. Prior research has highlighted a negative relationship with work hours related to work–life balance (Valcour, 2007). Research has also shown support for individuals who prefer to segment work and life as having higher levels of work–life balance (Mellner et al., 2014). Within the border and boundary theories, explicitly discussing the integration and segmentation of work and life, integration of work and life has a negative relationship of work–life balance (Li et al., 2013). Therefore, because workplace friendships integrate both work and life for an employee, it is proposed:

H₅: Workplace friendships are negatively related to work–life balance.

Studies have shown that friendships can deter individuals from always focusing on job-related tasks (Sanchez-Burks, 2002). This deterrent of focus from job-related tasks ultimately

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means less time to complete work-related tasks. Having less time to complete job-related tasks, in effect, increases the employee's workload, which is an antecedent to workplace stress (Colligan & Higgins, 2005). The COR theory states that employees need resources, such as time, to deal with workplace stressors, such as increased workload (Hofoll, 1989). When these resources are not present, an employee experiences higher levels of stress (Hofoll, 1989). Workplace stress is an antecedent to and negatively relates to psychological detachment (Sonnentag, 2012).

Research utilizing the border and boundary theories has shown that boundary crossing is negatively related to psychological detachment (Barber & Jenkins, 2014). Referencing both the definition of friendship and what constitutes a strong border, it can be deduced that workplace friendships can produce weak borders between both work and non-work life, thus causing one to integrate both work and life. Studies also have shown that the integration of work and life are negatively related to recovery activities (e.g., psychological detachment; Wepfer et al., 2018). Taking all of this into consideration, a previous hypothesis in this study stated a negative relationship between workplace friendships and psychological detachment.

The link between psychological detachment and overall well-being has been well established in research. Recently, recovery activities were found to be negatively related to exhaustion and positively related to work–life balance (Wepfer et al., 2018).

As expressed for Hypothesis 1, workplace friendships create an integration of work and life. Previous studies utilizing border and boundary theories have emphasized that an individual's preference for segmentation is positively related to psychological detachment (Hahn & Dormann, 2013; Park et al., 2011). Additionally, the actual integration of work and life has a negative relationship with recovery activities (Wepfer et al., 2018), such as psychological

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detachment. Individuals with a preference to segment work and life experience higher levels of work–life balance (Mellner et al., 2014). Similar to exhaustion, the actual integration of work and life produces lower levels of work–life balance (Li et al., 2013). Therefore, considering the previously stated hypotheses and their arguments:

H₆: Workplace friendships have an indirect relationship with (a) emotional exhaustion and (b) work–life balance through psychological detachment.

Methods

Sample

The data collected for this essay was part of a larger data collection effort. The population for this essay included employees from various organizations who work at least 20 hours or more per week. This population was selected for the following reasons. First, previous studies looking at similar constructs of interest have used this sample population within their studies (Wepfer et al., 2018). Second, in previous studies that have looked at workplace friendships and their impact on some of the variables of interest (e.g., workplace friendship’s impact on exhaustion), the population consisted of employees in a temporary setting, a summer camp (Kruger et al., 1995). The population in this study allowed for a permanent work environment to be studied. Third, the selected population included individuals who work for various organizations. A population consisting of only one organization would harm the external validity of a study. Considering these points, utilizing this population should help the external validity of this essay.

This essay used a convenience sample. The participants were from a college in the midwestern United States, where the researcher has a relationship with faculty members in the

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school of business. These relationships helped to increase the number of participants in the study. This sample was also selected due to the fact that the average age of students in the school of business is 26 and most students work while attending school. This sample is more representative of working adults than more traditional undergraduate students.

The target number of completed, usable surveys was 285. This number is larger than the number suggested by Soper's (2018) power calculator and thus should be sufficient. Further, this sample size meets the criteria needed to analyze data using the data analysis techniques used in this study (PROCESS macro in SPSS). Either a sample of 200 or five times as many observations as variables used is acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). Therefore, the sample target of 285 is acceptable. A response rate of approximately 20% was anticipated. This estimate was based on the researcher's experience working with the sample frame. In total, 206 usable surveys were collected at a response rate of 15%. The total number of usable surveys is still within the acceptable range with respect to statistical power (Hair et al., 2019; Soper, 2018).

Low response rates can harm the external validity of a study and thus produce misleading results via non-response bias (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). Non-response bias was minimized by following best-practices, as outlined by Rogelberg and Stanton (2007). Specifically, three rounds of follow-up reminders were sent to non-responders. Additionally, surveys are more likely to be responded to if survey questions are of interest to respondents (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). Preliminary discussions with respondents who would be considered part of the target population (but who were not utilized in the study's sample) proved to spark interest in the target population. Additionally, the survey questions focused on the employees themselves and their attitudes and feelings, and thus, the researcher believes the participants found these topics

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interesting. Finally, Rogelberg and Stanton (2007) commented that utilizing established scales helps to minimize non-response bias. Established scales were utilized throughout this study. Further, the surveys did not contain embarrassing or controversial questions regarding the respondents' attitudes. The surveys were anonymous and confidential, which was explicitly communicated to the respondents.

Data Collection

Participants at the individual level were the focus of this study, which utilized a cross-sectional research design. Cross-sectional data design was appropriate for the study, as this has traditionally been a research design used when studying the constructs in question (e.g., Wepfer et al., 2018). Further, since this study evaluated participants at a single point in time, a cross-sectional design was appropriate (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Electronic surveys were utilized to collect data from participants. Surveys are versatile as they can efficiently and effectively assess participants by pinpointing concerns, observing long-term trends, and monitoring impact, among other uses (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007). Additionally, surveys have been utilized by prior researchers as the primary data collection tool for many of the constructs of interest in this research (e.g., Wepfer et al., 2018).

Common method bias is “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent” (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003, p. 879). These errors can render a cross-sectional survey irrelevant due to inaccurate conclusions. To help minimize common method bias, suggestions provided by Podsakoff et al. (2003) were implemented. For example, this study first provided clear and concise instructions to participants, ensuring their anonymity and protection. Additionally, since data were collected

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from individual employees via self-reporting, constructs were measured at multiple points in time. Workplace friendships and psychological detachment were measured at Time 1 (T1). One week later, emotional exhaustion and work–life balance were measured at Time 2 (T2). Finally, existing measurement scales were utilized, ensuring the validity and reliability of survey results.

Social desirability bias is when a survey respondent answers questions that would generally be perceived to be endorsed by others (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In other words, answers provided by respondents are generally viewed in a positive way and thus would cause inaccurate responses to the survey. This study implemented specific suggestions made by Bryman and Bell (2015) to help reduce social desirability bias, such as using existing scales and ensuring the anonymity of responses to participants.

Internal validity helps a researcher determine how confident he or she can be that the independent variable impacts a dependent variable (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Internal validity threats are most prevalent in experimental research design and thus not applicable in this cross-sectional study. Causal relationships can more easily be inferred via experimental research, and when cross-sectional data is utilized, it is challenging to infer causal relationships (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Due to the cross-sectional nature of this study, there are no claims of causality. Instead, this study looked at correlational relationships that exist between the constructs of interest.

External validity is the degree to which the results of a study can be generalized and extrapolated to a population from which the sample was drawn (Bryman & Bell, 2015). As stated previously, the sample population was drawn from working adults in the United States, representing various organizations. This study's frame was intentionally selected to strengthen external validity. Further, the physical location where the participants reside is in a midwestern

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town with a population of around 70,000. While this is not considered a large city, the city has characteristics of an urban and rural setting. With that said, the sample is still a convenience sample, and external validity can still be more easily questioned. The limitations section will address such issues.

Variables

All variables in this study were measured utilizing existing scales. These scales came from academic papers in peer-reviewed journals. The utilization of these existing scales was selected to increase the validity and reliability of their results.

Workplace friendship was measured with an existing scale from Nielsen, Jex, and Adams (2000). This survey contains six items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). A sample question from the measurement scale is, “I have formed strong friendships at work.” Workplace friendship was measured at T1. Next, psychological detachment was measured utilizing an existing scale from Sonnentag and Fritz (2007). This survey contains four items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *I do not agree at all*, 5 = *I fully agree*). A sample question from the measurement scale is, “During time after work, I forget about work.” Psychological detachment was measured at T1. Emotional exhaustion was measured utilizing an existing scale from the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire II (Pejtersen, Kristensen, Borg, & Bjorner, 2010), which has been used to measure emotional exhaustion in previous similar studies (Wepfer et al., 2018). This survey contains four items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*). A sample question from the measurement scale is, “How often have you felt emotionally exhausted?” Emotional exhaustion was measured at T2. Finally, work–life balance was measured utilizing an existing scale from Valcour (2007). This survey contains five items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *very*

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dissatisfied, 5 = *very satisfied*). A sample question from the measurement scale is, “How satisfied are you with the way you divide your time between work and personal or family life?” Work–life balance was measured at T2.

This study’s control variables are age, the number of hours worked, gender, and job status. These control variables were utilized due to their previous use in similar studies (Wepfer et al., 2018). All measurement scales can be found in the appendix.

Procedure

Instructors within the school of business at the college were asked to voluntarily distribute the survey to the potential participants (students). Instructors were informed of the study, its purpose, and the directions and instructions for them to follow if they decided they wanted to provide this opportunity to the participants. Participants voluntarily participated. In exchange for their time, participants were offered extra credit. Alternative assignments were provided for participants who wished to not participate in the survey but still wanted extra credit.

All instructions and distribution material for instructors were created by the researcher to ensure consistency in direction distribution. Each participating instructor distributed instructions for participants in the course’s online learning management system. There were three rounds of instructions spanning the course of three weeks for participants.

The first week’s instructions had three purposes. First, inform participants of the opportunity. Second, provide an overview of the logistics of participation. Examples of the logistics needing explanation include but are not limited to the survey being distributed over two weeks and participants getting a unique code to match T1 and T2 surveys. The third and final purpose of the first week’s instructions was to get participants to sign up to participate in the

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study itself. Participants signed up by sharing their school email address, where the survey was distributed during Weeks 2 and 3.

The second week's instructions were distributed via email to participants. The emailed instructions contained an official script and the study's URL to the appropriate Qualtrics survey measuring the T1 variables. The script contained all institutional review board required disclosures and explicit communication following all ethical guidelines (e.g., no penalty for discontinuing), along with all remaining directions needed for completion of the survey. Week 2's survey measured workplace friendships and psychological detachment (T1). Participants were sent reminder messages on Wednesday and Friday to complete the week's survey if they had not completed it already. In addition, instructors who offered this opportunity to their students posted reminders in each class's learning management system. Three reminders were sent out in total. To ensure consistency, all reminder messages were developed and implemented by the researcher.

The third week's process followed the same format as the second week's process. Week 3's survey measured emotional exhaustion and work-life balance (T2). To match T1 and T2 survey responses, participants were given a unique code. Upon completion of the T1 and T2 survey, participants were provided with an electronic certificate of completion, which was turned in to their instructors for extra credit.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected from this essay were evaluated using regression. SPSS software was utilized to evaluate the data. The data were collected and entered into SPSS software and cleaned utilizing a listwise deletion technique to deal with any missing variables. Regression

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analysis was determined to best evaluate the hypothesized relationships among the variables as the research questions associated with this study were concerned with determining the relationship between different variables. Regression helps to determine relationships between different variables (Wooldridge, 2016). Further, regression analysis is used in similar studies addressing the constructs of interest (Wepfer et al., 2018). Finally, the PROCESS macro in SPSS was used to test for mediation in the model. PROCESS uses an ordinary least squares analytical framework, helping to identify indirect effects in mediation models (Hayes, 2017).

Results

The following section contains a statistical analysis of the cross-sectional survey collected at both T1 and T2. The data were cleaned via listwise deletion, and 206 usable surveys were analyzed. This number is acceptable with respect to statistical power, as 200 surveys or five times the number of variables in the study is needed (Hair et al., 2019; Soper, 2018). The section describes the results from the data analysis process via SPSS 27, including factor analysis and the PROCESS macro.

Factor Analysis

Established scales from peer-reviewed academic journals were the source of survey instruments used in this essay. The degree to which an item on a measurement scale measures the same construct is known as internal consistency (Devlin, 2018). To test the internal consistency of the scales used, a factor analysis was conducted. The results of the factor analysis revealed which survey questions to include in the analysis of data. The factor analysis also revealed Cronbach's alpha, a measurement of internal consistency. While many scholars cite .70 as an appropriate Cronbach's alpha level, it is preferred for the alpha to be .80 or greater

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(Nunnally, 1978). The factor analysis conducted via SPSS revealed the items for each construct and the corresponding Cronbach's alpha score. Table 3 displays the results of the factor analysis for all constructs.

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Table 3

Factor Analysis Results for Study Constructs

Scale Items	Factors			
	Workplace Friendships ($\alpha = .922$)	Psychological Detachment ($\alpha = .766$)	Emotional Exhaustion ($\alpha = .893$)	Work-Life Balance ($\alpha = .937$)
I feel I can trust many coworkers a great deal	.876			
I can confide in people at work	.865			
I do not feel that anyone I work with is a true friend	.864			
Being able to see my coworkers is one of the reasons why I look forward to my job	.840			
I have formed strong friendships at work	.836			
I socialize with coworkers outside of the workplace	.818			
I don't think about work at all		.863		
I forget about work		.840		
I distance myself from my work		.783		
How often have you been physically exhausted?			.891	
How often have you felt worn out?			.883	
How often have you felt tired?			.862	
How often have you felt emotionally exhausted?			.848	
How satisfied are you with the way you divide your attention between work and home?				.910
How satisfied are you with your ability to balance the needs of your job with those of your personal or family life?				.909
How satisfied are you with the way you divide your time between work and personal or family life?				.895
How satisfied are you with how well your work life and your personal or family life fit together?				.888
How satisfied are you with the opportunity you have to perform your job well and yet be able to perform home-related duties adequately?				.869

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Table 4

Descriptive Statistics, Variable Correlations, and Significance Levels

Variables	M	SD	Variables							
			Workplace Friendships	Psychological Detachment	Emotional Exhaustion	Work-Life Balance	Age	Gender	Number of Hours Worked	Level in Company
Workplace Friendships	3.8115	0.91387	1	-.122	-.128	.221**	-.128	.002	-.037	-.093
Psychological Detachment	2.20223	0.96304		1	-.008	.117	-.026	-.151*	-.114	.233**
Emotional Exhaustion	2.9988	1.01378			1	-.571**	-.141*	-.022	.020	-.046
Work-Life Balance	3.4728	1.05735				1	-.048	.027	-.047	.128
Age	1.95	0.999					1	.136	-.377**	-.187**
Gender	1.74	0.438						1	-.008	-.002
Number of Hours Worked	3.33	1.005							1	.294**
Level in Company	2.56	0.754								1

Note. Age (1 = 18–24, 2 = 25–34, 3 = 35–44, 4 = 45–54, 5 = 55–64, 6 = 65+); Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female); Number of Hours Worked (Per Week; 1 = 0–19 hours [excluded from study], 2 = 20–29 hours, 3 = 30–39 hours, 4 = 40–44 hours, 5 = More than 44 hours); Level in Company (1 = Top management, 2 = Supervisory Position, 3 = employee without a supervisory function, 4 = trainee/intern). All measurement scales can be found in the appendix.
 * $p < .05$, two-tailed; ** $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all variables included in the essay are found in Table 3. When looking at the focal construct in this study, workplace friendships, there were negative and nonsignificant relationships with psychological detachment ($r = -.122, p > .05$) and emotional exhaustion ($r = -.128, p > .05$). There was a positive and significant relationship between workplace friendships and work–life balance ($r = .221, p < .01$). Finally, age, gender, number of hours worked, and level within company had insignificant relationships with workplace friendships.

To test H_1 through H_3 (the relationships between workplace friendship, psychological detachment, emotional exhaustion and work–life balance), H_4 (workplace friendships impact emotional exhaustion), H_5 (workplace friendships impact work–life balance), and H_6 (workplace friendships have an indirect relationship with emotional exhaustion and work–life balance through psychological detachment), a simple mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS, as presented by Hayes (2013). Bootstrapping was set to 5,000 resamples. A non-significant and negative relationship was then found between workplace friendship and psychological detachment ($b = -0.0968, p > .05$), not supporting H_1 . Next, a non-significant and positive relationship was found between psychological detachment and employee exhaustion ($b = 0.0316, p > .05$) and between psychological detachment and work–life balance ($b = 0.1205, p > .05$), not supporting H_2 and H_3 , respectively. Testing H_4 , a non-significant and negative relationship was found between workplace friendships and employee exhaustion ($b = -0.1478, p > .05$), not supporting H_4 . A significant and positive relationship was found between workplace friendships and work–life balance ($b = 0.2957, p < .001$), not supporting H_5 . Regarding mediation, there was not a significant unconditional indirect association established

between workplace friendship and employee exhaustion through psychological detachment ($b = -0.0031$; 95% BCa CI = -0.0271 – -0.0167), thus not supporting H_{6a} . Finally, there was not a significant unconditional indirect association established between workplace friendships and work–life balance through psychological detachment ($b = -0.0117$; 95% BCa CI = -0.0492 – 0.074), thus not supporting H_{6b} .

Discussion

The word friendship evokes almost exclusively positive feelings, thoughts, and emotions for many people. Conducting a literature review on workplace friendships shows numerous benefits for both the employees and organizations. For example, studies have shown that employees who have more friendships at work are more productive, have higher retention rates, are more engaged, and have higher levels of job satisfaction than those who do not have friends (Rath, 2006). Further, relationships can help to increase creativity within the workplace (Lu et al., 2017). While the benefits are numerous, there has been a recent surge in interest related to the dark side of workplace friendships (Methot et al., 2016; Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). Based on this rising interest, this essay investigates specific negative impacts workplace friendships can have on employees. By applying the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and the boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000), zero out of the six hypotheses in this essay were supported. Only one hypothesis showed significant results, where workplace friendships positively impacts work–life balance.

With zero of six hypotheses supported, these results showcase the difficulty in understanding the downfalls of workplace friendships. This difficulty is echoed by the previous work of scholars who have recently highlighted that little is known about how workplace friendships might harm employee outcomes (Methot et al., 2016; Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018).

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While the results of this essay do not shine light into the black box helping to explain the negatives of workplace friendships, the results do help highlight the difficulty in prying open the black box itself. This supports previously made calls by scholars for further work into understanding these negatives.

Furthering the difficulty in understanding how workplace friendships may harm employee outcomes, this essay highlights that no relationship exists between workplace friendships and emotional exhaustion. However, two previous studies have looked at this relationship and found significant yet contradictory relationships. Specifically, a negative relationship was found between workplace friendship and emotional exhaustion in a study focused on a temporary work setting (Kruger et al., 1995), while a positive relationship was found between these constructs in a later study which focused on a permanent work setting (Methot et al., 2016). A hope of this essay was to add clarity to these prior conflicting studies, but the results of this essay only add to the difficulty in understanding the relationship between workplace friendships and emotional exhaustion.

The significant finding in this essay, the positive relationship between workplace friendships and work–life balance, does contribute new and interesting information related to the workplace friendship literature. Specifically, little to no prior work has looked at the relationship between workplace friendships and work–life balance. This now established relationship provides a new opportunity to further our understanding on the positive results of workplace friendships on employees. This finding does provide some interesting theoretical contradictions. When applying the boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; S. C. Clark, 2000), prior studies have shown that the integration of work and life has a negative relationship with work–life balance (Li et al., 2013). This essay argues that workplace friendship is an integration of work and life, and

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in contradiction to prior studies, this essay shows that the integration of work and life (via workplace friendships) has a positive relationship with work–life balance. These contradictory findings from this study to existing literature are interesting and provide further opportunities for clarification related to how the integration and segmentation of work and life impact employees.

The findings in the essay also have practical implications for practitioners. As workplaces continue to become more and more flexible, research has shown there is a positive relationship to working more hours (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Working more hours is an antecedent and negatively related to work–life balance (Haar et al., 2019). The results in this study indicate a positive relationship between workplace friendships and work–life balance. To help increase work–life balance for employees who may be working more hours, managers can emphasize and encourage employees to build friendships with coworkers. Encouraging workplace friendships should positively impact the work–life balance of employees, which provides many positive benefits for both employees and organizations (Carlson et al., 2009; Haar & White, 2013).

Limitations and Future Research

This essay contributes to existing literature and has practical implications for practitioners; however, no study is without its limitations. In this essay, data collection and results were generated from multiple organizations in the Midwest of the United States, and thus there was no target industry. Also, the sample was extracted from a location that would not be considered rural but would not be considered urban either. Therefore, future studies can confirm the significant findings of this study in a more generalizable way, looking at specific industries in specific regions of the United States or other countries.

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Additionally, since cross-sectional survey data were collected, causal claims cannot be made regarding the results of the essay. This essay measured constructs at two points in time, helping to minimize common method bias. However, this type of measurement can lead to fewer individuals taking surveys at T2 than at T1. To help increase completion of the survey at both points in time, participants were provided with three reminders at each measurement point, but there is always a possibility of a participant dropping off. The sample itself did come from a college in the midwestern United States. While the sample was selected because the average age of students in the college was 26 years old, these are still students, and some scholars have called into question the use of students in sampling (Sears, 1986). An ideal setting may be one in which students are not part of the sample. Next, the external validity of the study may be called into question due to a convenience sample being used. To remedy this, as described previously, utilizing a randomly selected non-student sample would help increase external validity.

The findings in this essay highlight the challenge of understanding how workplace friendships negatively impact employees (Methot et al., 2016; Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). Future papers should look at clarifying this understanding. Prior scholarly work has concluded employees who integrate their work and non-work lives negatively impact their work–life balance. However, this essay argues that workplace friendships represent an integration of work and non-work life, yet the results show the integration of work and non-work life (via workplace friendships) positively impacting work–life balance. Future work can clarify whether workplace friendships are truly an integration of work and non-work life or if they are a segmentation of work and non-work life. By first clarifying whether workplace friendships are an integration of work and non-work life, future studies can then focus on workplace friendships in the context of

the boundary theory. Further, an opportunity for refinement in conceptualization or measurement of friendship-related constructs will likely provide further benefit to scholars.

Another avenue for future study should look at the relationship between workplace friendships and emotional exhaustion. Kruger et al.'s (1995) study showed a negative relationship between the constructs, Methot et al.'s (2016) study showed a positive relationship, and this study showed no relationship. This relationship needs clarification, as this could provide an interesting and incremental step towards answering how can workplace friendships negatively impact employees.

Future studies can also investigate how differing motivations of workplace friendships impact the relationships and how gender plays a factor in these friendships. Further, looking at different industries or even public sector jobs compared to private sector jobs would provide interesting avenues for expanded work.

Finally, many scholars have studied the antecedents of work–life balance. Examples include a negative relationship with work hours, work demands, and family demands and a positive relationship with interactive quality time with children, supervisory support, and job autonomy (Haar et al., 2019; Milkie et al., 2010; Valcour, 2007). This essay is one of the first to highlight the relationship between workplace friendships and work–life balance, specifically, a positive relationship between the two. Therefore, future research related to work–life balance can and should consider how workplace friendships impact this relationship.

Conclusion

With many scholars reporting on the benefits of workplace friendships, the dark side of workplace friendships is an area of study that has recently gotten scholarly attention. A review

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of the literature shows that while this is a growing area of interest, there is little known about how workplace friendships might harm employee outcomes. This essay took a step in attempting to understand how employees are harmed by workplace friendships by applying both the COR theory and the boundary theory. This study highlights the difficulty in understanding how workplace friendships harm employees, instead finding a significant relationship that strengthens the argument that workplace friendships are positive. More work is needed to understand how workplace friendships negatively impact employees. Until then, it may be fair to say that friendships may be the best ship of all.

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Appendix

Measurement Scales

Workplace Friendship (Nielsen et al., 2000)

1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*

- 1) I have formed strong friendships at work.
- 2) I socialize with coworkers outside of the workplace.
- 3) I can confide in people at work.
- 4) I feel I can trust many coworkers a great deal.
- 5) Being able to see my coworkers is one of the reasons why I look forward to my job.
- 6) I do not feel that anyone I work with is a true friend.

Psychological Detachment (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007)

1 = *I do not agree at all*, 5 = *I fully agree*

- 1) I forget about work.
- 2) I don't think about work at all.
- 3) I distance myself from my work.
- 4) I get a break from the demands of work.

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Emotional Exhaustion (Pejtersen et al., 2010)

1 = *never*, 5 = *always*

- 1) How often have you felt worn out?
- 2) How often have you been physically exhausted?
- 3) How often have you been emotionally exhausted?
- 4) How often have you felt tired?

Work-Life Balance (Valcour, 2007)

1 = *very dissatisfied*, 5 = *very satisfied*

How satisfied are you with...

- 1) The way you divide your time between work and personal or family life?
- 2) The way you divide your attention between work and home?
- 3) How well your work life and your personal or family life fit together?
- 4) Your ability to balance the needs of your job with those of your personal or family life?
- 5) The opportunity you have to perform your job well and yet be able to perform home-related duties adequately?

Control Variables

Identify your age:

- 1) 18–24
- 2) 25–34
- 3) 35–44

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- 4) 45–54
- 5) 55–64
- 6) 65+

Identify your gender:

- 1) Male
- 2) Female

How many hours do you work per week according to your employment agreement?

- 1) 0–19 hours
- 2) 20–29 hours
- 3) 30–39 hours
- 4) 40–44 hours
- 5) More than 44 hours

Identify the group which you belong to within your company:

- 1) Top management
- 2) Supervisory position
- 3) Employee without a supervisory function
- 4) Trainee/intern

VITA

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