

Investigating Loneliness at the Workplace

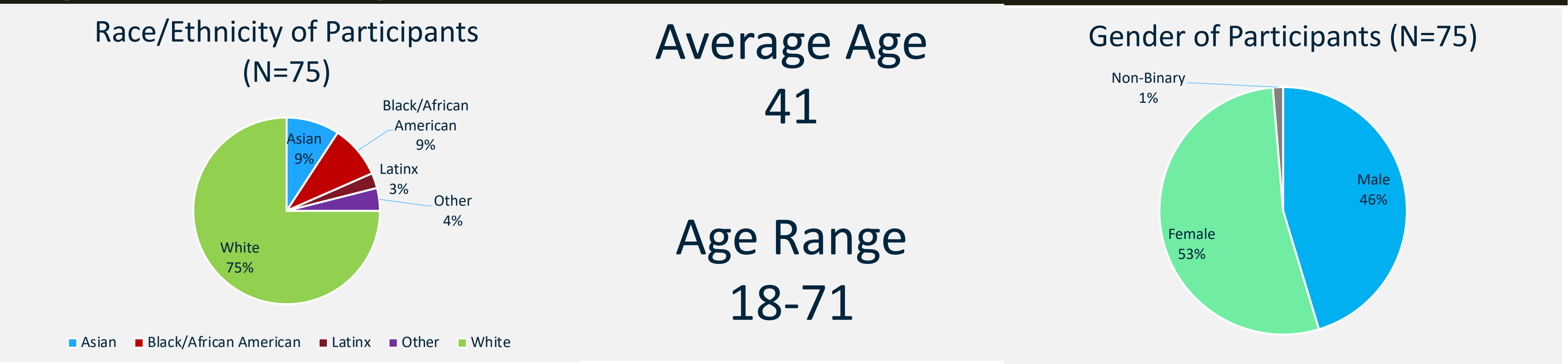
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I. Introduction

- Emerging adults and millennials are said to be experiencing a sort of loneliness crisis
- Older generations have been found to focus more on finding your own way, whereas younger generations seek a communal work experience
- A report by Cigna, a large research center, identified Millennials and Generation Z as being significantly lonelier at work than Baby Boomers and the Silent generation
- This study aimed to further examine this relationship using a loneliness scale that, unlike the Cigna study, applies specifically to the workplace
- In addition to generational factors, we also examined how loneliness at work correlates to various work outcome variables
- We studied both environmental variables such as coworker support and supervisor support, as well as performance variables such as perceived job performance and counterproductive work behaviors
- Data was collected through a survey measuring loneliness at work, various workplace variables, and demographics
- The study was exported through snowball sampling as well as a large database provided by the WorkPlace Group, an HR consulting firm



Figure 1- Demographics



II. Measures

- Loneliness at Work Scale (Wright et al., 2006)
- Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (Smith et al., 1983) “OCB’s”
- Team Psychological Safety (Edmonson, 1999)
- Perceived Job Performance (Bal & De Lange, 2015) “Performance”
- Counter Productive Work Behavior Checklist (Spector, Bauer, & Fox, 2010) “CWB’s”
- Turnover Intentions (Kelloway, Gottlieb, & Barham, 1999) “Turnover”
- Coworker Support (O’Driscoll, Brough, & Kalliath, 2004)
- Supervisor Support (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988)
- Affective Organizational Commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990)
- Note: Words in quotations show how data is represented in Table 2

III. Results

- Higher scores on the Loneliness at Work Scale (LAWS) were significantly negatively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviors, coworker support, supervisor support, psychological safety, and commitment to one’s organization.
- Higher scores on the LAWS were significantly positively correlated with turnover intentions.
- There was no significant relationship between LAWS and counterproductive work behaviors
- No one work variable was indicative of a significantly greater correlation with loneliness at the workplace than any other variable
- There was a large amount of overlap between workplace variables in their correlation with loneliness at work
- Neither age nor generation was found to have a significant correlation with loneliness at work

Table 1- Correlation Table

	LAWS	OCB's	Psychological Sa	Performance	CWBs	Turnover	Coworker Suppo	Supervisor Supp	Commitment
LAWS	1	-0.406**	-0.544**	-0.326**	0.159**	0.425**	-0.576**	-0.5**	-0.495**
OCB's	-0.406**	1	0.29*	0.497**	-0.387**	-0.332**	0.386**	0.343**	0.475**
Psychological Safety	-0.544**	0.29*	1	0.349**	-0.343**	-0.593**	0.501**	0.755**	0.628**
Performance	-0.326**	0.497**	0.349**	1	-0.175	-0.362**	0.347**	0.298*	0.396**
CWBs	0.159	-0.387**	-0.343**	-0.175	1	0.17	0.011	-0.116	-0.362**
Turnover	0.425**	-0.332**	-0.593**	-0.362**	0.17	1	-0.406**	-0.612**	-0.633**
Coworker Support	-0.576**	0.386**	0.501**	0.347**	0.011	-0.406**	1	0.636**	0.338**
Supervisor Support	-0.5**	0.343**	0.755**	0.298*	-0.116	-0.612**	0.636**	1	0.449**
Commitment	-0.495**	0.475**	0.628**	0.396**	-0.362**	-0.633**	0.338**	0.449**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 2 – Linear regression of Workplace Behavior Variables

Regression^

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.239	8	5.655	6.666	.000^^
	Residual	51.747	61	0.848		
	Total	96.987	69			

^ . Dependent Variable: LAWS

^^. Predictors: (Constant), Commitment, CWBs, Performance, Coworker Support, OCBs, Turnover, Supervisor Support, Psychological Safety

Coefficients^

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	6.9	1.733			3.983	0
	OCBs	-0.287	0.271	-0.137		-1.06	0.293
	Psych Safety	-0.362	0.258	-0.251		-1.403	0.166
	Performance	0.031	0.232	0.015		0.134	0.894
	CWBs	-0.18	0.455	-0.045		-0.395	0.694
	Turnover	0.048	0.133	0.048		0.358	0.721
	Coworker Suppo	-0.298	0.118	-0.324		-2.519	0.014
	Supervisor Supp	0.08	0.23	0.061		0.346	0.731
	Commitment	-0.201	0.133	-0.219		-1.51	0.136

^ . Dependent Variable: LAWS

IV. Conclusions

- Loneliness at work was correlated with worse job performance, a less supportive work environment, and a lower feeling of attachment to one’s company
- No one workplace variable stands out as being uniquely correlated with loneliness at work
- We did not find any significant relationship between loneliness at work and age or generation
- While the results showed significantly negative outcomes between loneliness and workplace variables, we cannot conclude causality, as we did not control for confounding variables
- In order to make causal statements, future research should consider how overall loneliness in one’s day to day life correlates with loneliness at work. Other demographics such as job industry and salary should also be considered.

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