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No Cheers, No Fears: Unpacking Nondrinkers' Survival **Tactics in Social Work Events**

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Introduction

- U.S. alcohol culture extends into the workplace, where alcohol-centric events are often the norm. Nondrinkers may find work-sponsored alcohol events are exclusionary or face indirect discrimination or stigmatization.
- Research shows nondrinkers experience a stigma and may engage in practices to conceal their nondrinking status (Ghumman et al., 2021), and drinkers often perceive nondrinkers negatively and as a threat to fun, connection, and self (Cheers et al., 2021).

This research aims to examine the relationships between characteristics of workplace drinking situations, identity management strategies, and employee outcomes and identify moderators of those relationships.

Proposed Method & Hypotheses

This study will use a policy-capturing design with participants responding to vignettes that manipulate workplace drinking norms. We will examine how reasons for nondrinking (e.g., health, religion) and the permanence of nondrinking status affect nondrinkers' strategy selection and outcomes (e.g., turnover intent, organizational identification) in navigating drinking norms.

H1: Nondrinkers are likelier to choose signaling strategies in moderately supportive environments where they perceive some level of acceptance but are uncertain about the reactions of all colleagues.

H2: Nondrinkers are more likely to choose revealing/disclosing strategies in highly supportive workplace environments when they perceive high organizational support.

H3: Nondrinkers are more likely to choose concealing strategies in workplace environments with strong drinking norms and low perceived organizational support.



Theoretical Background

- Stigma Identity Management Theory (Jones & King, 2014) posits that people with concealable stigmas, such as nondrinkers, must decide whether, how, and when to disclose their stigmatized identity. This multi-level model examines various identity management strategies, including concealing, revealing, and signaling.
- The model comprises within-person and between-person levels. The "within" level refers to how the identity management strategy varies across different situations. The "between" level examines the differences between individuals in their typical use of stigma identity management strategies.

The practical implications of this research include identifying situational triggers that may induce turnover among nondrinkers and determining whether the situations or coping strategies contribute to intent to turnover and other organizational outcomes.

This knowledge will enable organizations to create more inclusive environments that respect and accommodate the needs of nondrinking employees.

Shumman, S., Park, J. S., & Kim, S. (2022). Failure to drink, failure to launch? A model of the perceived stigma of nondrinkers in the workplace. Applied Psychology, 71(4), 1248-1274.

Romo, L. K. (2015). An examination of how professionals who abstain from alcohol communicatively negotiate their nondrinking identity. Journal of Applied Communication Research, 43(1), 91-111.



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Preliminary Model Potential moderators Stigma Identity Management Multi-Level Model Level 1: Within - Different situations require different identity Ind. Diffs (need for management strategies. Reasons (religi Totality (neve affiliation, self drink vs rarel[,] blematic drinki (temporary v Level 2: Between – Differences in individuals (length of nondrinking esteem drink) health, etc) tenure, reason for nondrinking) may lead to different identity management strategies. WHO IS DRINKING PERFORMANCE CONCERNS Client Will affect job performance at thi event Boss (power differential Will affect career via networking STIGMA IDENTITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES Coworkers External Peers (e.g., Preventative others in your field, **OTHER-CONCERNS** (Cheer et al, Honesty important clients) 2021) Implying you drink sometimes just not now Passing (active / passive) Threat to Fun Threat to Connection NATURE OF EVENT • Encouraging others to drink ("nonverbal Threat to Self Instrumental for corrective facework") Joining in the drinking (including just Business (e.g., sales SELF-CONCERNS (Various source pitch, recruitment) drinking a little) Avoidance of these situation Revealing an adjacent concea Instrumental for Self status (e.g., pregnant or alcoholic) Intent to turnover (Ghumann et al) Social tion of an adjacent statu Stereotypes (boring insophisticated LOCATION / DISTANCE **Onsite**, Offsite Local **Offsite Travel**

Practical Implications

Preliminary Literature Review

Buvik, K. (2019). It's time for a drink! Alcohol as an investment in the work environment. Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy, 27(1), 86-91.