UMSL | Doctor of Business Administration
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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
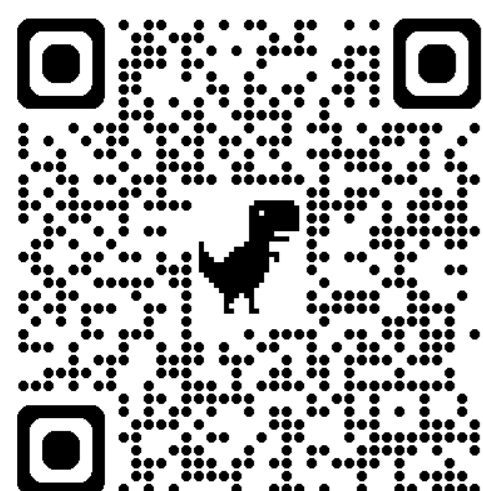
❖ Stigma Identity Management Theory (Jones & King, 2014) posits that people with concealable stigmas, such as nondrinkers, must decide whether, how, and when to disclose their stigmatized identity. This multi-level model examines various identity management strategies, including concealing, revealing, 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.
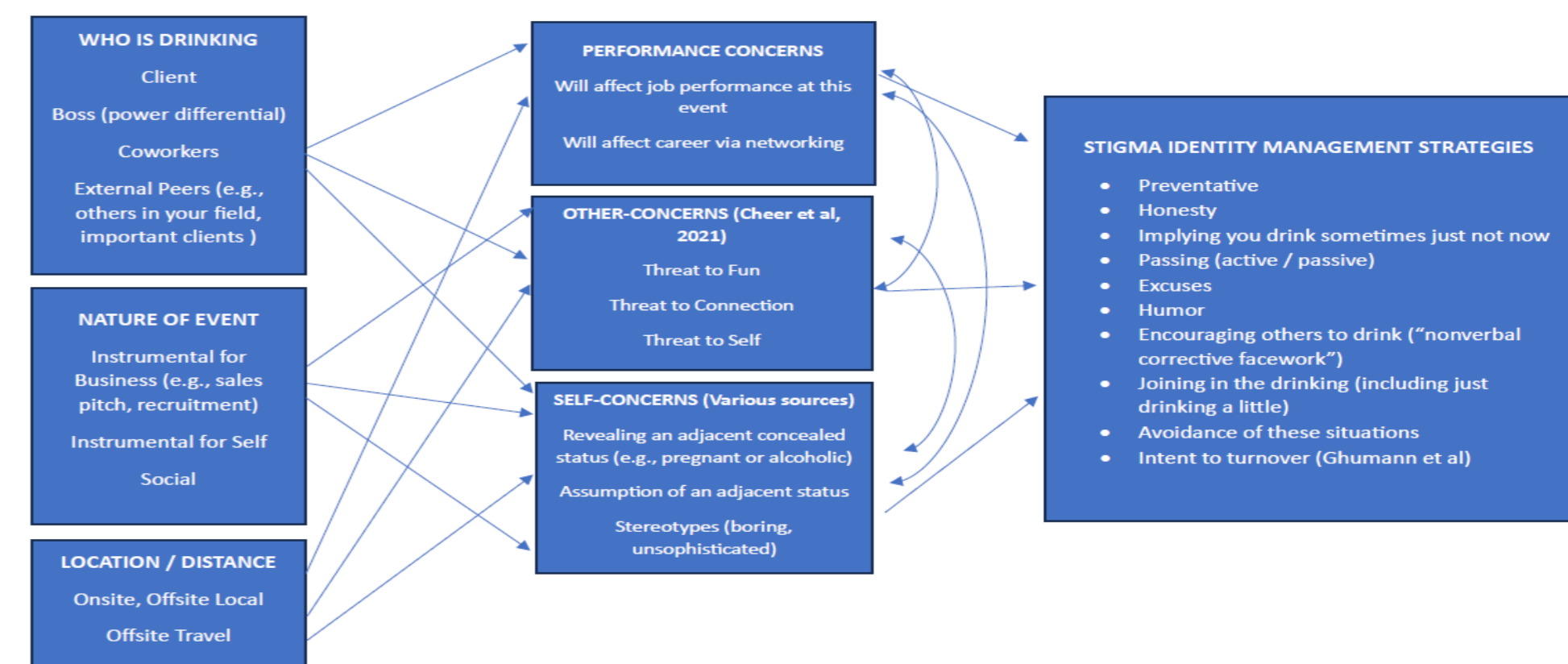
Preliminary Model

Practical Implications

❖ 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.

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.

❖ Ghumman, 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.