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WORK AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RECOVERY EXPERIENCES OF ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLAND WORKERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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BACKGROUND

The Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community is one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States with a large presence in the workforce in mentally and demanding fields. Additionally, AAPI workers play integral roles in the U.S. higher education sector serving as educators, researchers, and administrators. Such work intensive practices call for the importance of industrial-organization psychology literature. The AAPI workforce is often overlooked as they are seen as the "Model Minority," alongside being aggregated as a single group rather than differentiated by region and their unique cultural differences. However, studies examining this demographic have been limited with past studies mainly utilizing a white homogenous study sample, resulting in inaccurate and misinformed interpretations. This is a critical, yet unexplored area of research on psychological recovery from work and interpersonal work experiences.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to fill the gap in industrial-organizational literature with rich qualitative data from a diverse perspective. This study also hopes to identify necessary resources to help manage stressors in the workplace as well as to investigate the phenomenon of psychological recovery from work and how cultural values play a role in work and non-work time. With this, organizations may explore opportunities to develop targeted interventions that can alleviate rising levels of stress, injury, illness, and poor mental health in AAPI populations.

References:
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AAPI Cultural Values

- To what extent do cultural values influence work/ professional values, work experiences and work ethics?
- How do cultural values affect non-work values and experiences?

Interpersonal Work Experiences

- What does "recovery from work" look like in workers of AAPI descent?
- How do the negative interpersonal experiences of AAPI workers affect their recovery from work practices?

Question Categories	Sample Questions
Demographic Background	What racial/ethnic identities do you most strongly identify with?
Recovery from Work	Does your culture play a role in what you do in your non-work time?
Cultural/Professional Values	Can you tell me about a time when your cultural values influenced how you think about the relationship between work and nonwork?
Interpersonal Work Experiences	Have you experienced any negative interactions during work?... a. How does this make you feel? b. Do you think these experiences affect your work? After work?

PRELIMINARY DATA FROM INTERVIEWS

Theme	Sample Codes
Cultural Influence on Work Ethics	Learned hardworking traits from family
	Feelings of guilt and unaccomplishment during work recovery practices
	Competing Values (culture vs career identity)
Perceptions of Institutional Diversity Initiatives	Experiences with diversity programs and outreach efforts
	Values an inclusive organizational culture for personal and professional growth
	Encouragement of cultural perspectives for faculty and student populations

"I learned from a young age that, you know, work, working hard is definitely valued. The **separation between your personal and your work really isn't there**, right?...I like to think that there's a little bit more than to just work all the time." - #EL104

"I always have to be more American in order to survive and for people to relate to me in workplaces and stuff. So that's the identity that I lean towards. And it sucks because **I want to embrace my culture a little bit more, but I can't**. I have to hold it and save it for certain environments." - #AP184

"They have a community set so they don't feel alone or isolated, things like that. And ultimately creating community in a **sense of belonging for the students**...I feel like a lot of the times like there are a lot of values that are rooted in white supremacist frameworks of like what how a school should run. And then there's the values of like what I know my experience with my students, their experiences to and how I think it should be. " - #ML01

METHODOLOGY

Participants underwent a screening survey in order to ensure they met the specific demographic criteria before participating in an hour long qualitative interview asking questions under the following categories: demographic background, recovery from work, cultural/professional values, and interpersonal work experiences. Participants include a sample size of twenty-nine 2nd/2.5 generation immigrants, full-time working adults that identify with the AAPI community and currently reside in the United States. Nine AAPI employees from a large, public university with an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) designation in the Pacific Northwest were interviewed.

Data collected will undergo analysis in order to identify patterns of themes (coding), following a thematic analysis and conventional content analysis approach for a comprehensive understanding of the responses.

NEXT STEPS AND LIMITATIONS

The next steps of this study is to continue the analysis process using thematic and content conventional analysis approaches to identify overarching themes within participant responses. As this is an ongoing study, one limitation is the specific inclusion-exclusion criteria. Future studies may benefit from a broader criteria accepting participants from different immigration-generations.

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