

TITLE: An Investigation of Factors Driving Health Disparities for Marginalized Workers in California

ABSTRACT:

The disastrous and negative effects of stress on health outcomes for workers have long been documented by industrial/organizational psychology and management scholars. However, such work has been built off traditional work contexts and a gap remains the unique experiences of employees in alternative work arrangements such as contractors, freelancers, and 'gig workers' who rely on app-based employment. As this is a growing sector of the working population, more research attention is vital. Additionally, employees from marginalized backgrounds may still be targets of discrimination in such work arrangements and these experiences may further exacerbate already detrimental health disparities in our society. The data contained in the California Labor Lab's California Work and Health Survey (CWHS) presents an opportunity to assess the effects of such work arrangements on employees. Thus, the PI proposes a multilevel analysis of the CWHS with a team of students at their institution. The proposed work has three major aims: (1) assessing stress' effect on physical and mental health outcomes based on the employment arrangements for Californian workers; (2) investigating if health disparities exist for workers in the CWHS dataset based on sociodemographic differences; (3) identifying other contextual factors that can exacerbate health disparities for marginalized workers. The outcomes of this project will lead to greater awareness of the experiences of this increasing working population and future investigations of the theoretical mechanisms that separate 'gig' work experiences from those of traditional workspaces and how marginalized employees navigate such a dynamic context. Additionally, this project will enhance the PI's program of research and further the research training of underrepresented students at the institution.