Handelshøyskolen BI

GRA 19703 Master Thesis

Thesis Master of Science 100% - W

Predefinert informasjon

Startdato:	09-01-2023 09:00 CET	**Termin:**	202310
Sluttdato:	03-07-2023 12:00 CEST	**Vurderingsform:**	Norsk 6-trinns skala (A-F)
Eksamensform:	T		
Flowkode:	202310||11184||IN00||W||T		
Intern sensor:	(Anonymisert)		

Deltaker

Navn:	Synnøve Horgen og Victoria Kailin Fredheim

Informasjon fra deltaker

Tittel *:	The relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and job burnout in the Norwegian consulting industry, and the mediating role of LMX quality
Navn på veileder *:	Ralf Müller

Inneholder besvarelsen konfidensielt materiale?:	Nei	**Kan besvarelsen offentliggjøres?:**	Ja

Gruppe

Gruppenavn:	(Anonymisert)
Gruppenummer:	86
Andre medlemmer i gruppen:	

- Master of Science Thesis -

The relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and job burnout in the Norwegian consulting industry, and the mediating role of LMX quality.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost we would like to express our gratitude to our exceptional supervisor, Ralf Müller, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the completion of this master thesis. His dedication to provide us with thorough feedback and encouragement greatly improved our work. He was highly invested in all stages of the writing process, and the knowledge he possesses, as well as his attention to detail, is simply unmatched.

Furthermore, we want to sincerely thank one another for the amazing cooperation and support throughout our master thesis. Our ability to work together, exchange ideas, and overcome obstacles as a team has been remarkable. Throughout our academic journey, we have made lasting memories, enjoyed moments of inspiration, and supported one another. Our friendship has undoubtedly enhanced the quality of our work and made this experience truly unforgettable.

Synnøve Horgen   **Victoria Kailin Fredheim**

Oslo, 03.07.2023

Abstract

This master thesis aims to examine the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and job burnout in the Norwegian consulting industry. Further, it explores the potential mediating role of leader-member exchange (LMX) quality in the relationship between interpersonal justice and burnout.

Data was collected through a quantitative self-completion questionnaire on N=127 respondents who identified themselves as consultants located in Norway, and work full time for their respective companies. The collected data was analyzed through regression analysis in IBM SPSS. The analysis found no significant relationship between interpersonal justice and the two burnout constructs; Burnout Motivation and Burnout Overload. Consequently, no support was found for the existence of a relationship between the variables. This finding led to the cessation of the mediation analysis, as it is based on the underlying assumption that a statistically significant relationship must exist between interpersonal justice and at least one of the burnout constructs. The research transitioned into an exploratory phase aimed at identifying potential significant relationships among the remaining variables. However, the exploratory research yielded no significant findings.

While the findings of this study did not support the hypothesis and provided limited support for existing research, it contributed valuable insights to academia and filled a crucial knowledge gap in the consulting industry in Norway. The findings suggest that cultural and industry differences may affect the relationships between LMX, interpersonal justice, and burnout. There are a limited number of studies that support the non-correlational results observed in this study, highlighting the need for further investigation in this area.

Key Words

Table of contents

1.0 Introduction

In today's climate of constant change, organizations encounter significant challenges. The state of tough competition following the increasing trend of globalization has driven organizations to push their limits in order to uphold efficiency and stay relevant. The pressure of which organizations are subjected to further increases the demands they hold towards their employees, which can put a strain on their health and well-being as they are met with the growing expectations regarding work performance (Marianetti & Passmore, 2009). This strain can often lead to stress and burnout, which could further bring severe consequences for both employees and organizations, such as reduced employee performance and higher turnover (Larrivee, 2012).

Project-based organizations have become more prevalent in the latter half of the 20th century, replacing functional organizations (e.g. Prencipe & Tell, 2001). This shift is the result of the nature of work changing from mass manufacturing to the present situation, where each product supplied may be made to a client's specifications, where technology is changing quickly and constantly (Turner & Keegan, 2000). In that regard, project-based work is a component of the recent wave of "new organizational forms" (Packendorff, 2002). Project-based companies are the ones where the majority of the products and services are based on custom orders from clients, and these companies frequently work on several projects at once. A consulting firm is a typical example of this kind of company, as it is a permanent organization with a distinct identity, but projects account for most of its production (Koskinen & Pihlanto, 2008).

Particularly, those working for project-based companies experience higher demands and pressure from their environment (Turner et al., 2008). These companies create temporary organizations where they generate a dynamic work environment. Here, employees may experience greater strain due to shifting workloads, ambiguous requirements, and various role expectations (Turner et al., 2008). Companies in the business consulting industry are project-focused, where specialists collaborate with their clients on a range of initiatives to help develop, expand, or manage their company. Almost any need that a given business may have, can be addressed by consultants. While some consultants focus on certain industries, others adopt a more all-encompassing approach (McNeice, 2021). Employees in this industry are highly exposed to pressure as they could be working on several projects simultaneously. This may cause sporadic periods of

extremely high work loads, which can make it challenging to maintain work-life balance. An individual's personal life could also be filled with uncertainty, as they never know what assignments or projects they will be assigned to in the future, or where and who their future coworkers will be (Turner et al., 2008).

Management consulting, for example, has a reputation for being an immensely demanding industry (Meriläinen et al., 2004). The pressure to perform, demanding clients, project dynamics, consecutive deadlines, and a heavy workload are work stressors that consultants most frequently mention (Mühlhaus & Bouwmeester, 2016). This industry is also known for the 'up-or-out policy', which means that if you do not perform well and advance within the company, you should consider changing your job (Mühlhaus & Bouwmeester, 2016). Being continually required to meet the many demands surrounding them in this type of work and culture can be quite difficult and stressful, which consequently can lead to burnout.

Based on the research conducted by Christina Maslach and several coworkers (2001), it is known that burnout is a three-component syndrome that occurs in reaction to chronic stressors in the workplace. These psychological syndromes are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognized burnout as an occupational hazard which may warrant medical attention, implying that burnout is a prevalent problem throughout organizations (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019; WHO, 2019). Burnout can have serious consequences, not only on an individual's health and performance, but also on their team and company (Valcour, 2016).

Generally, people want to adapt to the demands they are facing, and burnout can happen when there is a significant gap between a person's job demands and their capacity to handle them (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). This gap can be caused by various experiences such as work overload, lack of control, lack of fairness and value conflicts. Burnout is often caused by the social environment in which people work, rather than by the individual (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). One can in fact prevent employees from burning out by establishing supportive relationships between them and their leaders (Huang et al., 2010). The conservation of resources (COR) theory describes burnout in terms of lost resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018). This theory claims that individuals constantly work to protect the resources they value, such as the social support of their

leaders, and that when these resources are lost, stress may occur. When not managing to deal with stress effectively, one could eventually burn out (Houkes et al., 2003).

Leaders likewise have limited resources to allocate each of their followers, which causes them to build distinct interpersonal relationships with each of them (Thompson et al., 2018). Some researchers have emphasized the role of the leader when followers experience job burnout (e.g. Skakon et al., 2010; Son et al., 2014). There is evidence to support the claim that employees who have high-quality relationships with their leaders are less likely to feel stressed out by their jobs (Thomas & Lankau, 2009). Additionally, when workers feel their leaders treat them with respect and justice, there is a lower chance that they experience job burnout (Cole et al., 2010). In order to understand how employees interact with their leaders, it is essential to look at both leader-member exchange (LMX) theory and interpersonal justice. This way, one can understand employees' relationship with their leader and how it potentially affects job burnout. In this study, the exploration will focus on how employees perceive interpersonal justice by their leader, and how this may affect LMX quality and employee burnout.

LMX is a leadership theory which conceptualizes the process of interactions and the formation of dyadic relationships between a leader and their followers, bringing attention to the fact that there may be differences in each followers' relationship to their leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Employees who perceive a high level of interpersonal justice by their leader, are treated with respect, consideration, and dignity (Khan et al., 2022). The management must show a high level of concern for their employees in order to raise the level of interpersonal justice in the organization (Alias et al., 2012). Therefore, this study aims to investigate if an employee's perceived interpersonal justice from their leader has a negative relationship with job burnout. Additionally, it aims to examine whether perceived interpersonal justice improves the quality of LMX, which further reduces burnout.

The relationship between job burnout and LMX quality has been extensively studied, but minimal research has been conducted on the relationship between interpersonal justice and job burnout, where LMX quality is a mediator. This study seeks to provide a valuable contribution to the body of literature already available on the different factors that influence burnout. There is minimal research on the proposed relationships, and it has yet to be tested in Norway, and

in the consulting industry in general. Thus, the purpose of this study is to build upon existing research by investigating how perceived interpersonal justice relates to job burnout in the Norwegian consulting industry, and further explore if LMX quality will mediate the relationship between interpersonal justice and burnout. Consequently, this master's thesis aims to examine the following two research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between interpersonal justice and burnout?

RQ2: What is the role of LMX quality in the relationship between interpersonal justice and job burnout?

These research questions are going to be explored in the context of the Norwegian consulting industry.

2.0 Literature Review

This section provides an overview of the existing literature in order to build a strong foundation and greater understanding of the constructs which are relevant to the study. Firstly, the conservation of resources (COR) theory is introduced, which serves as a framework for understanding how an individual's resources affects burnout and leader-member exchange (LMX) quality. Subsequently, the literature on burnout is presented, along with the theoretical background on interpersonal justice and LMX. These three constructs play a central role in investigating the research questions. Finally, the research regarding the mediating role of LMX quality is presented. This research, alongside the previously mentioned constructs, establishes the framework from which two hypotheses and a research model are derived.

2.1 The Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The conservation of resources (COR) theory has received the most citations in the field of organizational behavior and psychology during the past 30 years (e.g. Hobfoll et al., 2018). Stevan E. Hobfoll (1989) developed this well-established theory, which states that individuals have a fundamental drive to acquire, hold onto, and safeguard the resources they value. Four fundamental sorts of resources are outlined by the COR theory: objects, such as one's car or bike; conditions, such as a stable career or good friends; personal characteristics, such

as high self-esteem; and energies; such as money, favors, and credit. The COR theory states that individuals may become stressed if they believe their resources are in danger of being lost, if they experience resource loss, or if they do not see a return on their investment in resources (Hobfoll et al., 2000).

According to the COR theory, employees have limited resources that they must use in a variety of ways to meet the demands of their day-to-day work lives in organizations. When resources are used up over time without being restored, employees may suffer negative effects like a decline in job satisfaction (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). The theory argues that resources available to accomplish different tasks are more significant in causing burnout than the actual demands of the job itself (Bakker, 2017). Resource loss has been used to study stress, and it has been discovered that when people lose their resources at work, they can feel strain in the form of burnout (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Lheureux et al., 2016).

Humans are driven to invest in and acquire resources, as well as recover from loss and safeguard against further losses. Therefore, when individuals experience resource depletion, they act defensively to preserve what remains (Hobfoll, 2001). This defensiveness affects their willingness to invest in future resources and may lead to a loss spiral. Individuals with greater access to resources have an advantage over those with fewer resources, as they have more opportunities to invest in additional ones (Hobfoll, 2001). Consequently, the desire to accumulate as much resources as possible to safeguard against burnout, which is primarily caused by resource scarcity, becomes a motivating factor for individuals (Lai et al., 2018). Employees may seek various sources of support related to their work to supplement their existing resources. Notably, the COR theory recognizes the significant role leaders play in either contributing to or mitigating resource depletion (Hobfoll, 2001). By applying this theory to challenging workplace situations, it has emerged as a crucial framework for understanding burnout (Buchwald & Hobfoll, 2004; Neveu, 2007).

In recent years, the COR theory has been used to study both burnout and LMX (e.g. Harris et al., 2011; Agarwal, 2018; Jin et al., 2020). In one study, the COR perspective was used to explain how high-quality LMX affects various work outcomes through increasing organizational job embeddedness. According to a study, LMX was a predictor of organizational job embeddedness, which is consistent with the COR theory since a high-quality LMX serves as a resource for employees (Harris et al., 2011). LMX explains how leaders trade crucial resources

with their followers to help them complete their work, such as social support, control, and self-efficacy (Hobfoll et al. 2018). More resources will be made available to employees with high-quality LMX than to those with low-quality LMX (Gran & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The outcomes of resource gains and losses have been the subject of more recent studies, which have been crucial in furthering the understanding of the COR theory. One study focused on how employees allocate their resources at work. It examined factors such as how people evaluate their available resources, pay attention to changes in resources, and self-regulate to determine how to invest in those resources in the most effective way (Hagger, 2015). According to Trougakos et al. (2015), employees who are chronically exhausted and begin each day with depleted resources, rely more on surface-level interactions with coworkers. Due to the lack of resources to address problems at work on a deeper level, they end up continually feeling more exhausted. These kinds of studies enable us to expand the COR theory and apply it in many contexts, such as interpersonal relationships at work, where additional research might, for instance, concentrate on leadership (Hobfold et al., 2018).

2.2 Burnout

Herbert Freudenberger (1974) first used the term "burnout" in the early 1970s. Christina Maslach later developed it, leading to the creation of the most used questionnaire for measuring burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Since then, researchers have paid a lot of attention to the concept (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Based on Maslach and her colleagues' study (2001), current understanding suggests that burnout manifests as a three-component syndrome which develops in reaction to ongoing pressures in the professional environment. These psychological syndromes are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment.

The primary symptom is exhaustion, which also represents the stress dimension of burnout. It is a feeling that people experience when they are overburdened mentally and physically (Maslach et al., 2001). They typically find it hard to work effectively or be positive, and that it is difficult to drag themselves to and from work (Valcour, 2016). This is normally the first reaction to stress in relation to job demands or other major changes, and it is typically how burnout starts. The second syndrome, depersonalization, is a feeling where an individual's

attitude is characterized by being cold and distant toward their work, and the people with whom they work. This negative attitude can have a significant impact on a person's well-being and capability to work effectively, and can result in a loss in work enjoyment and pride (Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

The third and last syndrome of burnout is reduced personal accomplishment, which is when individuals are under the impression that they are lacking productivity and not accomplishing anything, as well as feeling a sense of incompetence (Valcour, 2016). Here, every new project is overwhelming, and they frequently believe that the entire world is against them, further resulting in a lack of confidence (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Burnout can also begin with the feeling of reduced personal accomplishment, which occurs when the individual lacks both the support and resources needed to accomplish their work tasks. Each of the three burnout syndrome correlates to the other two, and one syndrome generally leads to another (Valcour, 2016).

Maslach (2011) emphasizes the significance of preventing burnout rather than dealing with it once it manifests as an issue. Burnout can have a wide range of detrimental effects on social, individual, and organizational expenses, which further could impact work performance, psychological well-being, and physical health. Building engagement can assist to lower the likelihood that burnout will develop. People who are more engaged in their jobs are better equipped to deal with the obstacles they confront, which reduces their stress levels. As a result, one of the best methods and approaches for preventing employee burnout is to encourage this engagement among them (Maslach, 2011).

Burnout has been characterized in earlier research as a process rather than a static state (e.g. Maslach, et al., 2001). In this research, we suggest conceptualizing burnout in terms of the COR theory's loss spiral rather than an end state. According to this theory, a loss spiral may occur to those who are unable to regain lost or lacking resources. As a consequence, they will experience a loss of energy and chronic exhaustion (Hobfoll, 2001). Depersonalization can be used as a coping mechanism for individuals who get caught in a loss spiral. Other symptoms including negative emotions, impaired cognitive abilities, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment may manifest if depersonalization does not prevent the loss spiral (Williams et al., 2020). Being in a loss spiral causes more resources to be lost as the individual is more likely to make mistakes, which increases the amount of work needed to solve different problems.

Additionally, fatigue happens when job demands outweigh an individual's resources. If this imbalance persists over time, fatigue turns chronic, and eventually burnout manifests (Edú-Valsania, 2022). As a result, job demands have a direct positive relationship with burnout, especially emotional exhaustion. On the other hand, the availability of job resources has the opposite effect on depersonalization by diminishing or reducing its use as a coping mechanism (Edú-Valsania, 2022).

Furthermore, burnout is frequently linked to both physical and mental conditions like depression, muscular pain, and anxiety (Wang et al., 2015). It has also been linked to concerns such as insomnia, physical exhaustion, increased marital and family challenges, and increased alcohol and drug usage (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Individuals could face physical issues which further creates additional resource loss, as they invest in resources just to maintain their physical health (Williamset et al,2020). Employees that experience burnout are frequently more likely to be absent from work, to be more inclined to quit, to have declining commitment and performance, as well as declining levels of creativity (Maslach et al., 2001; Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). This can have a detrimental impact on the organization, and thus it is crucial for organizations to address, minimize, and prevent burnout among their staff (Johnstone et al., 2016). In fact, it has been discovered that employees who experience lower levels of burnout have higher levels of job satisfaction and reduced turnover intention (Abu-Bader, 2000). Another interesting and recent study by Roman et al. (2019) had some intriguing results where they discovered that there is a difference between older and younger employees pertaining to occupational stress and burnout symptoms. When compared to older employees, the researchers discovered that younger workers generally perceived higher levels of occupational stress and burnout (Rožman et al., 2019).

In recent years a rising body of empirical evidence demonstrates that occupational health is now more important than ever, much due to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Edú-Valsania, 2022). Multiple studies on burnout have been conducted since the COVID-19 outbreak using international samples of frontline healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, and pharmacists (Azoulay et al., 2020; Barello et al., 2020; Matsuo et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Apart from research in the healthcare sector, there appears to be little research conducted in other industries as of today.

2.3 Interpersonal Justice

The importance of people's judgements of the fairness of their interactions with organizations and leaders has earlier been recognized by several psychologists (e.g. Deutsch, 1985; Tyler & Bies, 1990). Research by Cole et al. (2010) states that a person's psychological health is related to how they perceive justice. They further supported the idea that one of the key elements contributing to employee job burnout is organizational justice (Cole et al., 2010). Today, a variety of justice perceptions exists, including informational, distributive, procedural, and interpersonal justice (Judge & Colquitt, 2004). Interpersonal justice focuses on an individual's opinions on the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive when organizational choices are carried out (Alias et al., 2012). When leaders treat employees in an insensitive or impersonal manner, it might result in strong emotional and behavioral reactions (Bies & Moag, 1986).

It has been discovered that interpersonal injustice was positively related with people's propensity to engage in workplace deviant behaviors (Aquino et al., 2004). These behaviors could be moral outrage, resentment, or anger, and employees would engage in these deviant behaviors when they feel minimal interpersonal justice (Henle, 2005). When employees are feeling a high degree of interpersonal justice they are treated with respect, politeness, and dignity by their leaders (Khan et al., 2022). In order to increase the level of interpersonal justice in an organization, the management has to demonstrate high concern for their employees (Alias et al., 2012). This highlights the importance of leaders realizing how justice perceptions are important, and how it shapes the employees behavior and work performance (Abbas et al,. 2021). As interpersonal interactions are common between leaders and employees, employees frequently find interpersonal justice to be increasingly relevant and psychologically important to them (Fassina et al., 2008). This is due to the notion that employees tend to attribute their perception of interpersonal justice to their leaders rather than the organization as a whole (Bryant & Merritt, 2019). Interestingly, in a study by Ionescu and Iliescu (2021), their results show that if an employee feels as if they are shown consideration and treated with respect by their leader, they are more likely to have a higher work performance. This is true regardless of whether the employee personally likes their leader as a person, or perceives their relationship as a friendly one or not. However, when employees believe they receive fair treatment from their leader, the relationship between the two is likely to be strengthened,

and the employees tend to be less likely to engage in unethical pro-organizational behavior (Bryant & Merritt, 2019).

A recent study by Khan et al. (2022) shows that psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and creativity are all positively correlated with the perception of interpersonal justice. Having a sense of purpose at work is an important psychological state for employees' motivation, productivity and experience at work (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). It also has implications for workers' well-being (Arnold et al, 2007), and it is one of the most crucial factors for resilience under stressful circumstances (Matuska & Christiansen, 2008). An individual's perceptions of the outcomes of taking interpersonal risks in a certain setting, such as their workplace, is referred to as psychological safety. According to research by Kerrissey et al. (2022), psychological safety can further reduce the likelihood of burnout. Establishing a workplace culture where employees experience a high level of psychological safety, psychological meaningfulness, and increase in creativity can be greatly influenced by the perceived interpersonal justice (Khan et al., 2020).

Interpersonal justice primarily focuses on how employees see their leaders' sincerity, justification, respect, and propriety (Bies & Moag, 1986). It has been shown that those who believe their leader treats them fairly and with respect are more likely to experience less job burnout (Cole et al., 2010). Lack of support from one's leader is negatively related to employee burnout, especially the component of exhaustion (Cole et al., 2010). Based on the COR theory, employees might sense a significant loss of valued resources when they perceive unjust and degrading behavior from leaders. This may affect their relationship with their leader, as employees value leaders highly as a social resource in the workplace (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Based on the discussed theory, perceived interpersonal injustice has a high probability of depleting workers' valuable resources, resulting in an increase in job burnout. Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> **H1:** By increasing the perceived interpersonal justice, the occurrence of job burnout will decrease.

2.4 Leader Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory was first presented in the 1970s, and was initially known as the vertical dyad linkage (VDL) approach (Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Cashman, 1975). According to the LMX theory's central tenet, leaders differentiate how they treat their followers through various sorts of exchanges (Dansereau et al, 1995). The quality of the relationship between leaders and their followers often varies, and as a result, each leader-follower relationship tends to be unique (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). To explain how the various kinds of interactions between leader and follower are established, LMX research has traditionally relied on role and social exchange theories (Grean & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Considering this, leaders set expectations for their followers and reward those who fulfill them. In turn, followers have expectations from their leaders regarding how they will be treated and the benefits they will receive for upholding the leader's standards (Grean & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This involves the leader and followers engaging in a social exchange of both tangible and intangible resources. The LMX theory further acknowledges variations in the interactions that leaders have with various types of followers (Bernerth et al., 2007). Early LMX research suggests that due to the constraints on leaders' time, resources, and cognitive capacity, they only manage to develop close bonds with a select few of their followers (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The LMX theory proposes that there are two types of relationships that a leader creates with their followers. These relationships are referred to as "in-groups" and "out-groups"(Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). It is how well a leader and follower work together – in other words, their compatibility – which sets the premises to whether the follower is categorized as a part of the in-group or out-group (Graen and Scandura, 1987). Followers who are placed in the in-group are often engaged in their work, and are willing to take on more responsibility, which can benefit both their leader and their group. Members of the in-group typically have a high-quality LMX, based on trust, information sharing, support and exchanges, that extends beyond the confines of the workplace (Kauppila, 2015).

There are certain followers with whom a leader develops this high-quality exchanges with, but controversially there are others with whom the leader simply rely on the terms of employment, namely the out-group members (Sanders et al., 2010). Followers who are fairly unengaged and do not take interest in involving

themselves beyond their formal job descriptions, are likely to be placed in the out-group. They tend to have a lower quality LMX to their leader which is rather formal and impersonal, where the exchanges are mainly work related (Estel et al., 2019). Having a low-quality LMX can cause followers to feel stressed due to not receiving sufficient information or support from their leader (Thompson et al., 2018).

In later years, the focus of LMX theory has changed, with studies concentrating more on the source of the distinctions between in-groups and out-groups (Northouse, 2021). Research found that having a high-quality relationship is important, as it creates the highest amount of effectiveness in organizations. This could lead to increased work performance and satisfaction, support creativity, lower turnover as a result of higher commitment, and elevated work clarity and autonomy (Buch et al., 2014; Malik et al., 2015). Anand et al. (2011) also carried out a review that indicated that most LMX research conducted after year 2000 focused on the antecedents and results of LMX, and paid more attention to the context of LMX. Followers who perceived that they had high-quality LMX felt more energized, which encouraged them to engage in being more creative at work (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009). Those with high-quality LMX were also more likely to exhibit citizenship behaviors that are advantageous to the leader and the group (Ilies et al., 2007). The quality of LMX and workplace creativity are both likely to improve as followers are given more freedom in their work (Volmer et al., 2012).

The results of multiple LMX studies were further examined in a meta-analysis by Martin et al. (2016), which confirmed the idea that LMX quality is positively related to task performance, and citizenship performance. Additionally, counterproductive performance is negatively related to LMX quality. Moreover, LMX demonstrates predictive power across the three dimensions of work performance: task, citizenship, and counterproductive performance. Further, an interesting finding was that counterproductive performance is highly predictive of overall performance, and is based on negative follower behaviors rather than positive. Martin et al. (2016) also came to the conclusion that the influence of LMX on job performance was explained by motivation, empowerment, trust, and job satisfaction, with trust in the leader having the greatest impact. The results of various studies on LMX over the past few years have shown that organizations benefit greatly from having leaders who

build high-quality relationships with their followers, since both leaders and followers tend to feel better and manage to achieve more (Northouse, 2021).

2.4.1 LMX Quality as a Mediator

According to Bies and Moag (1985), followers frequently use their view of interpersonal justice to judge their leaders. If they believe that their leader acts fairly, the quality and desirability of their ongoing relationship will likely improve (Masterson et al,. 2000). Early research has demonstrated that the perception of justice by followers encourages the creation of high-quality LMX (e.g. Scandura, 1999; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

Of the various justice perceptions, interpersonal justice is argued to be the most relevant form of justice in terms of employee-leader relationships, and appears to increase the employees' relationship quality with their leader (Bryant & Merritt, 2019). By being mindful of this, leaders can improve the LMX quality by endorsing fair behavior, such as treating employees equally with dignity and respect (Saragih et al., 2019). Thus, experiencing this can further encourage the follower to return favors as part of the ongoing social exchange relationship, which can provide the impression that their relationship with their leader is of a high-quality LMX, including mutual trust, obligation and respect (Reb et al., 2019). When there exists high quality LMX relationship between leaders and their employees, and a high degree of perceived interpersonal justice by the employees, this relationship can bring a reward in form of a positive attitude towards their leader, and further the readiness to accept responsibility (Siswanti et al., 2020).

There are few studies on the relationship between interpersonal justice and LMX in recent years, but a study from 2014 found that followers who believe their leaders treats them fairly and with respect are more likely to develop self-esteem and self-worth, which further encourages them to establish a positive relationship with their leader which results in a high-quality LMX (Son et al., 2014). This association is further supported by a recent study by Ionescu and Iliescu (2021), which demonstrates the importance of followers' perceptions of their leader's interpersonal justice for the LMX performance relationship.

As described earlier, having a high-quality LMX often has beneficial effects on the followers. Furthermore, some studies have also found that having a good relationship with one's leader increases the followers' sense of well-being because the relationship can provide the followers with additional beneficial

work-related resources like material and emotional support (e.g. Harms et al, 2017; Montano et al., 2017). Due to resource limitations, leaders, in accordance with the LMX theory, distribute resources unevenly, which results in varying LMX quality (Liden et al., 2016). Only those with high LMX quality receive the resources required to improve their well-being, and a recent study revealed that 35% of its respondents, all of whom were working professionals, stated that their leaders were their primary source of stress at work (Ferry, 2018). Based on the COR theory, leaders can cause employees to experience negative stressors that deplete their psychological resources and result in undesirable employee behaviors (McLarty et al., 2021). Increased job demands including role conflict, recurrent work-related problems, and role ambiguity is among the stressors that leaders can cause (Ozer et al., 2014). Controversially, leaders can be a source of minimizing the same effects through high-quality LMX (McLarty et al., 2021). Based on this theory, one can argue that perceived interpersonal justice in leaders may have a positive relationship with the quality of LMX.

Additionally, early studies have shown that having a strong relationship with one's leader might be a crucial factor in reducing employee job burnout (e.g. Cordes et al, 1997; Hetland et al., 2007). A high-quality LMX with one's leader is the most important social resource that can reduce the chances of burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Better communication between followers and their leaders, as a result of high-quality LMX, will eliminate ambiguity and uncertainty in responsibilities and tasks, which are key drivers in the development of burnout (Harris & Kacmar, 2006). Consequently, if leaders provide their followers with resources they may value, such as social support, various benefits, precise instructions, and opportunities, their followers may experience less role-related stress, which also can be a tool in reducing job burnout (Hetland et al., 2007). Hence, various studies have revealed a negative relationship between LMX and employee job burnout (e.g. Cordes et al., 1997; Hetland et al. , 2007; Son et al., 2014). In recent years, where Covid-19 has had an impact and burnout has gained more attention, there have been additional studies on the relationship between LMX and burnout. In these new studies, they also find support for a negative relationship between the two, where having a high-quality LMX will eventually contribute to reducing followers' chances of burning out (e.g. Derindag et al., 2021; Dixon, 2021; Moura, et al., 2021).

As previously described, burnout is characterized by lost resources based on the COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 2018). When discussing a lack of resources, one may consider lack of time, self-esteem, or social support (Maslach, 2003). In order to prevent burnout, it is crucial that the workplace acknowledges the human aspect in the workplace, so that the followers get the resources they need (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Employees can benefit from having a high LMX quality by using it to manage their workload and lessen the risk of burnout, due to the various resources they will receive from their leader. Having a high-quality LMX will also imply that managers have a better chance of identifying burnout signs and taking corrective action before the symptoms turn into burnout (Thomas & Lankau, 2009). Therefore, having a supporting relationship with their leader can prevent employees from burning out (Huang et al., 2010).

So, according to the LMX theory, followers who perceive their leaders as demonstrating interpersonal justice may increase the likelihood of developing a LMX of a high quality. Additionally, having a high-quality LMX can be a tool to keep followers from burning out as leaders will likely give them access to more resources, and leaders may be able to spot early signs of burnout and take action. As a result, the following hypothesize is suggested:

H2: LMX will mediate the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and job burnout.

The proposed relationships and interactions between the variables are represented in Figure 1.
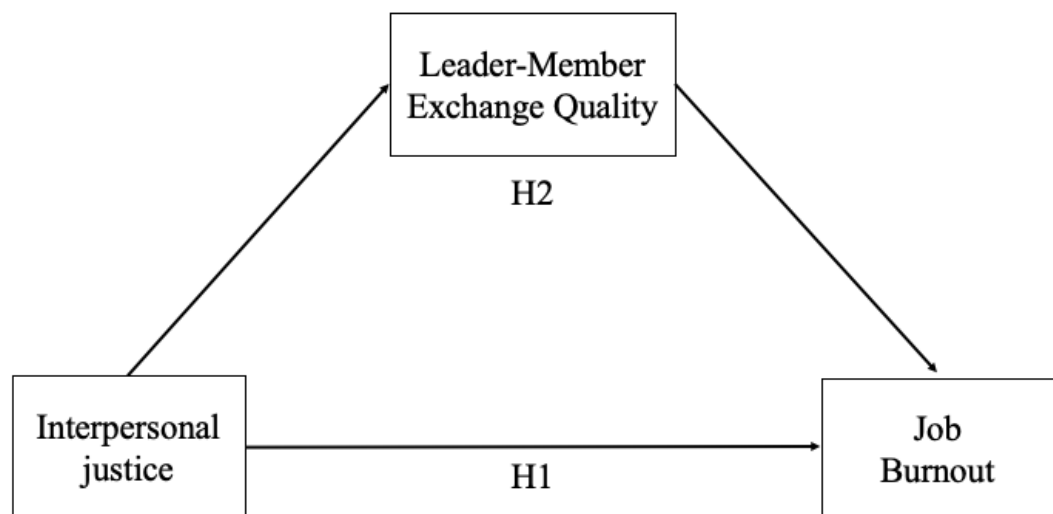
Figure 1: Model based on sized relationships.

3.0 Methodological Framework

The following section presents the methodological framework on which the research is based on, along with the decision-making process employed to investigate the research questions and hypotheses. The choice of research and survey design, the credibility of the data and measurement scales, the ethical considerations, and the procedure utilized for data collection in relation to the sample, are elaborated upon here.

3.1 Research Design

In order to identify the optimal research design for the exploratory study, the design process advocated by Saunders et al. (2016) was adopted. They offer a clear and simple design process that demands making a series of distinct decisions. The authors achieve this by using a model they refer to as "the research onion", which has six layers and each of which represents a decision (see Figure 2). The first five layers of the structure deal with research design, while the final layer deals with research tactics (Saunders et al., 2016).

Figure 2: The Research Onion (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016)

The first layer, or decision, that needed to be addressed, was the research philosophy. Research philosophy is a "set of assumptions and beliefs about how

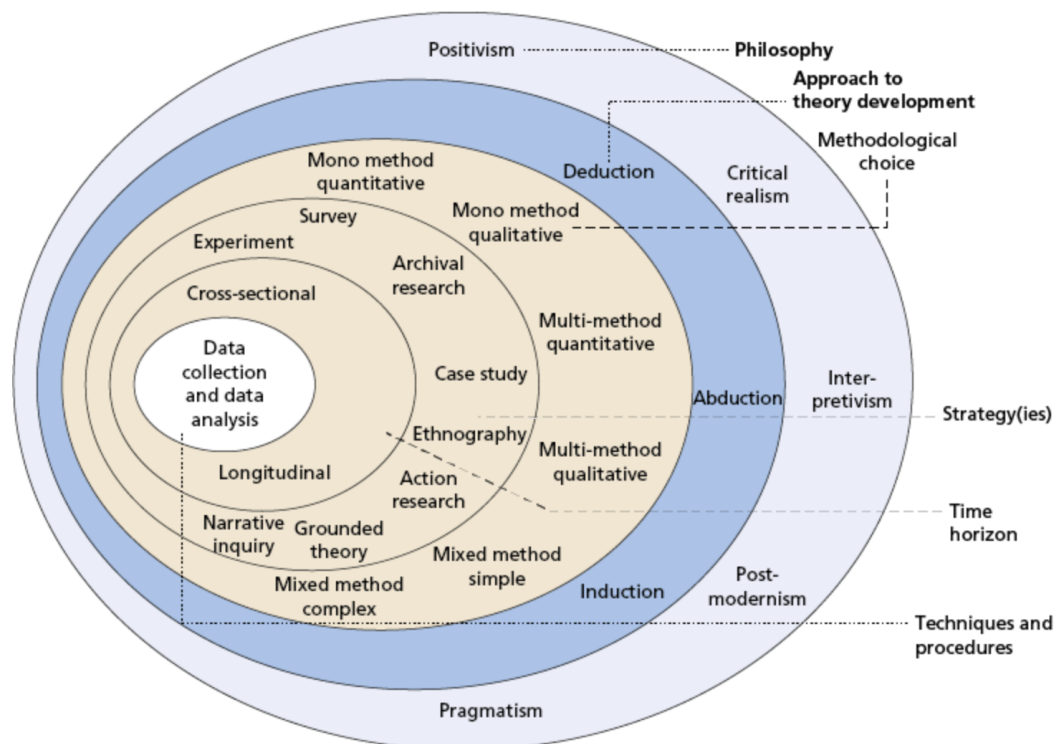knowledge is developed" (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 124). To develop a credible research philosophy that would guide subsequent design decisions, it was essential to have a set of assumptions that are well-considered and consistent (Saunders et al., 2016). The ontology and epistemology assumptions were established before the design process began. In business research, ontology is concerned with the assumptions about the nature of reality (Saunders et al., 2016). In this study, the ontological position is objectivism. The social reality examined in the study is perceived as an objective entity, existing independently of any specific individuals (Bell et al., 2018).

Epistemology is described as "assumptions about knowledge, what constitutes acceptable, valid and legitimate knowledge, and how one communicates knowledge to others" (Sauders et al, 2016, p.127). This study takes a post-positivist stance, where the aim is to receive objective statements while being aware of the subjectivity of the study respondents. Hence, the focus lies in identifying trends, acknowledging the fact that what holds true in one situation, may not in another situation (Müller & Locatelli, 2023).

This leads to the second layer of the research onion, which involves determining the approach to theory development. Building upon the foundation of objective post-positivism, a deductive approach was utilized, implying that the research is grounded in pre-existing theories. This further creates the basis for hypothesis creation, and the choice of research design in order to test the theory.

The methodological choice is the third layer that was addressed. This study adopted a quantitative research method, which involves gathering numerical data and taking a deducting approach to investigating the potential relationship between theory and research (Bell et al, 2018). In this quantitative research design, a single data collection technique was used, which is referred to as the mono-method quantitative study (Saunders et al., 2016). Using a quantitative research approach made it possible to collect a larger sample of participants, where a generalizable conclusion was more likely to be achieved (Bell et al., 2018).

Choosing the type of research strategy to use was the fourth layer of developing the research design. As the approach for the study is exploratory, it was decided to employ a survey research strategy. When using this strategy, it was crucial to take the time to obtain a representative sample, build and test the data collection tools, and seek to achieve a high response rate (Saunders et al., 2016).

This facilitated the gathering of standardized data from a large group in a cost-effective manner.

For the fifth layer of the research onion, it was decided to adopt a cross-sectional design for the study. This design was the most appropriate, due to contemporariness of the data which was to be collected. This led to the decision of collecting data at a single point in time, as this would ensure that the data was up-to-date and relevant (Blasius & Thiessen, 2010). This design also made it possible to collect data from many different respondent cases (Bell et al, 2018).

3.2 Survey Design

After developing the framework for the questionnaire, "Qualtrics", the online survey provider partnered with BI Norwegian Business School (BI), was utilized in order to distribute the survey. The respondents were tasked with submitting their answers by filling out a structured, self-completion questionnaire which provided insight on the respondents backgrounds, perceptions, and attitudes related to the constructs that were to be measured (Bell et al., 2018).

The survey was optimized to accommodate both computers and mobile devices, as the questionnaire was web-based. This was important as the layout and "device-friendliness" of the survey contributes to higher completion rates (Qualtrics, 2023). Further, it was ensured that the survey contained the appropriate measures for the given concepts and control variables, while also adhering to a limited time frame. Online surveys exceeding 12 minutes pose a risk of substantial respondent break-off, so constraining the survey within this time limit was essential to reduce the risk of respondent fatigue (Bell et al., 2018).

The reliable and validated measurement items, which were originally developed in English, were kept unaltered. Translation into Norwegian was therefore not pursued, as to avoid potential implications on the validity of these items. By creating the questionnaire in English, this also helped accommodate for potential english-speaking consultants working in Norway.

3.3 Data and Measurement Credibility

It was important to consider both the validity and reliability of the measurement scales intended to be included in the study in order to ensure that the collected data were credible. When assessing measuring scales, the term "reliability" refers to the degree of consistency and stability in the outcomes of the

various measurements. It was crucial to make sure that the measuring tools were trustworthy, yielded predictable results, and had as little random error as possible (Bell et al., 2018). The reliability in the study was evaluated in SPSS using Chronbach's alpha with a threshold of .50 (Hinton, 2004).

Validity is the extent to which a research study measures what it intends to measure (Bell et al., 2018). It was made a top priority to maintain an acceptable level of validity by identifying already established and validated scales and measurements, where there was openness on the method of data collecting, the analysis, and the accuracy of the data. This also involved inspecting the degree of inter-item correlation, and item-total correlation. Inter-item correlation indicates whether an item is part of a scale or not. If too high (0.9), the items almost measure the same thing. If too low (0.2), an item may not be a part of the same construct as the rest. Therefore, the most preferred position for the inter-item correlation is in the middle, neither too high nor low (Krabbe, 2016). Item-total correlation examines the relation between one item and the total score on the scale. For item-total correlations lower than 0.5, it may imply that an item does not measure the same construct as the other items, where deletion of this item is reasonable (Hair et al, 2019).

Furthermore, a priority was placed on ensuring a high level of transparency in the development of the questionnaire, constructing the survey in a way that would hinder any attempt to deceive the respondents. This goal was achieved by clearly explaining the study's objectives and providing a brief description of each construct used to measure participants throughout the survey. The consequences of having this much openness in the data collection was that it could lead to common method bias. Common method bias (CMB) refers to a systematic error that occurs when various constructs are measured using the same method in a study. This error may distort the relationship between the variables and produce false results (Kock et al., 2021). According to Podsakoff et al. (2003), when respondents are aware of the context of the study, they create their own theories about the phenomenon being examined and react to the questions in line with those theories rather than reality. In an effort to reduce the chance of imposing CMB, it was clearly stated in the start of the survey that the survey was anonymous and that there were no right or wrong answers (Podsakoff et al., 2003). A Harman One-Factor test was also conducted to ensure that the sample did not suffer from CMB. This test entails performing a factor analysis with an

unrotated factor solution on all the study's measures. CMB may exist if a single factor dominates and accounts for a sizable amount of the variance across all measures. According to Podsakoff and Organ (1986) the threshold for explanatory power of the first unrotated factor is >50%.

Additionally, the questionnaire (N=10) was piloted before its distribution. Participants in the survey were consultants who were both junior and senior consultants, to capture the breadth of experiences. Through this pilot, the questionnaire was successfully modified based on participant feedback. These modifications encompassed rectifying spelling errors and providing a clearer understanding of the term "immediate leader" in relation to questions concerning interpersonal justice and LMX quality. Some participants were unsure if it was referred to the leader of their ongoing project, or their functional leader within their employing organization. To address this, a survey description was included to explicitly state that "your immediate leader" pertained to the functional leader in their respective company. The data obtained in this pilot was not used further in the analysis.

The chosen survey items that measure interpersonal justice, LMX, and job burnout were collected in a structured manner as interval data, using both five-point and six-point Likert scales. The control variables in the survey were collected as nominal and ordinal data. Appendix 1 shows the complete list of all the questionnaire items.

3.3.1 Interpersonal Justice

Interpersonal justice (IPJ) was measured based on the four sub-dimension of organizational justice described by Jason A. Colquitt (2001), which includes distributive, procedural, informational, and interpersonal justice. This measure was based on findings by Bies and Moag (1986). A confirmatory factor analysis carried out by Colquitt revealed evidence in favor of the four-factor measure with both concept and predictive validity. Moreover, this measurement construct also showed results of sufficient discriminant validity and predictive validity (Colquitt, 2001).

In the survey, four items measuring interpersonal justice were included. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1='to a small extent' to 5='to a large extent' was used. A sample item is: "Has he/she treated you in a polite manner?", where "he/she" refers to the respondents immediate leader, which was specified in the

survey in order to reduce any confusion. These four items are listed in Appendix 1. The measure for interpersonal justice was developed based on a solid foundation of theory and has been widely used in multiple studies conducted across diverse industries and contexts. An average Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 was reported by Hansen et al. (2013), demonstrating rather high reliability of scores across different samples.

3.3.2 Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Quality

The quality of the leader-member exchange (LMX) was measured using the LMX-7 scale. This questionnaire was created by Graen and Uhl-Bien and has seven items which were developed in order to evaluate the quality of working relationships between followers and their leaders (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX-7 is frequently used and is well-known for its high validity (Furunes et al., 2015). It is a generalized measure that is independent of context and asks respondents to describe their relationship with their leader or their subordinate, including how much respect, trust, and responsibility are reciprocated between them (Hanasono, 2017). The study focuses on the subordinates' perspectives on their leader.

The measure utilized a five-point Likert scale, where the items had varied response anchors. A sample item is "How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?", and it was specified that the leader referred to their immediate leader. All items are listed in Appendix 1. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale generally ranges from .80 to .90 (Gerstner & Day, 1997).

3.3.3 Job Burnout

Job burnout was measured using Bergen Burnout Inventory (BBI), developed by Salmela-Aro and colleagues (2011). This is a short measurement of burnout, and it contains nine items divided into three dimensions: exhaustion at work, cynicism toward the meaning of work, and the sense of inadequacy at work, all containing three items each. Together, these three dimensions compose burnout in work life.

The study measured the items using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1='completely disagree' to 6='strongly agree'. A sample item for exhaustion is: "I often sleep poorly because of the situation at work". A sample

item for cynicism is: "I feel dispirited at work and I think of leaving my job", and a sample item for the sense of inadequacy at work is: "I frequently question the value of my work". The items are listed in Appendix 1. According to Salmela-Aro et al. (2011), the BBI demonstrated high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three subscales ranging from 0.83 to 0.88.

3.3.4 Control Variables

At the end of the questionnaire, demographic and circumstantial questions were included. This was to ensure that it was possible to control for third variables, as these could have an influence on the relationship and outcomes between the variables was included in this study. The demographic variables that were included were 'sex', 'age' and 'company size in Norway'. The circumstantial values included 'years in company' and 'duration of work with your immediate leader'. See appendix 1 for a detailed overview of questionnaire items. All control variables were measured at either a nominal or ordinal level.

3.4 Research Ethics

This research project followed Diener and Crandall (1978) ethical guidelines for business research, encompassing four primary areas of these ethical principles. Firstly, they highlight the importance of ensuring that those who take part in a study do not suffer any harm. This study's online survey design did not affect any of the practitioners in any way, including factors such as their self-worth, future work opportunities, or career prospects. Secondly, it is important to address whether there is a lack of informed consent, as we wanted to ensure informed consent from the respondents. Prior to choosing to participate in the online survey, individuals were presented with a message outlining the study's purpose and data management procedures. Participants were informed that the online survey was completely voluntary, where they had the right to abandon the survey at any time.

Finally, the last two principles comprehend if deceit is used in the study, and whether participation in the study violates participants' privacy. There was no deception in the study. Due to anonymous participation, it would be impossible to identify the person of which has completed the questionnaire, which protects their personal information and anonymity. Further, they were informed that no personal data would enter the analysis, and that it would be impossible to trace the results

to either them or their respective organizations. This was stated in the survey invitation, and before the respondent commenced with the questionnaire. By using the online survey provider Qualtrics, we were able to utilize its anonymization software. This guaranteed that no personally identifying information, including the responders' IP addresses, was gathered. Prior to commencing data collection, the BI Research Office was contacted to inquire about NSD approval. However, given the nature of the data to be gathered, such an approval was deemed unnecessary.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

For the distribution of the questionnaire, a snowball sampling technique was employed. This implies contacting individuals through our personal networks and social media who are relevant for the research topic, and rely on this network to further establish contact with other individuals who could forward the questionnaire (Bell et al., 2018). In advance of the data collection, the aim was to obtain >100 respondents in order to achieve a representative sample size. The target recipients were those who identified themselves as consultants located in Norway, who worked full time for their respective companies for at least a year. Filter questions were included at the beginning of the survey to confirm that respondents met these requirements.

The utilization of snowball sampling proved to be cost-efficient, enabling access to a challenging-to-reach population (Bell et al., 2018), specifically being consultants in Norway. However, the snowball method also had some limitations. As this type of sampling technique is categorized as a form of convenience sampling, it could threaten the external validity and generalizability. Generalizability is the likelihood of research findings to be applied or generalized to different contexts or people outside of the sample that was investigated. In other words, if the results of the study are generalizable, they can be applied to other groups or circumstances in addition to the unique sample that was examined (Bell et al., 2018). Employing convenience sampling in the study could lead to a potential limitation where the sample of consultants selected has limited generalizability, as they may not represent the entire population of Norwegian consultants.

The method in question also suffers from a lack of control, as it may be challenging to ensure a diverse range of participants. Given the lack of control

over the survey audience and their responses, there is no assurance that the respondents accurately reflect the studied population (Bell et al., 2018). However, at the outset of the survey, as earlier mentioned, filter questions were employed to ensure that only respondents who met specific requirements were included. These criteria were established as prerequisites for participation in the study. By exploiting the connections of our network, it enhanced the likelihood of reaching the suitable respondents who met the established criteria.

3.6 Sample

229 respondents were recorded by SPSS for the duration of the survey. A considerable number of these individuals did not fit the criteria to be a part of the research, which was that they had to be a consultant, reside in Norway, and have had at least one year of full-time employment with the company in question. Those who did not fulfill these requirements were excluded from the analysis, leaving 160 respondents. It is challenging to say with certainty why so many people who did not fit the criteria participated in the survey. One explanation could be that the utilization of platforms, such as LinkedIn, may have resulted in respondents who are not part of the intended target group to unavoidably view the content. Hence, although the requirements for participating were clearly stated in the message encouraging readers to take part in the study and in the description when entering the survey, it is possible that a number of people simply accessed the survey with intention of taking it without reading the description.

There were also several respondents who fulfilled the set requirements reflected in the filter questions in the beginning of the survey, but ceased to participate in the remainder of the survey. There could be numerous reasons for this, one of which could be that many people working in the consulting industry are known for having busy schedules (Kubr, 2002). So, when they encounter questions that require them to read a lengthy text, it may have demotivated them from continuing due to the time which needs to be devoted to complete the survey. As a consequence, participants who only answered the filter questions were excluded from the study as they did not provide any meaningful data. After this exclusion, a working sample of 136 respondents remained. Respondents number 15, 44, 47, 50, 57, 58, 60, 159 and 156 were also further excluded, but as outliers (see section 4.1). 127 responses made up the final sample size, and falls well inside the required threshold of 20 respondents per variable for generalizing the

results (Hair et al., 2019). The response rate could not be calculated due to the employment of snowball sampling. However, to get a feeling of the magnitude of responses, it was possible to divide the final sample responses (127) by the number of people opening the questionnaire (229), yielding an indicated magnitude of response of 56%.

As shown in the result part (part 4.2.1) Table 2 to 6, the sample was dispersed among various demographic groupings. The respondents consisted of both males and females, and the distribution of the sexes in the sample was almost equal. Males accounted for 57% of the sample, whereas females 43% (see Table 2). The age group which made up the largest part of the respondents were between 21- 29 years (44%), followed by the age group of 30 - 39 years (30%), 40 - 49 years (15%), and 50 - 59 years (11%) (see Table 3). Most of the respondents worked in an organization with 1001 - 5000 employees (39%), followed by organizations with 251 - 1000 employees (29%), 50 - 250 employees (16%), less than 50 employees (15%), and lastly organization with more than 5000 employees (1%) (see Table 4). The years of experience that the majority of the respondents reported was between 2 - 4 years (41%), followed by 7 years or more (26%), 1 year (21%), and lastly 5 - 7 years (12%) (see Table 5). The most reported years the respondents had with their current immediate leader was between 2 - 4 years (43%), followed by 1 year (31%), less than 1 year (13%), 7 years or more (7%), lastly between 5 -7 years (6%) (see Table 6).

4.0 Data Analysis and Results

In the initial section, a comprehensive overview of the conducted data analysis is presented, providing in-depth insights into the procedures and methodologies employed to thoroughly investigate the collected data. The utilization of IBM SPSS Statistics version 29 facilitated the analysis and description of the acquired data. Following this, the subsequent section reveals the results derived from the analysis.

4.1 Data Analysis

The preliminary phase in the data analysis process addressed the essential task of data preparation. Here, data screening and cleaning was undertaken to detect and correct errors and address instances of missing data. Missing data occurs when respondents fail to respond to one or more survey questions. This

could happen unintentionally, by not wanting to respond to a question, or by failing to complete the survey. Acknowledging and considering this missing data holds significant importance for further data analysis (Saunders et al., 2016). In order to determine whether there were any trends in the missing data, SPSS was utilized to conduct a missing value analysis. The results revealed a pattern in which respondents gradually stopped responding to questions as they progressed through the questionnaire. On average, the missing data accounted for approximately 12% of the overall dataset.

After thoroughly examining the data file for potential errors, the descriptive phase of the analysis was initiated. Performing a descriptive analysis is crucial for explaining the characteristics of the sample, and identifying potential breaches of underlying assumptions associated with the statistical techniques to be used in later research (Pallant, 2020). The main underlying assumption that needed to be controlled for was the normality in the distribution (Bell et al., 2018). When data is normally distributed, it takes the form of a bell-shaped frequency distribution that is symmetrically centered on the variable means. This assumption needed to be fulfilled in order to conduct inferential analysis techniques, such as factor and regression analysis, since they only function correctly with normally distributed data (Bell et al., 2018). In the analysis, factors were used as replacements for the original variables, and were therefore also tested for normality before they entered the regression analysis.

Frequency statistics was applied for the purpose of assessing the characteristics of the control variables (nominal and ordinal variables), where the central tendency of these variables was measured utilizing the mode. Further, descriptive statistics were employed for the analysis of the continuous variables (scale variable). These descriptive statistics provided basic summary information such as the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), maximum (max.), minimum (min.), kurtosis, and skewness (Pallant, 2020).

Skewness and kurtosis were examined with the intent of measuring the distribution of data in the dataset. This facilitated an understanding of the shape of the distribution, which further supported the decision-making in how to analyze and interpret it. The distribution's asymmetry is measured by the skewness, while kurtosis measures how peaked or flat the distribution is. Both can have an impact on the assumptions of statistical tests, such as the assumption of normality. Perfect normal distributed data would have a skewness and kurtosis of value 0, but in the

context of social scenes, this is rare (Pallant, 2020). There is disagreement on the permissible range of skewness or kurtosis to be classed as normal distribution. For research purposes, the reasoning by Kline (2016) suggests adhering to a cut-off value of ±3 for both skewness and kurtosis. The initial analysis showed that all of the interpersonal justice (IPJ) items had high positive kurtosis values (>3), indicating a leptokurtic distribution in the sample. The same items were negatively skewed, and were within the set cut-off value for skewness. All other items were within the cut-off value of ±3 for both skewness and kurtosis (Kline, 2016; Warne, 2018).

A boxplot was produced in an effort to identify whether there were any outliers in the sample. The boxplot revealed several outliers, which led to the exclusion of the most extreme observations (respondents 50, 58 and 60). To accomplish this, a filter variable was created and then used to exclude the identified outliers from the dataset. The kurtosis and skewness both improved as a result of the intervention, however the value of kurtosis remained above the threshold of 3. Consequently, the decision was made to exclude four additional outliers from the analysis, namely respondents 44, 47, 15, and 57. However, this exclusion did not result in a significant reduction in kurtosis. Instead, it led to a noticeable increase in kurtosis for other items. Thus, the outliers were included after determining that excluding them was not the most effective method for improving our kurtosis.

As outlier reduction was deemed ineffective, the next attempt was data transformation. In pursuit of meeting the prerequisites for statistical inference, the variables within any statistical methodology must adhere to the necessary assumptions. Consequently, employing this method could be key for ensuring their compliance (Hair et al., 2019). In an attempt to improve skewness and kurtosis, three potential transformation techniques were considered for the IPJ items in an attempt to correct these violations of the underlying assumptions; (1) $1/x$, (2) $\sqrt{x}$, and (3) $1/\sqrt{x}$. If the initial transformation did not yield satisfactory results, the following steps were applied in a sequential manner (Hair et al., 2019). Unfortunately, none of the transformation techniques worked. However, as normality is not a strict requirement for factor analysis, the conclusion was made to advance with the analysis.

The next step was to investigate whether common method bias (CMB) existed in our sample. The identification of CMB involved the adoption of

Harman's one-factor test, a method that Podsakoff and Organ (1986) have demonstrated to be suitable. The presence of CMB can be inferred based on the condition that the first factor accounts for more than 50% of the variance observed among the variables, and this analytical approach was applied to assess the total variance explained by the survey items. The results indicated that the first factor explained only 34% of the variance among variables, which is below the 50% threshold (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). This suggests that CMB did not pose a significant concern in the context of this particular study.

The subsequent step involved performing a factor analysis, which is a reduction technique which provides the tools needed for analyzing a structure of interrelationships amongst a sizable number of variables. For this study, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was the method of choice. This analytical approach facilitates the identification and categorization of these interrelated variables into distinct factors (Hair et al., 2019). Here, the concern lied with obtaining factors that would satisfy the cut-off value of ±3 for skewness and kurtosis and to investigate the measures' reliability. By thoroughly evaluating the sample size and the strength of the relationship between the items on the scales, it was possible to determine the suitability of the data set for conducting the factor analysis prior to its initiation. The data set comprised 127 respondents, satisfying the minimum requirement of 20 respondents per variable, as the study encompassed three distinct research variables (Hair et al., 2019). Before conducting the factor analysis, the second aspect to consider was the level of intercorrelations among the items on the scales. To assess this, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test for sphericity were used to evaluate the factorability of the data (Pallant, 2020). According to Hair et al. (2019), a valid factor analysis requires a KMO measure of at least 0.5 and a significance level of $p < .05$ for Bartlett's test. These criteria serve as indicators of the appropriateness of the analysis. In this study, the sample size and factorability were both satisfied, allowing for further progress with PCA. The anti-image correlation matrix was also inspected, as these correlations describe the level of correlation among variables in a data set. This is important in making sure that variables were not excessively linked, as this could result in unreliable results in factor analysis. In order to obtain satisfactory anti-image correlations, the correlations should be >.6 (Hair et al., 2019).

The next step in the process of the PCA was the Factor Extraction, where Varimax Rotation was applied. Varimax Rotation attempts to maximize the number of variables that have high loadings in each factor (Pallant, 2020). The factor loading of each item onto its corresponding hypothesized construct gave a clue as to how successfully the items measured the constructs they were meant to test throughout the study. The initial factor analysis conducted using Varimax Rotation revealed that the burnout items (BBI) loaded onto two distinct factors rather than one. Additionally, a descriptive analysis was conducted on the obtained factors, revealing the presence of the same skewness and kurtosis issues as discussed earlier in the descriptive statistics section.

Given prior issues with skewness and kurtosis, and that the BBI items did not load onto the same factor, an exploratory approach was pursued. This involved conducting experiments with varying numbers of factors, following the guidelines of Tabachnick and Fidell (2014). Additionally, outliers were excluded from the analysis until a satisfactory solution was obtained. A suitable solution centered around two issues: the requirement to account for as much variance in the original data set as possible, and the need to provide a straightforward solution with the fewest number of elements factors possible (Pallant, 2020). In order to assure the reliability of the new scales, a reliability test for internal consistency was conducted for all the various factor solutions investigated. This test measures the extent to which the items comprising the scale were reliable and consistent. In essence, it measured the degree of association between the items when assessing the same construct (Pallant, 2020). The most common method of measuring this is with Cronbach's alpha, and the ideal value for the coefficient for a scale should be >.70 (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). A Cronbach's alpha value of >.70 indicates high reliability, whereas a value of between .50 and .70 indicates moderate reliability (Hinton, 2004). Consequently, the reliability threshold was set at .50 for the duration of the analysis.

Furthermore, a descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the various factors and assess the validity of the skewness and kurtosis. Challenges were encountered during the initial factor analysis, specifically concerning the IPJ factor, which led to the utilization of a boxplot technique to identify outliers. Subsequently, a decision was made to exclude 9 outliers, specifically respondents 15, 44, 47, 50, 57, 58, 60, 156, and 159. This exclusion led to the emergence of a five-factor solution, whereby none of the items associated with the three

constructs loaded onto a singular factor. It was accepted that the BBI construct presented a two-factor solution, and saved the new variables as "Burnout Motivation" (containing BBI Item 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9) and "Burnout Overload" (containing BBI Item 1 and 7). The names given reflected the items of which the factors contained. In the construction of the interpersonal justice (IPJ) measure, a one-factor solution was considered acceptable, excluding IPJ Item 4 from the factor. The absence of this particular item in the factor loading suggested that it did not align with the underlying construct being measured by the other IPJ items. This factor was named as "IPJ" and comprised IPJ Items 1, 2, and 3. Similarly, in the assessment of LMX quality, a one-factor solution was judged appropriate, with the exclusion of LMX Item 1 due to its failure to load onto the factor. This factor was named "LMX" and contained LMX Item 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. The fifth factor identified in the analysis included IPJ Item 4 and LMX Item 1. To assess the reliability of this factor, a Cronbach alpha test was performed, indicating a low reliability score (<.50). Consequently, the decision was made to exclude this factor, leading to a four-factor solution for further analysis. The factors present in this solution, namely "Burnout Motivation", "Burnout Overload", "IPJ", and "LMX", demonstrated high reliability and met the criterion of ±3 for both skewness and kurtosis. The hypothesized model underwent modifications after the BBI construct was split in two, resulting in two models with two distinct dependent variables, Burnout Motivation and Burnout Overload (see Figure 5 and Figure 6). Consequently, the following new hypotheses were formulated:

> **H1a:** By increasing the perceived interpersonal justice, the occurrence of Burnout Motivation will decrease.
>
> **H1b:** By increasing the perceived interpersonal justice, the occurrence of Burnout Overload will decrease.
>
> **H2a:** LMX will mediate the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and Burnout Motivation.
>
> **H2b:** "LMX will mediate the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and Burnout Overload.

Continuing the study, a series of One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The objective was to assess whether there existed any notable statistical disparities in the mean scores of the variables among distinct

demographic and circumstantial groups (control variables). The selection of the "one-way" method was motivated by the objective of analyzing the effect of a single independent variable, specifically the control variables, on a distinct dependent variable, which were the study's four different factors. The ANOVA test allowed for the assessment of differences among the various groups within the independent variable. However, it was insufficient to determine whether these differences are statistically significant or not on its own. Conducting an ANOVA test for all control variables along with a Scheffé post-hoc test would provide an understanding of the specific groups that exhibit statistically significant differences compared to others (Pallant, 2020). To determine statistical significance, the alpha (significance) level was set at $\alpha < .05$, which is the widely used alpha value in the field of social sciences (Warne, 2018). From the analysis, no significant differences were found between groups in the control variables. Therefore, conducting a Scheffé post-hoc test was considered pointless (see results in part 2.2.4).

To test the hypotheses, a mediating analysis was conducted using a four-step mediation model that relied on regression analysis to estimate the variables (Kenny, 2021). The study aimed to test two models, where interpersonal justice was the independent variable and LMX quality was the mediating variable in both models. The dependent variables in the two models were Burnout Motivation and Burnout Overload (see Figure 5 and 6). In the first step, a regression analysis was conducted to examine the presence of a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in two distinct models (path C1 and C2 illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4, respectively). This first step was necessary in order to uncover if there existed any effect that could be mediated.
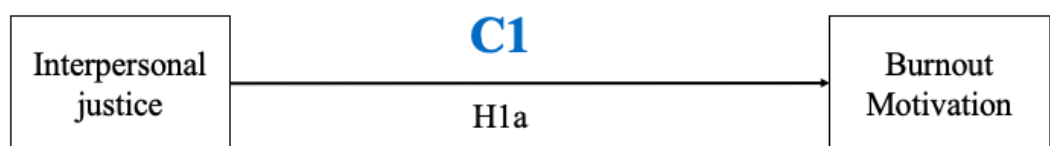

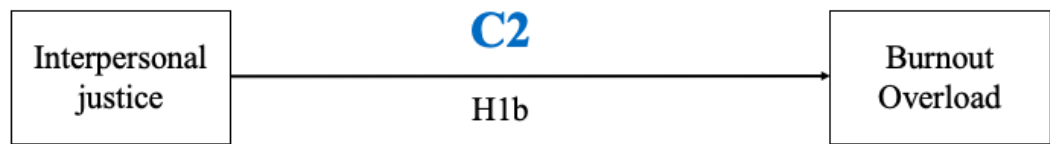***Figure 3:*** The Unmediated Model 1 (C1 = total effect Model 1)

Figure 4: The Unmediated Model 2 (C2 = total effect Model 2)

The results showed that there was no significant relationship between the two variables in both Model 1 and Model 2. Furthermore, a similar set of regression analysis was conducted, this time incorporating the control variables to examine the presence of any significant relationships. However, no differences in the results were observed. Therefore, it was concluded that no significant relationship existed between the independent and dependent variables in Model 1 and Model 2. Thus, investigating any potential mediating effects could not proceed, as a prerequisite for this is the existence of a significant relationship between the variables (Pallant, 2020; Kenny, 2021). Consequently, the analysis to further assess mediation terminated here.

If a significant relationship existed, the subsequent step of the analysis would involve the examination of whether there was a correlation between the independent variable and the mediating variable in both models (represented as paths a1 and a2 in Figures 5 and 6). The third step would have been to assess whether the mediating variable had an impact on the dependent variable in each model (represented as paths b1 and b2 in Figures 5 and 6). This particular step would have been essential in determining whether the correlation between the mediating variable and the dependent variable was a result of both variables being affected by the independent variable. Therefore, the plan was to control for the independent variable when investigating the effect of the mediating variable on the dependent variable. If step three yielded the appropriate results, the final step would involve testing whether the mediating variable mediated the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in both models (represented as paths C1' and C2' in Figures 5 and 6).
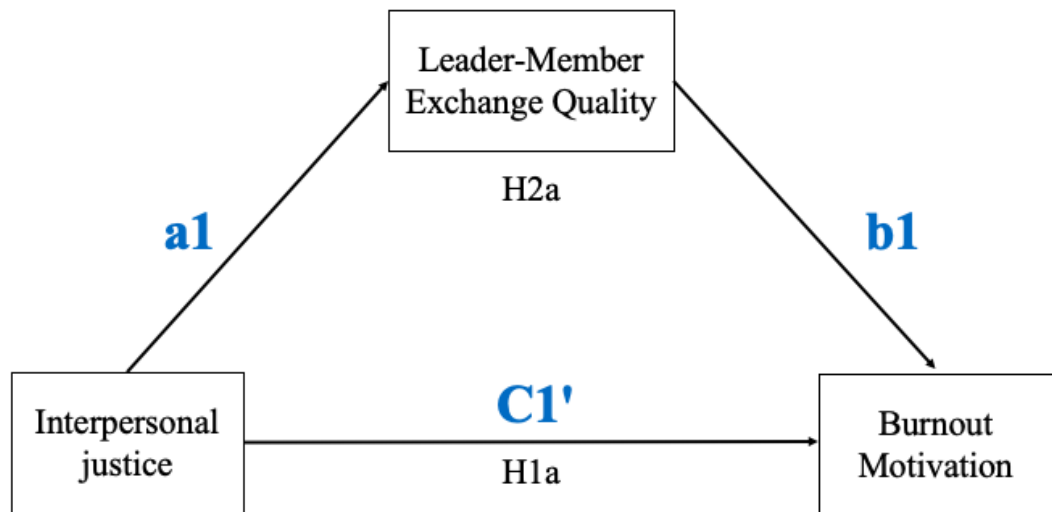
Figure 5: The Mediated Model 1 (C1' = direct effect in Model 1)
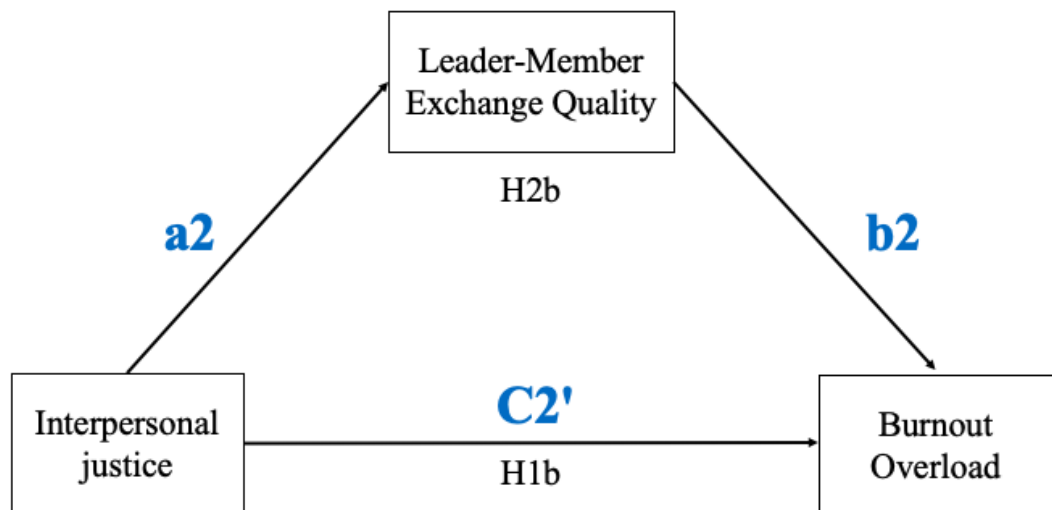
Figure 6: The Mediated Model 2 (C2' = direct effect in Model 2)

Due to the lack of support for H1a and H1b, the application of the aforementioned mediation analysis to evaluate H2a and H2b came to an end, leading us to abandon our proposed hypothesized models. Subsequently, a transition was made to an exploratory research phase to investigate the relationships between the remaining variables. The aim was to investigate step two of the study, as outlined earlier, where a regression analysis to assess the association between interpersonal justice and LMX quality was performed (represented by path a1). For step three, the relationship between LMX quality and Burnout Motivation and Burnout Overload was analyzed (represented by paths a1 and a2, respectively). The findings revealed no significant associations

between these variables, as noted in the results section (part 4.2.5.2). Despite this, all exploratory regression analyses were conducted with the control variables to verify whether any significant relationships could be detected. However, no significant differences were observed, indicating that the control variables did not have a significant impact on the findings.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

In Table 1, the descriptive statistics presents all items measuring interpersonal justice (IPJ), leader-member exchange quality (LMX) and burnout (BBI), as well as the control variables with the number of responses (N), minimums (Min.), maximums (Max.), means (for scale variables), modes (for categorical variables), standard deviations (SD), and level of skewness and kurtosis with standard errors (SE). Upon inspection of the relevant table, it is apparent that IPJ Items 1, 2, 3, and 4 display a significantly high positive kurtosis value of 4.588 (S.E=.428), 10.846 (S.E=.427), 8.239 (S.E=.427), and 11.303 (S.E=.430), respectively. These values have been obtained after excluding any outliers, as determined by performing a box plot analysis. The issues related to kurtosis and skewness, which have been previously mentioned in the data analysis (part 4.1), have been sufficiently addressed during the factor analysis stage. This has been achieved by substituting the original variables with factors, which were then tested for normality before their incorporation into the regression analysis.

Frequency tables of the control variables have been included in this study and are presented in Tables 2 to 6. The purpose of including these tables is to offer a comprehensive overview of the distribution of our sample across different demographic groups, and provide detailed descriptions of the dispersion of the sample with respect to various demographic variables.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics (post exclusion of outliers)

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Mode	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
IPJ Item 1	126	3	5	4.80	<NA>	.456	-2.267	.216	4.588	.428
IPJ Item 2	127	2	5	4.81	<NA>	.484	-3.026	.215	10.846	.427
IPJ Item 3	127	3	5	4.85	<NA>	.419	-2.912	.215	8.239	.427
IPJ Item 4	125	1	5	4.70	<NA>	.785	-3.264.	.217	11.303	.430
LMX Item 1	112	1	5	3.86	<NA>	.826	-.704	.228	.759	.453
LMX Item 2	112	1	5	3.95	<NA>	.815	-.613	.228	.651	.453
LMX Item 3	112	2	5	4.04	<NA>	.752	-.462	.228	-.048	.453
LMX Item 4	112	2	5	4.14	<NA>	.721	-.368	.228	-.498	.453
LMX Item 5	111	1	5	3.43	<NA>	1.015	-.424	.229	.086	.455
LMX Item 6	112	2	5	4.03	<NA>	.753	-.302	.228	-.471	.453
LMX Item 7	112	2	5	3.96	<NA>	.747	-.074	.228	-.846	.453
BBI Item 1	108	1	6	3.09	<NA>	1.212	.205	.233	-.812	.461
BBI Item 2	108	1	6	2.47	<NA>	1.249	.651	.233	-.410	.461
BBI Item 3	108	1	6	2.24	<NA>	1.101	.790	.233	.194	.461
BBI Item 4	107	1	6	2.77	<NA>	1.371	.612	.234	-.630	.463
BBI Item 5	107	1	6	2.60	<NA>	1.273	.797	.234	-.049	.463
BBI Item 6	107	1	6	2.57	<NA>	1.237	.598	.234	-.543	.463
BBI Item 7	108	1	6	2.23	<NA>	1.258	1.016	.233	.455	.461
BBI Item 8	108	1	6	2.37	<NA>	1.250	.901	.233	.156	.461
BBI Item 9	108	1	6	2.35	<NA>	1.468	.830	.233	-.569	.461
Valid N (listwise)	102									
Sex	107	1	2	<NA>	1	.497	.287	.234	-1.954	.463
Age	108	2	5	<NA>	2	1.020	.796	.233	-.545	.461
Organization Size	108	1	5	<NA>	4	1.088	-.571	.233	-.867	.461
Years Experience	108	1	4	<NA>	3	1.112	.235	.233	-1.135	.461
Years with Immediate Leader	108	1	5	<NA>	3	1.027	.460	.233	.256	.461
Valid N (listwise)	102									

Table 2.

Frequency Table (Sex)

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Parentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Male	61	48.0	57.0	57.0
	Female	46	36.2	43.0	100.0
	Total	107	84.3	100.0	
Missing	System	20	15.7		
Total	112	127	100.0		

Table 3.

Frequency Table (Age)

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Parentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	21 - 29	48	37.8	44.4	44.4
	30 - 39	32	25.2	29.6	74.1
	40 - 49	16	12.6	14.8	88.9
	50 - 59	12	9.4	11.1	100.0
	Total	108	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	19	15.0		
Total	112	127	100.0		

Table 4.

Frequency Table (Organizational size)

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Parentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Less than 50	16	12.6	14.8	14.8
	50 - 250	17	13.4	15.7	30.6
	251 - 1000	32	25.2	29.6	60.2
	1001 - 5000	42	33.1	38.9	99.1
	More than 5000	1	.8	.9	100.0
	Total	108	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	19	15.0		
Total	112	127	100.0	14.8	

Table 5.

Frequency Table (Years of Experience)

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Parentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Less than 1 year	1	.8	.9	.9
	1 year	22	17.3	20.4	21.3
	2 - 4 years	44	34.6	40.7	62.0
	5 -7 years	13	10.2	12.0	74.1
	7 years or more	28	22.0	25.9	100.0
	Total	108	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	19	15.0		
Total		127	100.0		

Table 6.

Frequency Table (Years with Immediate leader)

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Parentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Less than 1 year	14	11.0	13.0	13.0
	1 year	33	26.0	30.6	43.5
	2 - 4 years	47	37.0	43.5	87.0
	5 - 7 years	6	4.7	5.6	92.6
	7 years or more	8	6.3	7.4	100.0
	Total	108	85.0	100.0	
Missing	System	19	15.0		
Total		127	100.0		

4.2.2 Common Method Bias

To test for common method bias (CMB), a Harman one-factor test was conducted on all continuous variables. The test produced 20 factors, where the first variable accounted for 34% of the variance, and the consecutive variables accounted for 14%, 9%, 6%, 5% and less. As the first variable complied with the set threshold of 50%, there was no issue with CMB.

4.2.3 Factor Analysis

By running a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotations, five new factors were identified (displayed in Table 8). While controlling for the reliability of each individual factor, it was discovered that the fifth factor, containing IPJ Item 4 and LMX Item 1, did not comply with the acceptable Cronbach's alpha of $>.50$ (Hair et al., 2019). With an $\alpha = 0.414$, factor 5 would not be reliable, and the decision was made to not include this factor in further analysis (categorized at "Not Valid" in Table 8). As a result, a four factor solution was accepted. Each factor was given a descriptive name in terms of the items they contained, namely "Burnout Motivation" (containing BBI Items 2-6, 8 and 9), "LMX" (containing LMX Items 2-7), "IPJ" (containing IPJ Items 2-4), and "Burnout Overload" (containing BBI Item 1 and 7). Burnout Motivation, LMX, and IPJ all had a high level of reliability (.903, .832 and .904, respectively), whereas it was moderate for Burnout Overload (.611). All four factors therefore had acceptable reliability, and satisfied the cut-off value for both skewness and kurtosis of values between ±3. Additionally, the cross-sectional data of the anti-image correlations were assessed, which yielded satisfactory results as all values exceeded 0.6. Table 7 displays the correlation matrix resulting from the factor analysis, revealing that there were no statistically significant correlations detected among the variables.

Due to the division of the initial burnout construct, there were now two constructs measuring burnout. Therefore, the hypothesized model had to be altered, as well as the initial hypotheses. Both H1 and H2 were split in two, resulting in two reformed research models (see Figure 5 and 6 in part 4.1).

Table 7.

Correlation Matrix (Correlation)

		IPJ Item 1	IPJ Item 2	IPJ Item 3	IPJ Item 4	LMX Item 1	LMX Item 2	LMX Item 3	LMX Item 4	LMX Item 5	LMX Item 6	LMX Item 7	BBI Item 1	BBI Item 2	BBI Item 3	BBI Item 4	BBI Item 5	BBI Item 6	BBI Item 7	BBI Item 8	BBI Item 9
Correlation	IPJ Item 1	1.000																			
	IPJ Item 2	.499	1.000																		
	IPJ Item 3	.566	.699	1.000																	
	IPJ Item 4	.091	.102	.092	1.000																
	LMX Item 1	.118	.265	.259	.266	1.000															
	LMX Item 2	.297	.355	.429	.105	.482	1.000														
	LMX Item 3	.154	.296	.232	.165	.424	.505	1.000													
	LMX Item 4	.281	.358	.376	-.006	.259	.524	.345	1.000												
	LMX Item 5	.154	.295	.255	.131	.275	.342	.277	.389	1.000											
	LMX Item 6	.259	.382	.323	-.014	.275	.561	.422	.585	.428	1.000										
	LMX Item 7	.226	.352	.296	.153	.434	.545	.516	.551	.408	.525	1.000									
	BBI Item 1	-.245	-.122	-.137	-.147	.080	-.026	.059	.010	.187	.123	-.008	1.000								
	BBI Item 2	-.242	-.224	-.268	-.111	-.232	-.402	-.406	-.325	-.059	-.185	-.360	.207	1.000							
	BBI Item 3	-.279	-.107	-.219	-.019	.008	-.117	-.034	-.039	.010	.104	-.143	.366	.343	1.000						
	BBI Item 4	-.269	-.237	-.293	-.106	-.352	-.311	-.360	-.215	-.152	-.123	-.271	-.086	.608	.389	1.000					
	BBI Item 5	-.357	-.174	-.166	-.046	-.238	-.340	-.255	-.250	-.075	-.147	-.304	.189	.759	.505	.645	1.000				
	BBI Item 6	-.299	-.219	-.157	-.011	-.223	-.303	-.366	-.251	-.148	-.170	-.400	.087	.633	.430	.681	.790	1.000			
	BBI Item 7	-.218	-.147	-.195	-.010	-.090	-.248	-.185	-.069	.056	.014	-.069	.472	.461	.408	.249	.442	.292	1.000		
	BBI Item 8	-.370	-.340	-.333	-.054	-.244	-.322	-.340	-.251	-.148	-.117	-.324	.191	.669	.467	.647	.709	.684	.447	1.000	
	BBI Item 9	-.352	-.416	-.286	-.004	-.274	-.391	-.431	-.345	-.161	-.270	-.376	.131	.605	.258	.468	.560	.597	.317	.644	1.000

Table 8.

Factor Analysis and Reliability

	Component				
	Burnout Motivation	LMX	IPJ	Burnout Overload	Not Valid
Cronbach Alpha	.903	.832	.904	.611	.414
N	103	103	103	103	103
BBI Item 5	.867				
BBI Item 6	.865				
BBI Item 4	.834				
BBI Item 8	.812				
BBI Item 2	.761				
BBI Item 9	.644				
BBI Item 3	.534				
LMX Item 6		.809			
LMX Item 4		.744			
LMX Item 2		.740			
LMX Item 7		.734			
LMX Item 3		.625			
LMX Item 5		.507			
IPJ Item 3			.830		
IPJ Item 2			.782		
IPJ Item 1			.750		
BBI Item 1				.873	
BBI Item 7				.713	
IPJ Item 4					.867
LMX Item 1					.584

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax Rotation

Table 9.

Descriptive Statistics (of the factors)

	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	SE	Statistic	SE
Burnout Motivation	103	5.26900	-1.66741	3.90159	-.0099283	1.00708155	.951	.238	.622	.472
LMX	103	4.63300	-2.39777	2.23523	.0185646	.99707213	-.332	.238	-.543	.472
IPJ	103	4.11229	-2.76078	1.35151	.0847494	.79689319	-1.258	.238	2.190	.472
Burnout Overload	103	5.13062	-1.93734	3.19328	-.0101070	1.00702889	.420	.238	-.219	.472
Valid N (listwise)	103									

4.2.4 One-Way Analysis of Variance

A One-Way between-groups ANOVA was performed to compare the mean scores of all variables across different groups for both demographic variables (i.e., 'sex', 'age', and 'company size') and circumstantial variables (i.e., 'Years of experience' and 'Years with immediate leader') used as control variables in the analysis.

Sex

A one-way ANOVA of all variables (Burnout Overload, Burnout Motivation, LMX and IPJ) on the control variable "sex" (Man, Woman and Other) was conducted. This revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the sex groups and the variables Burnout Overload (p=.838), Burnout Motivation (p=.987), LMX (p=.863) and IPJ (p=.681). Since there were no differences, it was not necessary to conduct a Scheffé post-hoc test for multiple comparisons.

Age

The results of our second one-way ANOVA, which was conducted to analyze the impact of all variables on the control variable "Age", were examined. The age groups were categorized as "20 or younger," "21-29," "30-39," "40-49," "50-59," "60-69," and "70 and older." The statistical analysis revealed that there were no significant differences among the age groups for the variables Burnout Overload (p=.594), Burnout Motivation (p=.195), LMX (p=.238), and IPJ (p=.974). Therefore, it was deemed unnecessary to conduct a Scheffé post-hoc test for multiple comparisons.

Company Size

The third one-way ANOVA, tested all variables on the control variable "Company Size" ("Less than 50", "50 - 250", "251 - 1000, "1001 - 5000" and "More than 5000") revealed no significant difference between the company size groups and the variables Burnout Overload (p=.725), Burnout Motivation (p=.872), LMX (p=.292) and IPJ (p=.239). As a result, it was determined that there is no need to conduct a Scheffé post-hoc test for multiple comparisons.

Years of Experience

Further, the fourth one-way ANOVA aimed to investigate the impact of all variables on the control variable "Years of Experience," with the experience groups categorized as "1 year," "2-4 years," "5-7 years," and "7 years or more." The statistical analysis showed that there were no significant differences among the experience groups for the variables Burnout Overload (p=.242), Burnout Motivation (p=.844), LMX (p=.660), and IPJ (p=.681). Consequently, it was determined that there is no need to perform a Scheffé post-hoc test for multiple comparisons.

Years with Immediate Leader

The final one-way ANOVA examined the impact of all variables on the control variable "Years with immediate leader" ("under 1 year", "1 year, "2-4 years", "5-7 years and "7 years or more") revealed no significant difference between the years of experience groups and the variables Burnout Overload (p=.705), Burnout Motivation (p=.599), LMX (p=.758) and IPJ (p=.827). As a result, it was deemed unnecessary to conduct a Scheffé post-hoc test for multiple comparisons.

4.2.5 Hypotheses Testing

4.2.5.1 Regression Analysis

To test hypotheses H1a and H1b, a regression analysis was conducted to investigate the proposed relationships. The p-values for both relationships were higher than the conventional threshold of $p < .05$ for statistical significance, indicating a lack of a significant relationship. The relationship between IPJ (IV) and Burnout Motivation (DV) was found to be insignificant ($\beta = .055$, t = .549, p = .584), as was the relationship between IPJ (IV) and Burnout Overload (DV) ($\beta =$

.056, t = .562, p = .575) (refer to Table 12). As a result, both H1a and H1b were rejected due to insufficient evidence supporting the hypothesized relationships. Consequently, H2a and H2b were also rejected as LMX quality could not mediate a non-existent relationship.

4.2.5.2 Exploratory Research - Regression analysis

Given the lack of significant relationships among the variables necessary for advancing the analysis of the research model and hypotheses, further progression involved entering an exploratory research phase to investigate the relationships between the remaining variables. In the first instance, the relationship between IPJ (IV) and LMX (DV) was examined. The findings revealed that the two variables lacked a significant relationship (β = -.112, t = -1.128, p = .262). Subsequently, the relationship between LMX (IV) and Burnout Motivation (DV) was investigated, which also showed no significant relationship (β = .009, t = .087, p = .931). Finally, an attempt was made to determine if there was a significant relationship between LMX (IV) and Burnout Overload (DV), which the analysis revealed was not the case (β = .009, t = .092, p = .927) (see Table 12). Thus, based on the exploratory research, no noteworthy findings were uncovered.

Below is a comprehensive presentation of the results obtained from all the regression analyses performed, which are listed in Tables 10 to 12.

Table 10.

Model Summary of all Regression Models

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
IPJ (IV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	.055	.003	-.007	1.01054592
IPJ (IV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	.056	.003	-.007	1.01041956
IPJ (IV) → LMX (DV)	.112	.012	.003	.99574281
LMX (IV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	.009	.000	-.010	1.01201710
LMX (IV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	.009	.000	-.010	1.01195772

Table 11.

ANOVA table for Regression Models.

Model		Sum of square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
IPJ (IV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	Regression	.308	1	.308	.302	.584
	Residual	103.142	101	1.021		
	Total	103.450	102			
IPJ(IV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	Regression	.323	1	.323	.316	.575
	Residual	103.116	101	1.021		
	Total	103.438	102			
IPJ (IV) → LMX (DV)	Regression	1.262	1	1.262	1.273	.262
	Residual	100.142	101	.992		
	Total	101.404	102			
LMX (DV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	Regression	.008	1	.008	.008	.931
	Residual	103.442	101	1.024		
	Total	103.450	102			
LMX (DV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	Regression	.009	1	.009	.008	.927
	Residual	103.430	101	1.024		
	Total	103.438	102			

Table 12.

Coefficients for all Regression Models.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
IPJ (IV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	(Constant)	-.016	.100		-.158	.875
	IPJ	.069	.126	.055	.549	.584
IPJ (IV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	(Constant)	-.016	.100		-.161	.873
	IPJ	.071	.126	.056	.562	.575
IPJ (IV) → LMX (DV)	(Constant)	.030	.099		.308	.759
	IPJ	-.140	.124	-.112	-1.128	.262
LMX (DV) → Burnout Motivation (DV)	(Constant)	-.010	.100		-.101	.920
	LMX	.009	.100	.009	.087	.931
LMX (DV) → Burnout Overload (DV)	(Constant)	-.010	.100		-.103	.918
	LMX	.009	.100	.009	.092	.927

5.0 Discussion

5.1 Discussion of hypotheses

This chapter of the thesis presents and evaluates the findings derived from the conducted study. This study has focused on investigating the following two research questions: "*What is the relationship between interpersonal justice and burnout?*" and *"What is the role of LMX quality in the relationship between interpersonal justice and job burnout?"*. After thoroughly examining the research questions and conducting an extensive literature review on burnout, interpersonal justice, and LMX quality, two hypotheses were derived. However, during the initial factor analysis, a two-factor solution for the burnout construct was discovered, which was deemed acceptable and saved as new variables. To accurately reflect the specific items associated with each factor, the variables were renamed "Burnout Motivation" and "Burnout Overload". Consequently, the

division of burnout into two distinct factors required a revision of the initial hypotheses from two to four:

H1a: By increasing the perceived interpersonal justice, the occurrence of Burnout Motivation will decrease.
H1b: By increasing the perceived interpersonal justice, the occurrence of Burnout Overload will decrease.
H2a: LMX will mediate the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and Burnout Motivation.
H2b: "LMX will mediate the relationship between employees' perceived interpersonal justice and Burnout Overload.

Based on the results presented in this study, the regression analysis indicated the absence of a statistically significant relationship between interpersonal justice and Burnout Motivation, as well as between interpersonal justice and Burnout Overload. As a result, the analysis did not provide support for hypotheses **H1a** and **H1b**. It is worth noting that the literature review suggested a high likelihood of perceived interpersonal justice acting as a preventive factor for employees experiencing job burnout (e.g., Cole et al., 2010; Son et al., 2014; Khan et al., 2020). Therefore, it was unexpected to observe the lack of a significant relationship in the current study. Consequently, while previous research has consistently shown a link between interpersonal justice and burnout, the findings of this particular study do not provide support for such a significant relationship in the context of the particular sample – which in this case is derived from the consulting industry.

Accordingly, the examination of mediation came to a halt due to the underlying assumption that a statistically significant relationship must exist between interpersonal justice and both Burnout Motivation and Burnout Overload. Therefore, further investigation of **H2a** and **H2b** was ceased, leading to the abandonment of the initial hypothesized models. This decision was based on the understanding that LMX quality cannot act as a mediating factor in the absence of an established relationship between the variables.

5.2 Discussion of the exploratory research

Given that all four hypotheses were rejected, the study entered an exploratory research phase to identify potential significant relationships between the remaining variables. To this end, a regression analysis was employed to examine the association between interpersonal justice and LMX (represented by path a1), as well as the relationships between LMX and Burnout Motivation, and Burnout Overload (represented by paths a1 and a2, respectively). Notably, the existing literature, presented in the literature review, suggested the presence of significant relationships among these variables. However, contrary to expectations, the findings surprisingly failed to reveal any significant associations. Therefore, based on the exploratory research, no noteworthy findings were uncovered.

5.3 Implications

5.3.1 Theoretical contributions

While the findings of this study did not yield statistically significant results, they still contribute valuable insights to academia. Currently, there is a shortage of research exploring the proposed relationships within the consulting industry, particularly in Norway. Therefore, this research contribution fills a crucial knowledge gap in this specific context.

This study follows the current research trend of utilizing the COR theory to investigate LMX and burnout (Harris et al., 2011; Agarwal, 2018; Jin et al., 2020). Given the prior research on LMX and interpersonal justice, and their effect on reducing burnout, it is intriguing that the present study fails to replicate these findings. This discrepancy suggests that country and industry differences may influence the relationship between these constructs. Previous studies conducted in different settings consistently reported significant relationships, but the findings cast doubt on their generalizability to the consulting industry in Norway. Consequently, the results of this study provide limited support for existing research on similar topics and raise concerns regarding the applicability of current findings to this industry.

Despite contradicting the majority of previous findings, a few studies do support the non-correlational results observed in the present study. For instance, Campana and Hammoud (2015) conducted a study involving a sample of 75 nurses in the USA. Amongst other findings, they reported that the association

between interpersonal justice and burnout lacked statistical significance. Furthermore, another study focused on the association between LMX and burnout. It hypothesized a negative impact of LMX on emotional exhaustion, one of the three syndromes of burnout. However, the results of this study indicated that the connection between LMX and emotional exhaustion was not statistically significant, thus failing to support its hypothesis (Lee, 2011).

To summarize, while the majority of the current study's findings may contradict the presented results, the inclusion of studies like those conducted by Campana and Hammoud (2015) and Lee (2011) provides important insights that support the findings in this study. These contributions contribute to the broader body of literature and enhance the understanding of the complex relationship between interpersonal justice, LMX, and burnout.

5.3.2 Practical implications

The data analysis in the present study revealed that the respondents' average mean scores on the LMX quality and interpersonal justice constructs were considerably high (with an average mean of 3.916 and 4.79, respectively, on a 5-point scale). This indicates that the sample group, which was made up exclusively of consultants resided in Norway, reported a significant level of interpersonal justice within their work environment and exhibited a high quality connection with their immediate leader. It is worth noting that this high mean score on both constructs may be unique to the consultant population, which could make this group a compelling target for exploring industry-specific differences in LMX quality and interpersonal justice.

Further, existing research has established a significant relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and interpersonal justice with burnout, indicating that high levels of LMX quality and interpersonal justice may serve as protective factors against employee burnout (e.g., Harris & Kacmar, 2006; Hetland et al., 2007; Cole et al., 2010; Cordes et al., 1996; Derindag et al., 2021). This knowledge has practical implications for organizations, as they may consider investing in interventions that improve these factors in order to prevent employee burnout. However, this study, conducted on consulting firms in Norway, did not find any evidence to support these relationships. This underscores the need for consulting organizations to take note of these findings, as they cast doubt on the assumptions and conclusions drawn from previous studies regarding the link

between LMX, interpersonal justice, and burnout. Relying solely on high-quality LMX and interpersonal justice to protect against burnout may not be an effective approach, and it is imperative for organizations to recognize this. Rather, they should focus on implementing evidence-based techniques that work in their specific context. However, it is important to note that high-quality LMX and interpersonal justice remain important for other areas of organizational functioning, but may not specifically reduce burnout.

5.4 Limitations and directions for future research

5.4.1 Limitations

There are several limitations in this study, which includes how its statistical power, research design and impact can have an effect on the reliability and validity of the obtained results. Firstly, an important limitation to consider in this study is the level of experience in the sample. Although the sample size was satisfactory, other studies which have found significant relationships between this study's desired constructs have had larger samples with more experienced employees. In a study by Son et al. (2014), the mean age of their final sample reported close to 35 years, where 32.4% had worked for their current employer for 4-9 years, and 22.1% for 10 years or more. Their study closely resembled the purpose of this study, as it also researched LMX as a mediator between interpersonal justice and job burnout. Similarly, Thompson et al. (2018) drew a total sample of 753 employees and 148 leaders studying low-quality LMX and its effect on followers, where the average age for employees and leaders were 41.6 and 42.3 respectively, and the length of time an employee had with their immediate leader averaged at 5.5 years. The majority of the respondents in the sample obtained in our study were between 21-29 years old (44%), reported their work experience to be between 2-4 years (41%), and had worked with their current immediate leader for 2-4 years (43%). Based on these differences, having a young sample with minimal work experience may have impacted the results, which may be a reason why this study contradicts prior research.

Considering the sample, another limitation may be that the measures utilized to test the three constructs were developed using samples from different industries and countries, which may affect how these apply to the sample which is based in the Norwegian consulting industry. Both the interpersonal justice and job burnout measures were based on two large samples, where the latter focused on

managers in Finland and Estonia (Colquitt, 2001; Salmela-Aro et al., 2011). Further, the measure for LMX was developed from a non-specific sample, and based on a comprehensive review of prior research using validated data from diverse organizations – none of which included consulting companies (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As there is reason to believe that there may be differences between countries, as well as differences between industries, the selected measures may not have been optimally tailored for the unique characteristics of this study's specific sample. An additional limitation related to these measures is that they were not translated to the native language of the participants. Although this was a deliberate choice in order to not potentially implicate the validity of the measures, there lies a possibility that some questions may have been misinterpreted depending on their English proficiency.

The data collection technique used in this study is considered a limitation, as it may influence the findings. While snowball sampling allowed for reaching the desired population in an effective and cost-efficient manner, the act of utilizing personal networks and social media, and this network further recruiting other participants, limited our ability to control who responded to the survey and assess the total response rate. Although filter questions were applied in an attempt to reach only the desired respondents who participated in the survey, there is no guarantee that the respondents accurately represent the studied population.

Based on the nature of the sample and the chosen technique of which the data was collected, the impact of this study is limited in terms of generalizability. As a majority of the respondents are young and fairly inexperienced in their professional fields, they may not sufficiently capture the population as a whole. Additionally, as snowball sampling is categorized as a form of convenience sampling, this technique poses a threat to the generalizability of the study as it may not fully represent the entire population.

Another limitation regarding the methodology of data collection is the accuracy of capturing true perceptions and attitudes through the self-completion questionnaire. In social sciences, researchers often rely on self-reports as they are easily obtained, and may often be the only feasible option in assessing the constructs of interest. However, as research participants generally want to respond in a manner which makes them look as good as possible, they may under-report behaviors which they perceive as inappropriate, and over-report behaviors which are deemed appropriate (Stewart & Elisa, 2002). Given that burnout may be

considered a sensitive and uncomfortable topic, participants in the study could have under-reported their experiences. The same notion might hold for LMX, where participants may have over-reported the relationship quality with their leader if they deem it more favorable. Stewart and Elisa (2002) find that using multiple sources of data is the most advantageous strategy for reducing bias. Using a single data collection method may introduce self-reporting bias, which could impact the validity of the study.

In the factor analysis, the validated measurement scales were subjected to item separation into distinct factors. During this procedure, two items, one from the LMX construct and another from the interpersonal justice construct, were deemed unsuitable for further analyses, consequently undermining the integrity of the existing scales. Moreover, the burnout construct was subjected to a two-factor solution as a result of the aforementioned factor analysis, further undermining the pre-existing scale. Three out of the four additional factors included in the subsequent analysis demonstrated higher Cronbach's alpha values compared to those reported for the original scales in previous studies (Salmela-Aro et al., 2011; Hansen et al., 2013; Gerstner & Day, 1997). However, one of the two-factor solutions representing burnout, specifically the factor known as "Burnout Overload", displayed a lower Cronbach's alpha value than the original scale. While the majority of factors exhibited high Cronbach's alpha values, suggesting no significant decrease in validity and reliability, the Burnout Overload factor may exhibit a slight reduction in its validity and reliability. This limitation underscores the need for caution in interpreting and generalizing the findings from the analysis.

5.4.2 Directions for future research

The study has revealed several intriguing areas that could be investigated in future research, offering scholars plenty of opportunities to further explore the topic and expand our understanding in the field. Future investigations may include replicating the presented study with a more extensive participant pool and individuals with greater tenure in higher-level occupational roles to enhance the statistical validity of the findings. In addition to the self-reported questionnaire, employing multiple data collection techniques is advised for the replication study. For instance, a longitudinal approach could be employed by distributing the same survey at two different time points in time.

Another suggestion for future research is to conduct a cross-cultural study to explore whether cultural variations in the consulting industry can have an effect on the relationships suggested in this research. Due to different norms, values, and beliefs across cultures, interpersonal justice – which is concerned with how individuals perceive the quality of their interpersonal treatment during corporate decision-making (Alias et al., 2012) – could be interpreted and experienced differently. According to Colquitt et al. (2001), there is an argument that contextual factors shape individuals' perceptions of justice. Additionally, Erdogan et al. (2006) suggest that cultural norms play a significant role in determining the level of attention individuals devote to interpersonal fairness. Furthermore, cultural variations may have an impact on the quality of LMX, which refers to leaders' differential treatment of followers through various types of exchange (Dansereau et al., 1995). According to Erkutlu (2011), followers' values and norms may have an impact on their drive to establish high-quality LMX with leaders. Therefore, future research should aim to investigate the role of culture and other contextual factors in examining the proposed relationships in this study.

Additionally, further research could involve investigating other variables which could have a more significant impact on job burnout than interpersonal justice and leader-member exchange (LMX). Although previous studies have highlighted the importance of these two factors in preventing burnout in various industries and countries, it is probable that other factors within the consulting industry could alleviate or reduce burnout. Possible areas for investigation could include organizational culture, workload, job demands and resources, and employee well-being and support programs. Given the relative lack of research in this industry, such investigations could offer valuable insights for both researchers and practitioners in the field of consulting, potentially leading to the development of more effective interventions to prevent and mitigate burnout among consultants.

Lastly, one possible direction for future research is to conduct qualitative research on the proposed relationships in this study. A qualitative approach could be beneficial as it allows for a deeper understanding of the specific phenomenon studied in this research (Bell et al., 2018). For instance, a qualitative study could explore how different forms of organizational justice, such as distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, are perceived and experienced by employees working in the consulting industry. Similarly, qualitative research could examine

the ways in which different aspects of LMX quality, such as trust, respect, and communication, affect the experiences of consultants in relation to burnout. By applying qualitative methods, it could provide valuable insights to help researchers better understand how consultants in the Norwegian consulting industry perceive and experience different dimensions of organizational justice and LMX quality in relation to job burnout.

6.0 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the following two research questions: *"What is the relationship between interpersonal justice and burnout?"* and *"What is the role of LMX quality in the relationship between interpersonal justice and job burnout?"*. Consistent with the current research trend, which has extensively utilized the COR theory to predominantly examine burnout and LMX (Harris et al., 2011; Jin et al., 2020; Agarwal, 2018), this study took a similar approach when exploring the research questions. To address the research questions, four hypotheses were formulated; however, the subsequent analysis did not provide empirical support for the expected relationships.

The research findings indicate that interpersonal justice does not exert a direct influence on burnout within the defined scope of this study. This challenges the COR theory's notion that employees' perception of fair treatment in interpersonal interactions contributes to a reduction in burnout, as it is considered as a potential resource to mitigate burnout. Additionally, the findings suggest that the LMX quality does not have a significant role in this relationship. This also challenges the COR theory's assumption that individuals who receive greater resource allocation from their leaders and establish high-quality connections are capable of preventing the occurrence of burnout. Despite presenting a perspective that conflicts with the COR theory, it is crucial to carefully consider the study-specific results. Given the potential impact of unaccounted factors or contextual variables, these findings do not definitively invalidate COR theory.

Further, it is crucial to note that research results can vary depending on a sample's characteristics and research method. The discrepancy with previous research might also suggest that cultural and industry differences may have an effect on the relationship between burnout, interpersonal justice, and LMX. As a result, companies should be careful of relying simply on LMX quality and interpersonal justice in reducing burnout. Instead, they should concentrate on

context-specific, evidence-based approaches. While high-quality LMX and interpersonal justice remain important for organizational functioning, their direct impact on reducing burnout may be less significant than previously assumed.

References

Abbas, M., Rafi, N., Dost, M. & Ali, M. (2021). Role of organizational justice in facilitating LMX and its impact on psychological well-being and creativity of employees. *Multicultural Education*, 7(8), 143-155. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5172973

Abu‑Bader, S. H. (2000). Work satisfaction, burnout, and turnover among social workers in Israel: A causal diagram. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 9(3), 191-200. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2397.00128

Agarwal, U. A. (2018). Examining links between abusive supervision, PsyCap, LMX and outcomes. *Management Decision*. https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-02-2017-0103

Alias, M., Rasdi, R. M., & Said, A. M. A. (2012). The impact of negative affectivity, job satisfaction and interpersonal justice on workplace deviance in the private organizations. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 20(3), 829-846.

Anand, S., Hu, J., Liden, R. C., & Vidyarthi, P. R. (2011). Leader-member exchange: Recent research findings and prospects for the future. *The Sage handbook of leadership*, 311-325. http://digital.casalini.it/9781446209875

Aquino, K., Galperin, B. L., & Bennett, R. J. (2004). Social status and aggressiveness as moderators of the relationship between interactional justice and workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34(5), 1001-1029. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2004.tb02581.x

Arnold, K. A., Turner, N., Barling, J., Kelloway, E. K., & McKee, M. C. (2007). Transformational leadership and psychological well-being: the mediating role of meaningful work. *Journal of occupational health psychology,* 12(3), 193. ttps://doi.org/10.1037/1076-8998.12.3.193

Atwater, L., & Carmeli, A. (2009). Leader–member exchange, feelings of energy, and involvement in creative work. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(3), 264-275. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.07.009

Azoulay, E., De Waele, J., Ferrer, R., Staudinger, T., Borkowska, M., Povoa, P., ... & Cecconi, M. (2020). Symptoms of burnout in intensive care unit specialists facing the COVID-19 outbreak. *Annals of intensive care*, 10(1), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13613-020-00722-3

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2017). Job demands–resources theory: Taking stock and looking forward. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 22(3), 273. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000056

Barello, S., Palamenghi, L., & Graffigna, G. (2020). Burnout and somatic symptoms among frontline healthcare professionals at the peak of the Italian COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychiatry research*, 290, 113129. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113129

Bell, E., Bryman, A. & Harley, B. (2018). *Business Research Methods.* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Bernerth, J. B., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., Giles, W. F., & Walker, H. J. (2007). Leader–member social exchange (LMSX): Development and validation of a scale. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 28(8), 979-1003. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.443

Bies, R. J. & Moag, J. (1986). Interactional justice: Communication criteria of fairness. *Research on negotiation in organizations*, 1, 43-55.

Blasius, J., & Thiessen, V. (2010). Assessing the quality of survey data. *Journal of Official Statistics*, 26(3), 329-349.

Bryant, W. & Merritt, S. M. (2019). Unethical pro-organizational behavior and positive leader-employee relationships. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 168, 777-793. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04211-x

Buch, R., Kuvaas, B., Dysvik, A., & Schyns, B. (2014). If and when social and economic leader-member exchange relationships predict follower work effort: The moderating role of work motivation. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal.* https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-09-2012-0121

Buchwald, P., & Hobfoll, S. E. (2004). Burnout aus ressourcentheoretischer Perspektive. *Psychologie in Erziehung und Unterricht*.

Campana, K. L., & Hammoud, S. (2015). Incivility from patients and their families: can organisational justice protect nurses from burnout?. *Journal of nursing management*, 23(6), 716-725. https://doi.org/10.1111/jonm.12201

Cohen-Charash, Y., & Spector, P. E. (2001). The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes,* 86(2), 278-321. https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.2001.2958

Cole, M. S., Bernerth, J. B., Walter, F., & Holt, D. T. (2010). Organizational justice and individuals' withdrawal: Unlocking the influence of emotional

exhaustion. *Journal of Management Studies*, 47(3), 367-390.
https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00864.x

Colquitt, J. A. (2001). On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct
validation of a measure. *Journal of applied psychology*, 86(3), 386.
https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.386

Cordes, C. L., Dougherty, T. W., & Blum, M. (1997). Patterns of burnout among
managers and professionals: A comparison of models. Journal of
Organizational Behavior: *The International Journal of Industrial,
Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior,* 18(6), 685-701.
https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(199711)18:6<685::AID-JOB817>3.0.
CO;2-U

Dansereau, F., Graen, G., & Haga, W. J. (1975). A vertical dyad linkage approach
to leadership within formal organizations: A longitudinal investigation of the
role making process. *Organizational Behavior & Human Performance,* 13(1),
46–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(75)90005-7

Derindag, O. F., Demirtas, O., & Bayram, A. (2021). The Leader-Member
Exchange (LMX) Influence at Organizations: The Moderating Role of
Person-Organization (PO) Fit. *Review of Business,* 41(2).

Deutsch, M. (1985). *Distributive justice: A social-psychological perspective*. Yale
University Press.

DeVellis, R. F., & Thorpe, C. T. (2021). *Scale development: Theory and
applications*. Sage publications.

Diener, E., & Crandall, R. (1978). *Ethics in social and behavioral research*. U
Chicago Press.

Dienesch, R. M., & Liden, R. C. (1986). Leader-member exchange model of
leadership: A critique and further development. *Academy of management
review*, 11(3), 618-634. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1986.4306242

Dixon, D. (2021). *Examining Burnout, Leader Member Exchange Quality,
Experience and OCB in Registered Nurses* (Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral
University).

Edú-Valsania, S., Laguía, A., & Moriano, J. A. (2022). Burnout: A review of
theory and measurement. *International Journal of Environmental Research and
Public Health*, 19(3), 1780. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031780

Erdogan, B., Liden, R. C., & Kraimer, M. L. (2006). Justice and leader-member
exchange: The moderating role of organizational culture. *Academy of*

Management journal, 49(2), 395-406.
https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.20786086

Erkutlu, H. (2011). The moderating role of organizational culture in the
relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship
behaviors. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 32(6), 532-554.
https://doi.org/10.1108/01437731111161058

Estel, V., Schulte, E. M., Spurk, S. & Kauffeld, S. (2019). LMX differentiation is
good for some and bad for others: A multilevel analysis of effects of LMX
differentiation in innovation teams. *Cogent Psychology*, 6(1).
https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2019.1614306

Fassina, N. E., Jones, D. A., & Uggerslev, K. L. (2008). Meta‑analytic tests of
relationships between organizational justice and citizenship behavior: testing
agent‑system and shared‑variance models. *Journal of Organizational
Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and
Organizational Psychology and Behavior,* 29(6), 805-828.
https://doi.org/10.1002/job.494

Ferry, K. (2018). *Worried workers: Korn Ferry survey finds professionals are
more stressed out at work today than 5 years ago.* Korn Ferry Press Release.

Freudenberger, H. J. (1974). Staff burn‑out. *Journal of social issues*, *30*(1),
159-165. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1974.tb00706.x

Furunes, T., Mykletun, R. J., Einarsen, S., & Glasø, L. (2015). Do low-quality
leader-member relationships matter for subordinates? Evidence from three
samples on the validity of the Norwegian LMX scale. *Nordic Journal of
Working Life Studies*, 5(2), 71–87. https://doi.org/10.19154/njwls.v5i2.4794

Gerstner, C. R., & Day, D. V. (1997). Meta-Analytic review of leader–member
exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues. Journal of applied
psychology, 82(6), 827. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.82.6.827

Graen, G. B., & Scandura, T. A. (1987). Toward a psychology of dyadic
organizing. *Research in organizational behavior.*

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership:
Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25
years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The leadership
quarterly,* 6(2), 219-247. https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5

Graen, G., & Cashman, J. F. (1975). A role-making model of leadership in formal
organizations: A developmental approach. *Leadership frontiers*, 143, 165.

Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational behavior and human performance,* 16(2), 250-279. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7

Hagger, M. S. (2015). Conservation of resources theory and the 'strength'model of self-control: Conceptual overlap and commonalities. *Stress and Health, 31*(2), 89-94.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J. & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage.

Halbesleben, J. R. & Buckley, M. R. (2004). Burnout in Organizational Life. *Journal of Management.* 30(6), pp. 859-879. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jm.2004.06.004

Halbesleben, J. R., Neveu, J. P., Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., & Westman, M. (2014). Getting to the "COR" understanding the role of resources in conservation of resources theory. *Journal of management,* 40(5), 1334-1364. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920631452713

Hanasono, Lisa K. (2017). *Leader‑Member Exchange 7 Questionnaire (LMX‑7).* In The Sourcebook of Listening Research (pp. 354–360). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119102991.ch36

Hansen, A. M., Byrne, Z. S., & Kiersch, C. E. (2013). Development and validation of an abridged measure of organizational justice. *The Journal of psychology*, 147(3), 217-244. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2012.683054

Harms, P. D., Credé, M., Tynan, M., Leon, M., & Jeung, W. (2017). Leadership and stress: A meta-analytic review. *The leadership quarterly*, 28(1), 178-194. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.10.006

Harris, K. J., & Kacmar, K. M. (2006). Too much of a good thing: The curvilinear effect of leader-member exchange on stress. *The Journal of social psychology,* 146(1), 65-84. https://doi.org/10.3200/SOCP.146.1.65-84

Harris, K. J., Wheeler, A. R., & Kacmar, K. M. (2011). The mediating role of organizational job embeddedness in the LMX–outcomes relationships. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(2), 271-281. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.02.003

Henle, C. A. (2005). Predicting workplace deviance from the interaction between organizational justice and personality. *Journal of managerial issues*, 247-263. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40604498

Hetland, H., Sandal, G. M., & Johnsen, T. B. (2007). Burnout in the information technology sector: Does leadership matter?. *European journal of work and organizational psychology,* 16(1), 58-75. https://doi.org/10.1080/13594320601084558

Hinton, P. R. (2004). *Statistics explained* (2nd ed. ed.). Routledge.

Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513

Hobfoll, S. E., Shirom, A., & Golembiewski, R. (2000). Conservation of resources theory. *Handbook of organizational behavior*, 57-80.

Hobfoll, S. E. (2001). The influence of culture, community, and the nested‑self in the stress process: Advancing conservation of resources theory. *Applied psychology*, 50(3), 337-421. https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00062

Hobfoll, S. E., Halbesleben, J., Neveu, J. P., & Westman, M. (2018). Conservation of resources in the organizational context: The reality of resources and their consequences. *Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior*, *5*, 103-128. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032117-104640

Houkes, I., Janssen, P. P., de Jonge, J., & Bakker, A. B. (2003). Specific determinants of intrinsic work motivation, emotional exhaustion and turnover intention: A multisample longitudinal study. *Journal of Occupational and organizational Psychology*, 76(4), 427-450. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317903322591578

Huang, X., Chan, S. C. H., Lam, W., & Nan, X. (2010). The joint effect of leader–member exchange and emotional intelligence on burnout and work performance in call centers in China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(7), 1124–1144. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585191003783553

Ilies, R., Nahrgang, J. D., & Morgeson, F. P. (2007). Leader-member exchange and citizenship behaviors: a meta-analysis. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(1), 269. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.269

Ionescu, A. F., & Iliescu, D. (2021). LMX, organizational justice and performance: curvilinear relationships. *Journal of Managerial Psychology.* https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-03-2020-0154

Jin, X., Jiang, J., Li, P., & Li, B. (2020). LMX and voice: A test in the Chinese hospitality industry. *Anatolia*, *31*(1), 131-141. https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2020.1716259

Johnstone, B., Kaiser, A., Injeyan, M.C., Sappleton, K., Chitayat, D., Stephens, D. & Shuman, C. (2016). The Relationship Between Burnout and Occupational Stress in Genetics Counselors. *National Society of Genetics Counselors*. 25, pp. 731-741. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10897-016-9968-3

Judge, T. A., & Colquitt, J. A. (2004). Organizational justice and stress: the mediating role of work-family conflict. *Journal of applied psychology,* 89(3), 395. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.3.395

Kauppila, O. P. (2015). When and how does LMX differentiation influence followers' work outcomes? The interactive roles of one's own LMX status and organizational context. *Personnel Psychology*, 69(2), 357–393. https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12110

Kenny, D. A. (2021). *MEDIATION*. http://davidakenny.net/cm/mediate.htm#BK

Kerrissey, M. J., Hayirli, T. C., Bhanja, A., Stark, N., Hardy, J., & Peabody, C. R. (2022). How psychological safety and feeling heard relate to burnout and adaptation amid uncertainty. *Health Care Management Review*, 47(4), 308-316. doi: 10.1097/HMR.0000000000000338

Khan, A. K., Bell, C. M., & Quratulain, S. (2022). Interpersonal justice and creativity: testing the underlying cognitive mechanisms. *Management Research Review*. https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-03-2021-0206

Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4 ed.). Guilford publications

Kock, F., Berbekova, A., & Assaf, A. G. (2021). Understanding and managing the threat of common method bias: Detection, prevention and control. *Tourism Management*, 86, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104330

Koskinen, K. U., & Pihlanto, P. (2008). Why Knowledge Management in Project-Based Companies?. *In Knowledge Management in Project-Based Companies* (pp. 1-6). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1002/pmj.21266

Krabbe, P. (2016). *The Measurement of Health and Status: Concepts, Methods and Applications from a Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Elsevier Science & Technology.

Kubr, M. (Ed.). (2002). *Management consulting: A guide to the profession.* International Labour Organization.

Lai, J. Y., Chow, C. W., & Loi, R. (2018). The interactive effect of LMX and LMX differentiation on followers' job burnout: Evidence from tourism industry in Hong Kong. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 29(12), 1972-1998. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1216875

Larrivee, B. (2012). *Cultivating Teacher Renewal: Guarding Against Stress and Burnout.United State of American.* R&L Education

Lee, K. E. (2011). Moderating effects of leader-member exchange (LMX) on job burnout in dietitians and chefs of institutional foodservice. *Nutrition research and practice*, 5(1), 80-87. https://doi.org/10.4162/nrp.2011.5.1.80

Lee, R. T., & Ashforth, B. E. (1996). A meta-analytic examination of the correlates of the three dimensions of job burnout. *Journal of applied Psychology,* 81(2), 123.

Lheureux, F., Truchot, D., & Borteyrou, X. (2016). Suicidal tendency, physical health problems and addictive behaviours among general practitioners: their relationship with burnout. *Work & Stress*, *30*(2), 173-192. https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2016.1171806

Liden, R. C., Anand, S., & Vidyarthi, P. (2016). Dyadic relationships. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 3, 139-166. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-041015-062452

Malik, M., Wan, D., Ahmad, M. I., & Naseem, M. A. (2015). The role of LMX in employees' job motivation, satisfaction, empowerment, stress and turnover: Cross country analysis. *Journal of Applied Business Research (JABR)*, (5), 1897-2000.

Marianetti, O., & Passmore, J. (2009). Mindfulness at work: Paying attention to enhance well-being and performance, *Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology and Work*. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195335446.013.0015

Martin, R., Guillaume, Y., Thomas, G., Lee, A., & Epitropaki, O. (2016). Leader–member exchange (LMX) and performance: A meta‑analytic review. *Personnel psychology*, 69(1), 67-121. https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12100

Maslach, C & Leiter, M. P. (1997). *The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What to do about it*. United State of American: Published by Jossey Bass.

Maslach, C. (2003). Job burnout: New directions in research and intervention. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(5), 189–192. https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.bi.no/10.1111/1467-8721.01258

Maslach, C. (2011). Burnout and engagement in the workplace: New perspectives. *European Health Psychologist*, 13(3), 44-47.

Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. J*ournal of occupational behaviour*, 2(2), 99–113. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3000281

Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2008). *The truth about burnout: How organizations cause personal stress and what to do about it*. John Wiley & Sons.

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B. & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job Burnout. Annual *Review of Psychology,* 52, 397- 422. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397

Masterson, S. S., Lewis, K., Goldman, B. M., & Taylor, M. S. (2000). Integrating justice and social exchange: The differing effects of fair procedures and treatment on work relationships. *Academy of Management journal,* 43(4), 738-748. https://doi.org/10.5465/1556364

Matsuo, T., Kobayashi, D., Taki, F., Sakamoto, F., Uehara, Y., Mori, N., & Fukui, T. (2020). Prevalence of health care worker burnout during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in Japan. *JAMA network open*, 3(8), e2017271-e2017271. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.17271

Matuska, K. M., & Christiansen, C. H. (2008). A proposed model of lifestyle balance. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 15(1), 9-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2008.9686602

McLarty, B. D., Muldoon, J., Quade, M., & King, R. A. (2021). Your boss is the problem and solution: How supervisor-induced hindrance stressors and LMX influence employee job neglect and subsequent performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 130, 308-317. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.032

McNeice, K. (2021). *What is Business Consulting and What Advantages Does It Provide?* Accelo. https://www.accelo.com/resources/blog/what-is-business-consulting-and-what-advantages-does-it-provide/

Meriläinen, S., Tienari, J., Thomas, R., & Davies, A. (2004). Management consultant talk: A cross-cultural comparison of normalizing discourse and resistance. *Organization*, 11(4), 539-564. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508404044061

Montano, D., Reeske, A., Franke, F., & Hüffmeier, J. (2017). Leadership, followers' mental health and job performance in organizations: A comprehensive meta‑analysis from an occupational health perspective. *Journal of organizational behavior*, 38(3), 327-350. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2124

Moura, E. C. D., Furtado, L., & Sobral, F. (2021). The Burnout Epidemic During the Covid-19 Pandemic: the Role of LMX in Alleviating Physicians' Burnout. *Revista de Administração de Empresas,* 60, 426-436. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0034-759020200606

Mühlhaus, J. & Bouwmeester, O. (2016). The paradoxical effect of self-categorization on work stress in a high-status occupation: Insights from management consulting. *Human Relations*, 69(9), 1823–1852. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715626255

Müller R. & Locatelli, G. (2023). Philosophical Stances and Theoretical Perspective in Submissions to *Project Management Journal*. *Project Management Journal,* 54(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/87569728231159324

Neveu, J. P. (2007). Jailed resources: Conservation of resources theory as applied to burnout among prison guards. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *28*(1), 21-42. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.393

Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership Theory & Practice* (9th ed.). SAGA publishing

Nunn, K. & Isaacs, D. (2019). Burnout. *Journal of Pediatric and Child Health*, 55, 5-6. https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.bi.no/10.1111/jpc.14331

Ozer, M., Chang, C. H., & Schaubroeck, J. M. (2014). Contextual moderators of the relationship between organizational citizenship behaviours and challenge and hindrance stress. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87(3), 557-578. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12063

Packendorff, J. (2002). *The temporary society and its enemies: Projects from an individual perspective*. In K. Sahlin-Andersson and A. Söderholm (eds), Beyond Project Management. Liber.

Pallant, J. (2020). *SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS* (6 ed.). Routledge.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the

literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of applied psychology*, 88(5), 879. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879

Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of management*, 12(4), 531-544. https://doi.org/10.1177/014920638601200

Prencipe, A., & Tell, F. (2001). Inter-project learning: processes and outcomes of knowledge codification in project-based firms. *Research policy*, *30*(9), 1373-1394. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-7333(01)00157-3

Qualtrics. (2023). *Survey Methodology & Compliance Best Practices.* https://www.qualtrics.com/support/survey-platform/survey-module/survey-checker/survey-methodology-compliance-best-practices/

Reb, J., Chaturvedi, S., Narayanan, J., & Kudesia, R. S. (2019). Leader mindfulness and employee performance: A sequential mediation model of LMX quality, interpersonal justice, and employee stress. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 160(3), 745-763. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3927-x

Rožman, M., Grinkevich, A., & Tominc, P. (2019). Occupational stress, symptoms of burnout in the workplace and work satisfaction of the age-diverse employees. *Organizacija*, 52(1), 46-52. https://doi.org/10.2478/orga-2019-0005

Salmela-Aro, K., Rantanen, J., Hyvönen, K., Tilleman, K., & Feldt, T. (2011). Bergen Burnout Inventory: reliability and validity among Finnish and Estonian managers. *International archives of occupational and environmental health,* 84(6), 635-645. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-010-0594-3

Sanders, K. S., Moorkamp, M., Torka, N., Groenveld, S., & Groenveld, C. (2010). How to support innovative work behavior? The role of LMX and satisfaction with HR Practice. *Technology and Investment,* 1, 59-68.

Saragih, J., Pratama, I., Wardati, J., Silalahi, E. & Tarigan, A. (2019). Can organizational justice dimensions mediate between leader mindfulness and leader-member exchange quality: An empirical study in Indonesia pharmaceutical firms. *Systematic Reviews in Pharmacy*, 11(2), 545-554. DOI: 10.5530/srp.2020.2.82

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2016). *Research Methods for Business Students* (7th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Scandura, T. A. (1999). Rethinking leader-member exchange: An organizational justice perspective. *The leadership quarterly*, 10(1), 25-40. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(99)80007-1

Schaufeli, W. B., & Buunk, B. P. (1996). Professional burnout. *Handbook of work and health psychology,* 1, 383-425.

Siswanti, Y., Tjahjono, H. K., Hartono, A. & Prajogo, W. (2020). Leader-member exchange in mediating interpersonal justice and informational justice climate toward counterproductive work behavior. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 55(4). https://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258-2724.55.4.8

Skakon, J., Nielsen, K., Borg, V., & Guzman, J. (2010). Are leaders' well-being, behaviours and style associated with the affective well-being of their employees? A systematic review of three decades of research. *Work & stress*, *24*(2), 107-139. https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2010.495262

Son, S., Kim, D. Y., & Kim, M. (2014). How perceived interpersonal justice relates to job burnout and intention to leave: The role of leader–member exchange and cognition‑based trust in leaders. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology,* 17(1), 12-24. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.12038

Stewart, I. D., & Elisa, J. G.-V. (2002). Understanding Self-Report Bias in Organizational Behavior Research. Journal of business and psychology, 17(2), 245-260. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1019637632584

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2014). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed., new international ed. ed.). Pearson.

Thomas, C. H., & Lankau, M. J. (2009). Preventing burnout: The effects of LMX and mentoring on socialization, role stress, and burnout. *Human Resource Management: Published in Cooperation with the School of Business Administration,* 48(3), 417-432. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.20288

Thompson, G., Buch, R., & Glasø, L. (2018). Low-quality LMX relationships, leader incivility, and follower responses. *Journal of General Management,* 44(1), 17-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306307018788808

Trougakos, J. P., Beal, D. J., Cheng, B. H., Hideg, I., & Zweig, D. (2015). Too drained to help: a resource depletion perspective on daily interpersonal citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *100*(1), 227. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038082

Turner, J. R., & Keegan, A. (2000). The management of operations in the project-based organisation. *Journal of Change Management*, *1*(2), 131-148. https://doi.org/10.1080/714042464

Turner, R., Huemann, M. & Keegan, A. (2008). Human resource management in the project-oriented organization: Employee well-being and ethical treatment.

International Journal of Project Management, 26(5), 577-585.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2008.05.005

Tyler, T. R., & Bies, R. J. (1990). Beyond formal procedures: The interpersonal
context of procedural justice. *In Applied social psychology and organizational
settings* (pp. 77-98). Psychology Press.

Valcour, M. (2016). Beating Burnout. *Harvard Business Review,* 94(11), 98-101.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308986353_Beating_Burnout

Volmer, J., Spurk, D., & Niessen, C. (2012). Leader–member exchange (LMX),
job autonomy, and creative work involvement. *The leadership quarterly*, 23(3),
456-465. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.10.005

Wang, Y., Ramos, A., Wu, H., Liu, L., Yang, X., Wang, J. & Wang, L. (2015).
Relationship between occupational stress and burnout among Chinese teachers;
a cross-sectional survey in Liaoning, China. *International Archives of
Occupational and Environmental Health.* 88, pp. 589-597.
https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-014-0987-9

Warne, R. T. (2018). Statistics for the social sciences: A general linear model
approach (1 ed.). Cambridge University Press.

WHO (2019). *Burn-out an "occupational phenomenon": International
Classification of Diseases.*
https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupationalphenome
non-international-classification-of-diseases

Williams, E. S., Rathert, C., & Buttigieg, S. C. (2020). The personal and
professional consequences of physician burnout: a systematic review of the
literature. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 77(5), 371-386.
https://doi.org/10.1177/10775587198567

Wright, T. A., & Cropanzano, R. (1998). Emotional exhaustion as a predictor of
job performance and voluntary turnover. *Journal of applied psychology*, *83*(3),
486. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.83.3.486

Wu, Y., Wang, J., Luo, C., Hu, S., Lin, X., Anderson, A. E., ... & Qian, Y. (2020).
A comparison of burnout frequency among oncology physicians and nurses
working on the frontline and usual wards during the COVID-19 epidemic in
Wuhan, China. *Journal of pain and symptom managemen*t, 60(1), e60-e65.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2020.04.008

Appendix 1. Full questionnaire

Master thesis survey

Welcome,

This survey investigates the relationship between perceived interpersonal justice and employees' job burnout in the Norwegian consulting industry, and the mediating role of leader-member exchange (LMX) quality. We believe that our study will provide a valuable contribution to the body of literature already available on the different factors that influence burnout. There is minimal research on the proposed relationships, and it has not yet been tested in Norway or the consulting industry.

You have been asked to participate in this research project because **you are currently working in a consultant role in the consulting industry**, and have been **working in the industry for at least a year.**

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

There are no right or wrong answers, participation is voluntary, and organization or individuals will not be traceable from the final reports. Respondents can abandon the questionnaire at any time. However, meaningful results are only possible when all questions are answered. Respondents can save their answers and come back later to complete their responses.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to fill out the questionnaire as a contribution to our master thesis in Business with a major in Leadership and Change at BI Norwegian Business School. In case of questions, please contact Synnøve Horgen by email, s2111617@bi.no

Please confirm your consent for participation, and proceed.

o I consent (1)

o I do not consent (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Welcome, This survey investigates the relationship between perceived interpersonal justice and em... = I do not consent

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Filter Q's

Do you currently reside in Norway?

o Yes (1)

o No (2)

Have you been a full time employee in your current company for at least 1 year?

o Yes (1)

o No (2)

Do you currently work in the consulting industry?

o Yes (1)

o No (2)

o I am unsure (please specify your role) (3)

_____

End of Block: Filter Q's

Start of Block: Interpersonal Justice

Interpersonal justice is people's opinions on the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive when organizational choices are carried out. Employees who perceive a high level of interpersonal justice by their leader, are treated with respect, consideration, and dignity.

Based on this information, the next set of questions will assess your feeling of interpersonal justice with your immediate leader*.
 Note that in this survey, "immediate leader" refers to your functional leader in the company at which you are employed, and not the project leader you may have temporarily in a project.

To what extent...

	To a small extent (1)	To some extent (2)	Regularly (3)	Often (4)	To a large extent (5)
...has he/she treated you in a polite manner? (1)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
...has he/she treated you with dignity? (2)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

...has he/she treated you with respect? (3)	○	○	○	○	○
...has he/she refrained from improper remarks or comments?' (4)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Interpersonal Justice

_____

Start of Block: LMX Quality

Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory's central tenet is that leaders differentiate how they treat their followers through various sorts of exchanges. The quality of the relationship between leaders and their followers often varies, and as a result, each leader-follower relationship tends to be unique.

Based on this information, the next set of questions will assess the LMX quality of the relationship with your leader.

Do you know where you stand with your immediate leader?
 Note that in this survey, "immediate leader" refers to your functional leader in the company at which you are employed, and not the project leader you may have temporarily in a project.

	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Mostly (4)	Fully (5)
Do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? (1)	○	○	○	○	○
How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs? (2)	○	○	○	○	○
How well does your leader recognize your potential? (3)	○	○	○	○	○

	None (1)	Small (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)	Very high (5)
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/her power to help you solve problems in your work? (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader has, what are the changes that he/she would "bail you out" at his/her expense? (2)	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so. (1)	○	○	○	○	○

	Extremely ineffective (1)	Worse than average (2)	Average (3)	Better than average (4)	Extremely effective (5)
How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader? (1)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: LMX Quality

Start of Block: Job Burnout

Burnout is a three-component syndrome that occurs in reaction to chronic stressors in the workplace. These psychological syndromes are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment.

Based on this information, the next set of questions will measure burnout.

	Completely disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Partly disagree (3)	Partly agree (4)	Agree (5)	Completely agree (6)
I am snowed under with work (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel dispirited at work and I think of leaving my job (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I often sleep poorly because of the circumstances at work (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I frequently question the value of my work (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○

I feel that I have gradually less to give (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○
My expectations to my job and my performance have reduced (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I constantly have bad conscience because my work forces me to neglect my close friends and relatives (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I am gradually losing interest in my customers or my other employees (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Honestly, I felt more appreciated at work before (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Job Burnout

Start of Block: Control variables

What is your sex?

o Male (1)

o Female (2)

o Other (3)

What is your age?

o 20 or younger (1)

o 21 - 29 (2)

o 30 - 39 (3)

o 40 - 49 (4)

o 50 - 59 (5)

o 60 - 69 (6)

o 70 or older (7)

What is the size of your organization in your country, in terms of number of employees?

o Less than 50 (1)

o 50 - 250 (2)

o 251 - 1000 (3)

o 1001 - 5000 (4)

o More than 5000 (5)

For how long have you worked in the consulting industry?

o 1 year (1)

o 2 - 4 years (2)

o 5 -7 years (3)

o 7 years or more (4)

For how long have you had your current immediate leader?

o Less than 1 year (1)

o 1 year (2)

o 2 - 4 years (3)

o 5 - 7 years (4)

o 7 years or more (5)

End of Block: Control variables