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The Agency Psychology of Sustained and Prolonged Poverty Exposure on Public
Administrators in Nevada

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Doctor of Public Administration

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The Agency Psychology of Sustained and Prolonged Poverty Exposure on Public
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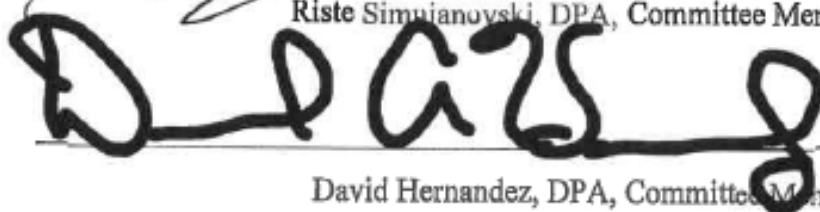
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ABSTRACT

The Agency Psychology of Sustained and Prolonged Poverty Exposure on Public Administrators

by Cynthia A. Donahe, DPA

Street-level public administrators, particularly welfare and social services professionals, working in direct contact with and delivering welfare benefits to the indigent public, expose themselves to chronic poverty daily and for some public service employees, throughout their careers. Over time, the public administrator's sustained and prolonged exposure to clients' poverty experience could have an impact on his or her behavioral, psychological, and physiological well-being, which, in turn, could affect a public agency's ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently to the public. This study examines the impacts of working with impoverished clients on a public administrator's level of effectiveness and the severity of burnout. The focus of this research was to determine whether there is any relationship or correlation between (a) a public administrator's duration in working with an impoverished population and the level of effectiveness, and (b) a public administrator's duration in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout. This study reviewed existing public administration literature through the lens of poverty scarcity theory and the motivation theory burnout model and identified a gap in the body of public administration literature for the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure of public administrators to impoverished clientele. The researcher employed the quantitative research method and research design of the survey, specifically the Maslach Burnout Inventory—Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS). The study was able to identify a statistically significant correlation and relationship between public administrators working for the study's public

organization and welfare agency with the MBI-HSS burnout subscale Emotional Exhaustion (EE), which was substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout. This research could provide insight to public leaders, public policy makers, and public organizations on the wicked problem and challenges of poverty that public service employees must face when serving an indigent clientele. The results of this study could help public leaders and human resource management (HRM) professionals understand the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure in order to manage HRM issues in organizational life and workplace environments by recognizing, monitoring, intervening, and/or addressing early onset of burnout in public service employees who serve impoverished populations.

Keywords: poverty, burnout, public administration

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to the impoverished of this world and to the poverty workers who work on behalf of the poor and show love, empathy, and compassion, striving to make the lives of the impoverished better through education, empowerment, and equipment. Poverty comes in all shapes, sizes, colors, ages, genders/sexes, orientations, ethnic/racial/national, socioeconomic, religious, educational, and political backgrounds. Your story deserves to be heard and understood.

The Beatitudes

Jesus said:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

—Matthew 5:3-11 (NIV)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
CBU	California Baptist University
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
FPL	Federal Poverty Level
GR	General Relief
HRM	Human Resource Management
IRB	Institutional Review Board
MBI-HSS	Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
SSI	Social Security Insurance
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SNAP	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Many professions are exposed to workplace hazards, routine and nonroutine, on a daily basis and even for the lifetime duration of those careers. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA, 2010) defines work organization hazards as “hazards or stressors that cause stress (short-term effects) and strain (long-term effects). These are the hazards associated with workplace issues such as workload, lack of control and/or respect, etc.” (p. 1). Examples of work organization hazards include workload demands, workplace violence, intensity/pace, respect (lack of), flexibility, control/influence, social support/relations, sexual harassment, and so forth (OSHA, 2010). Street-level public administrators, such as welfare and social services professionals, working in direct contact with and delivering welfare benefits to the indigent public expose themselves to chronic poverty daily, and some public service employees are exposed throughout their careers. Over time, the public administrator’s sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty and its manifestations could have an impact on his or her behavioral, psychological, and physiological well-being. Such indicators and impacts on the public administrator include stress, compassion fatigue, emotional labor, employee burnout, workload issues, work-life imbalance, job insecurity, performance issues, medical/health issues, poor customer service, low productivity, low motivation and commitment, and tardiness and absenteeism (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, & Cardy, 2012; Phillips & Gully, 2014; Xin, Tong, & Yiwen, 2017). These manifestations of a public administrator’s chronic exposure to poverty’s effects on clients could, in turn, affect a public agency or organization at large in areas of federal and state funding, human resource management (HRM) issues, performance measures, disciplinary issues,

absenteeism, employee turnover, increased use in health care and disability benefits and employee assistance programs, efficiency and effectiveness, customer service, reputation and branding, and training.

The topic of this research is the examination of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impact on public administrators who serve impoverished populations. This study examines how working with impoverished clients affects a public administrator's levels of engagement and burnout. The objective of this research is to determine whether there is a relationship or correlation between (a) a public administrator's duration in public service and level of effectiveness and (b) a public administrator's duration in working directly with the poor and the severity of burnout. In other words, is there a relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and his or her level of effectiveness? Is there a relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

Background of the Study

According the U.S. Census Bureau (2017b), although poverty in the United States is on the decline, down 0.8 percentage points from 13.5% in 2015, the official poverty rate in 2016 was 12.7% or 40.6 million people living in poverty. In Nevada (see Appendix A), the official poverty rate in 2017 was 13.8% or 413,729 residents living in poverty, ranking Nevada as the 28th poorest state in the nation. Other pertinent rankings in Nevada include the following: children, poverty ranked 30th, working-age women, poverty ranked 28th, and working-age men, poverty ranked 26th. In Nevada, areas of income inequality ratio ranked 18th, unemployment ranked 43rd, high school graduation

ranked 49th, disconnected youth ranked 38th, higher education attainment ranked 51st (associate's degree or higher), gender wage gap ranked 22nd, children living apart from parents ranked 32nd, teen birth rate ranked 39th, hunger and food insecurity ranked 21st, affordable housing ranked 47th, assets and savings ranked 38th, unemployment insurance ranked 23rd, and health insurance coverage ranked 37th (City-Data.com, 2017; Talk Poverty, 2018b; U.S. Census Bureau, 2017c).

Also, Prosperity Now Scorecard (2018) ranked the states on 58 outcome measures that describe how well residents are faring in each state in terms of financial health overall and within five issue areas with 1 being the most desirable and 51 being the least desirable. Nevada ranked 48th overall on the prosperity of its residents when compared to the 50 states and the District of Columbia followed by Georgia (49th), Louisiana (50th), and Mississippi (51st). Nevada also ranked 43rd in financial assets and income, 45th in businesses and jobs, 48th in homeownership and housing, 46th in health care, and 42nd in education (Prosperity Now Scorecard, 2018).

Factors contributing to Nevada's poverty issue include housing problems such as housing shortages and rising housing costs, substance abuse challenges, inability to find employment, youth exiting the foster care system, youth and elders experiencing homelessness, college student status, low-income seniors, large families, individuals with dual diagnosis or other mental health disabilities, persons with disabilities reliant on Social Security Insurance (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and persons leaving incarceration (City of Reno, 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2017d). Given these bleak statistics regarding Nevada's statewide poverty, it is important to investigate

the impacts of such poverty on impoverished populations as well as on the front-line public administrators who work directly with impoverished clientele.

Chronic exposure to poverty could have adverse effects on those public administrators serving impoverished clients. Dalton, Gonzalez Jimenez, and Noussair (2017) argued that “exposure to poverty can induce a psychological state in individuals that adversely affects productivity” (p. 1). Smith and Ashiabi (2007) maintained,

Compared with children from more affluent families, poor children face a higher risk of developmental delays and fare worse on various measures of developmental outcomes. . . . People living in poverty face lasting obstacles that keep them from attaining their most basic human rights and individual potentials. (p. 837)

According to Grant, Gracy, Goldsmith, Shapiro, and Redlener (2013), conditions associated with family homelessness exacerbate family vulnerabilities; impact child health and well-being and behavioral health; and induce multiple stressors, cumulative stress, and toxic stress. Additionally, Anakwenze and Zuberi (2013) claimed, “Concentrated urban poverty cultivates mental illness, while the resulting mental illness reinforces poverty” (p. 147). Furthermore, Bosma, Jansen, Scheman, Hajema, and Feron (2015) found that “people with an illness and low income not only lack the financial resources, but also the social resources to cope with disease and other life difficulties” (p. 185). Such are some of the effects that poverty and the psychology of poverty have on the poor.

Similarly, the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure, obtained through professional experience, could potentially impact a public

administrator's ability to treat impoverished customers with compassion and, thereby, may deliver services and benefits less effectively if the feelings of burnout exist. This research addresses the impact of agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure as it pertains to public service employees and public organizations that deliver services and benefits to impoverished clientele. This study examines the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure of public administrators to determine what impacts continual, daily, and direct experience and exposure to poverty could potentially have on a public administrator's ability to demonstrate compassion and to deliver services effectively to indigent populations.

Statement of the Problem

The research addresses the issue of the impacts of public administrators working in public service and their sustained and prolonged exposure to clients of poverty within their public agencies. The impacts could be manifested in terms of a public administrator's level of effectiveness and severity of burnout.

In terms of general understanding of the psychology of poverty among the impoverished, Dalton et al. (2017) argued that the state of poverty influences productivity in at least two ways. First, financial constraints dampen physical and cognitive performance through nutritional deficiencies, low educational quality, and health conditions, which in turn affect productivity. Second, psychological aspects of poverty have identified additional ways through which poverty affects individual decisions in a way that becomes counterproductive—such mechanisms as risk and time preferences or individuals' motivations and aspirations (Dalton et al., 2017). Smith and Ashiabi (2007) claimed that people living in poverty

often lack adequate food, shelter, access to education and healthcare, protection from violence, and a voice in what happens in their communities. They live day to day and in constant fear of the future. Poverty depletes families' economic, physical, and psychological resources, drains their coping abilities, and exhausts their social support networks. In short, it inhibits families' and communities' ability to care for themselves and their children. (p. 837)

Grant et al. (2013) maintained that family homelessness and poverty impacts include increases in late or nonreceipt of prenatal care and incidence of anemia among pregnant women, increased rates of low birth weight deliveries, and increased incidence of preventable childhood diseases, including failure to thrive, diarrhea and dehydration, and anemia. Homeless children also have high rates of lead exposure, hospitalization, and immunization delay and iron deficiency anemia as well as more severe hunger, higher rates of nutritional problems, higher rates for asthma and obesity, behavioral, developmental, psychological disorders, and academic problems (Grant et al., 2013). Additionally, "concentrated urban poverty cultivates mental illness, while the resulting mental illness reinforces poverty" (Anakwenze & Zuberi, 2013, p. 147). According to Bosma et al. (2015), "People with an illness and low income not only lack the financial resources, but also the social resources to cope with disease and other life difficulties" (p. 185). Anakwenze and Zuberi (2013) supported the conceptual basis on the issue of poverty by explaining the relationship between city living and mental health disorders by identifying socioeconomic disparities such as poverty, the presence of residentially unstable populations, dense and diverse populations, high crime rates, and social disorganization. Furthermore, Bosma et al. (2015) argued that since the 1980s' era of

neo-liberalism, government has become less involved and interventionist in peoples' lives so that "people have to increasingly solve their own problems" (p. 185), resulting in and compounded by citizens with illness and low-income and insufficient social support and resources to cope with life's challenges. Therefore, the state of poverty has endless impacts on poor people physically, emotionally, mentally, and psychologically.

Although the existing poverty literature and public administration literature and research discuss the impacts of poverty on the poor and attribute poverty to various and endless causes including government's lack of involvement or intervention, domestic violence, mental illness and physical health, gender and age, economic and political instability, religious and sociocultural practices, unemployment, lack of educational opportunities, lack of family and social support, and crime and violence, much of this literature and research deals only with the indigent, working poor, inner city poverty, rural poverty, third world poverty, and so forth. There remains a significant gap in the literature and knowledge in public administration on the examination and impacts of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on those who administer relief to impoverished communities: the street-level public administrators and public organizations that directly serve the public by providing public assistance and benefits to the impoverished clientele. When public administrators expose themselves to poverty through working with impoverished clientele on a daily basis, this chronic exposure to poverty can affect a public administrator's levels of compassion and effectiveness and even lead to burnout as manifested in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quasidescriptive study was to examine the impacts of working in public service and serving impoverished clients and the effects on the public administrator's severity of burnout. Lack of awareness or failure to recognize the impacts of the agency psychology of poverty on public administrators who serve impoverished clientele could have serious ramifications on public service employees, public organizations, and the workplace, with such extremes as toxic work environment, workplace violence, mass employee turnover, state and federal sanctions, and funding cuts. Little research currently exists on the influence of the agency psychology of poverty on public administrators, public organizations, or organizational life. The results of the study could be used for the following purposes:

1. Results could determine the severity of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure to indigent clientele within a public organization and how it affects public administrators and their agencies.
2. Results could identify public administrators' perceptions and attitudes about the impoverished clientele.
3. Results could determine a correlation between a public administrator's years of public service and severity of burnout.
4. Results could provide public service employees, supervisors, and managers with an understanding and awareness of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure in public organizations and in the workplace.
5. Results could provide HRM professionals with an understanding and awareness of HRM issues related to the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty

exposure and impacts on public organizations and public employees and in the workplace.

6. Results could help formulate recommendations for how to address the impacts of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty on public administrators and public organizations.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following two research questions:

1. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and level of effectiveness?
2. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

Importance of the Study

The importance of the study is relevant because as a quantitative analysis, this quasidescriptive study focused on sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators. While it is a public administrator's duty to serve the public and to care for those in need, it is important to understand not only how poverty impacts communities but also how sustained and prolonged poverty exposure impacts public service employees and public organizations that deliver services and benefits to impoverished clientele.

Figure 1 conceptualizes this study by proposing that public administrators, who deliver services to impoverished populations, experiencing sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty over time, will demonstrate greater severity of burnout and decreased levels of effectiveness. This study reviewed existing public administration literature

through the lens of poverty scarcity theory and motivation theory burnout model and identified a gap in the body of public administration literature for the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure of public administrators to impoverished clientele.

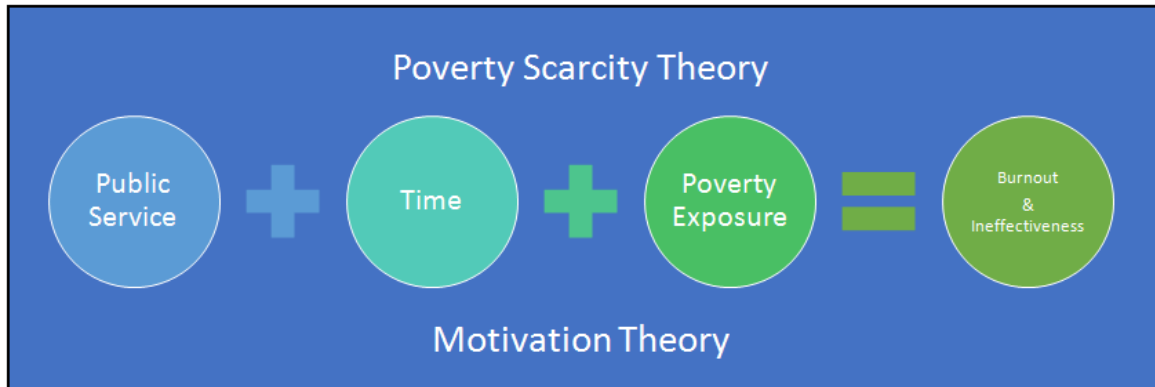


Figure 1. Concept map.

The research study on the agency psychology of prolonged and sustained poverty exposure on public administrators is significant because it adds to the body of knowledge in the field of public administration. It is relevant to the field of public administration because this study examines public administrators' years of public service, exposure to poverty, and severity of burnout, which can provide insight into a public organization's understanding, attitudes and perceptions, effectiveness and efficiency, and service delivery to indigent populations as well as insight to public leaders, public policy makers, and public organizations about the challenges of poverty that public service employees must face when serving an indigent clientele. The results of this study could help public organizations and HRM professionals recognize, monitor, intervene, and/or address early onset of burnout in public service employees who serve impoverished populations. The results of this study could also help leaders of public organizations and HRM

professionals promote empathy and compassion through poverty awareness training/workshops such as Bridges out of Poverty workshop, cultural sensitivity training, burnout awareness, and service-learning, and so forth. Finally, this research could also help leaders and HRM professionals understand how to better manage and address organizational and HRM areas of concern such as federal and state funding, performance measures, employee engagement, employee burnout, employee turnover, employee absenteeism, emotional labor, compassion fatigue, workplace stress, workplace violence, counterproductive work behaviors, health care benefits, employee assistance programs, emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity training, poverty awareness, burnout awareness training, disciplinary issues, customer service, efficiency and effectiveness, and reputation and branding in organizational life and workplace environments.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher was limited in studying the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators for a variety of reasons. The research was limited to studying public administrators' professional experience with poverty instead of personal experience. The research was limited to public organizations in Nevada. The research did not consider nongovernmental, nonprofit, or faith-based agencies and organizations. The research specifically focused on welfare and social services professionals who deliver entitlements, benefits, and services to impoverished clientele and did not include other street-level public administrators who also have direct contact with the poor such as paramedics, emergency medical technicians, police officers, firefighters, rescuers, military personnel, public works personnel, medical/health care workers, social workers, mental health counselors,

and educators. There was also a geographical limitation in this study that concentrated on the highly populated and urban areas and their associated social services welfare offices. This research excluded offices located in rural areas.

Definitions of Terms

Throughout this paper, the researcher frequently referred to the following terms through the lens of poverty and scarcity theory and HRM motivation theory within the realm of public administration: *agency psychology*, *poverty*, *poverty exposure*, *effectiveness*, and *burnout*.

Organizational Psychology

Organizational psychology, also known as industrial-organizational psychology, is the branch of psychology that is “characterized by the scientific study of human behavior in organizations and the workplace. The specialty focuses on deriving principles of individual, group, and organizational behavior and applying this knowledge to the solution of problems at work” (American Psychological Association, 2008, para. 1). According to Muchinsky (2006), organizational psychology is an “area of scientific study and professional practice that addresses psychological concepts and principles in the work world” (p. 3). Industrial-organizational psychology examines six major areas: selection and placement, training and development, ergonomics, performance management/appraisal, work life, and organizational development (Muchinsky, 2006). Similarly, according to Brown (2006), social psychology is about

understanding individual behavior in a social context . . . the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior in social

situations. It therefore looks at human behavior as influenced by other people and the context in which this occurs. (p. 6)

Topics examined in social psychology include the self-concept, social cognition, attribution theory, social influence, group processes, prejudice and discrimination, interpersonal processes, aggression, and prosocial behavior (Brown, 2006; McLeod, 2007). For this study, organizational psychology refers to the agency and psychological well-being, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors about poverty from sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty when public organizations and their public service employees provide services and benefits to impoverished populations.

Poverty

Poverty is defined as the state or condition of being extremely poor and having little or no money, goods, or means of support. In economic terms, income poverty is when a family's income fails to meet a federally established threshold. The U.S. Census Bureau (2017a)

uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty.

(para. 1)

Similarly, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) uses its own Federal Poverty Levels (FPL) or guidelines to determine poverty. Based on these federal poverty thresholds and guidelines, states then determine financial eligibility for public assistance programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Medicaid (see Appendix B).

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) identifies both absolute poverty and relative poverty:

Absolute poverty measures poverty in relation to the amount of money necessary to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter. . . . Relative poverty defines poverty in relation to the economic status of other members of society: people are poor if they fall below prevailing standards of living in a given societal context. (UNESCO, 2017, p. 1)

Payne, DeVol, and Dreussi Smith (2001) defined poverty as the “extent to which an individual does without resources” (p. 11). They referred to resources as financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, knowledge of hidden rules, and coping strategies (Payne et al., 2001). Payne et al. also differentiated between situational and generational poverty. Situational poverty is defined as “a lack of resources due to a particular event (i.e., a death, chronic illness, divorce, etc.)” (Payne et al., 2001, p. 49). Generational poverty is defined as “having been in poverty for at least two generations; however, the patterns begin to surface much sooner than two generations if the family lives with others who are from generational poverty” (Payne et al., 2001, p. 49). Furthermore, generational poverty

has its own culture, hidden rules, and belief systems. One of the key indicators of whether it is generational or situational poverty is the prevailing attitude. Often the attitude in generational poverty is that society owes one a living. In situational poverty the attitude is often one of pride and a refusal to accept charity. Individuals in situational poverty often bring more resources with them to the situation than those in generational poverty. (Payne et al., 2001, p. 49)

Jensen (2009) took the previous definition of poverty a step further, offering a more comprehensive definition of poverty by identifying six types of poverty:

- **Situational poverty** is generally caused by a sudden crisis or loss and is often temporary. Events causing situational poverty include environmental disasters, divorce, or severe health problems.
- **Generational poverty** occurs in families where at least two generations have been born into poverty. Families living in this type of poverty are not equipped with the tools to move out of their situations.
- **Absolute poverty**, which is rare in the United States, involves a scarcity of such necessities as shelter, running water, and food. Families who live in absolute poverty tend to focus on day-to-day survival.
- **Relative poverty** refers to the economic status of a family whose income is insufficient to meet its society's average standard living.
- **Urban poverty** occurs in metropolitan areas with populations of at least 50,000 people. The urban poor deal with a complex aggregate of chronic and acute stressors (including crowding, violence, and noise) and are dependent on often-inadequate large-city services.
- **Rural poverty** occurs in nonmetropolitan areas with populations below 50,000. In rural areas, there are more single-guardian households, and families often have less access to services, support for disabilities, and quality education opportunities. Programs to encourage transition from welfare to work are problematic in remote rural areas, where job opportunities are few. The rural poverty rate is growing and has exceeded the urban rate every year

since data collection began in the 1960s. The difference between the two poverty rates has averaged about 5 percent for the last 30 years, with urban rates near 10-15 percent and rural rates near 15-20 percent. (p. 6)

For this study, poverty is defined by this all-encompassing definition of poverty as public administrators could be exposed to impoverished populations experiencing more than one of these dimensions of poverty.

Poverty Exposure

Poverty exposure can be defined as encountering or experiencing poverty or the state of being poor through exposure, observation, or practical contact. Comeau and Boyle (2018) classified poverty exposure into five patterns. Stable patterns are: (a) always poor, (b) never poor while change patterns are single transition, (c) into poverty, (d) out of poverty, and (e) fluctuation in and out of poverty. A poor person experiences poverty by directly living in poverty through manifestations of poverty—having no money or possessions, unemployment, homelessness, poor health and hygiene, hunger, and so forth. A public administrator can also be affected by continual or intermittent poverty exposure with those who live in poverty through direct personal and/or professional experience. For this study, poverty exposure referred to the public administrator's daily, continual, and direct exposure and interactions while serving indigent populations in a professional capacity.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a key concept of public administration practice, synonymous with effectualness, efficacy, efficiency, and productiveness. Effectiveness deals with how good or successful an individual or a government organization is in accomplishing its

goals and mission, producing a desired result or product, serving its purpose, providing services, and so forth. Maslach, Jackson, Leitner, Schaufeli, and Schwab (1981) proposed,

The experience of being ineffective does not coincide with exhaustion or cynicism; instead it reflects a loss of confidence in one's capabilities—perhaps as a result of work that feels tedious or an environment that offers little recognition for a job well done. (p. 9)

Effectiveness was used as a variable for measurement in this study.

Burnout

Professional burnout is a syndrome “characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. People who experience burnout may dread returning to work for another day, treat coworkers and clients callously, withdraw from the organization, and feel less competent in their jobs” (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012, p. 559). Burnout is a “cumulative process marked by emotional exhaustion and withdrawal associated with increased workload and institutional stress” (American Institute of Stress, 2018, p. 1). According to M. A. Newman, Guy, and Mastracci (2009), burnout is

tangible, palpable, and all too real for many of our respondents. Burnout is characterized by an inability to disengage (“escape”) from the work, and by an overwhelming grinding pressure, a callousness, an inability to maintain a professional perspective, a sense of hopelessness, apathy, despondency, and a lack of trust. (p. 6)

Phillips and Gully (2014) defined burnout as the opposite of engagement and referred to “exhaustion of physical and emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration” (p. 456). Maslach and Leitner (1997) recognized burnout as an individual’s becoming chronically exhausted, becoming cynical and detached from work, and feeling increasingly ineffective on the job. Energy, involvement, and efficacy are the direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout—exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness (Maslach & Leitner, 1997).

Burnout is the “product of a poor working environment, usually entailing deficient administrative support, insufficient compensation, persistent staffing problems, high turnover, poor morale, lack of opportunities for advancement, a dearth of appreciation, and exasperating work with little hope of change” (Branson, 2018, p. 2). Maslach and Leitner (1997) argued that burnout is not a problem of the individual but rather of the social environment in which people work:

The structure and functioning of the workplace shape how people interact with one another and how they carry out their jobs. When the workplace does not recognize the human side of work, then the risk of burnout grows, carrying a high price with it. (p. 18)

Burnout was used as a variable for measurement in this study.

Sustained and Prolonged

The Cambridge dictionary defines “sustained” (n.d.) as “continuing at a particular level for a period of time” (n.p.) and “prolonged” (n.d.) as “lasting for a long time” (n.p.). As an operational definition in this study and to differentiate between sustained and

prolonged, sustained is held continually at a certain level while prolonged is lengthy in duration as it relates to poverty exposure.

Thus, the terms of *organizational psychology*, *poverty*, *poverty exposure*, *effectiveness*, *burnout*, *sustained*, and *prolonged* are used throughout this research as defined in the definitions section.

Summary

Chapter 1 briefly introduced the research topic of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators by covering the following areas: introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, importance of the study, limitations of the study, and definitions of terms.

The remainder of the study is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2 reviews public administration literature as related to the theories and theoretical frameworks: (a) poverty and scarcity theory and (b) motivation theory. Chapter 2 also identifies the gaps in the knowledge in the field of public administration.
- Chapter 3 discusses the most appropriate research methodology as being the quantitative research method of survey/questionnaire, quasidescriptive study.
- Chapter 4 discusses the findings and results of this research study.
- Chapter 5 summarizes this research on the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators by reviewing the findings, conclusions based on the research questions, limitations of the study,

implications for the field of public administration, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review section serves as a survey of the literature and provides the reader with historical and foundational knowledge of poverty research and poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators. First, the literature review briefly discusses the historical perspective of poverty research literature and public administration literature as separate, not yet canonical writings in their early years. Second, this literature review discusses the union between the field of public administration and the social and economic condition of poverty in literature. Third, this literature review examines the current body of literature on public administration and poverty and the major theories and theoretical frameworks as they pertain to public administration and poverty: (a) poverty and scarcity theory and (b) human resource management's (HRM's) motivation theory. Finally, this literature review identifies the need for new research and literature to fill the knowledge gaps of the literature on public administration and poverty for the field of public administration and practitioners to better understand the impacts of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and burnout on public administrators and public organizations.

Historical Perspective on Poverty Research Literature

Literature on the history of poverty research and social conditions can be traced back to as early as the late 19th century in response to the immense and increasingly evident disparities of industrial capitalism in Western Europe and the United States. In the United States, literature on poverty appeared in 1895 with Florence Kelley's book, *Hull House Maps and Papers*, a collection of essays and statistical information, detailing the squalid social and living conditions and substandard workplace conditions of

Chicago's tenements and sweatshops as products of the American Industrial Revolution (O'Connor, 2016). Other social reformers and progressive era investigators such as Jane Addams, Robert Hunter, and W.E.B. Du Bois were also laying the groundwork for modern survey movements, research, and poverty writings (O'Connor, 2016). Thus, the literature on poverty was new, social survey-focused, reform-oriented, and remained separate from public administration writings because public administration as a field of study was also still in its infancy and had not yet developed a large body of literature.

Historical Perspective on Public Administration Literature

It was also during the late 19th and early 20th centuries that the new field of public administration began to emerge and develop as an academic discipline and occupational specialty in the United States in response to civil service reform. Early public administration writers and literature included Woodrow Wilson's 1887 essay "The Study of Administration," Frank J. Goodnow's 1900 *Politics and Administration*, Frederick W. Taylor's 1912 *Principles of Scientific Management*, Max Weber's 1922 "Bureaucracy," and Leonard D. White's 1926 *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration* (Shafritz & Hyde, 2012). Much of early public administration writings focused on the Industrial Revolution, civil service reform, public administration as a new discipline, organizational efficiency and economy, bureaucracy, politics-administration dichotomy, scientific management, and so forth (Shafritz & Hyde, 2012). However, there is no clear or direct correlation between public administration (government) and poverty (social and economic condition) in the early literature.

In response to the Great Depression of the 1930s, the U.S. government took on a proactive role by intervening in the American widespread poverty, providing public

assistance/welfare and creating jobs through New Deal agencies. Government became more prevalent and necessary in American life. Public service was becoming recognized as a legitimate profession and the public administration field as professionalized (O'Connor, 2016).

As the field of public administration continued to grow and evolve throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, its body of literature and theories expanded and became more prolific. Prominent theorists of this time period included Luther Gulick, Chester I. Barnard, Abraham H. Maslow, Dwight Waldo, Samuel Krislov, R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr., Charles E. Lindblom, Alice M. Rivlin, Robert Agranoff, Frederick C. Mosher, Dennis F. Thompson, Carol W. Lewis, Frederick Herzberg, and others. Public administration research and literature explored various areas of organizations and systems, workplace environments, organizational culture, human motivation, employees' needs, HRM, representation, diversity, public service ethics, intergovernmental networks and cooperation, budget, public policy and analysis, program management, leadership and management, privatization and outsourcing, technology and e-government, and so forth (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012; Shafritz & Hyde, 2012).

Of interest to this literature review are current public administration theorists and their writings that offer interdisciplinary perspectives (i.e., education, economics, sociology, social work, psychology, etc.) and focus on workplace environments, employees' needs, human motivation, and HRM as they relate to poverty, which are discussed in later sections.

Union of Public Administration and Poverty in Literature

Literature that deliberately combined poverty research and public administration as a collective body or canon of literature did not fully emerge until 1964 when President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a “War on Poverty” (DeSilver, 2014, para. 1), a plan calling for the implementation of social initiatives and programs for combating the “wicked” problem of poverty. According to the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP, 2017),

When the federal government undertook new efforts to aid the poor in the 1960s, it also determined that social programs would be studied and evaluated to determine their effectiveness. In 1965, a presidential executive order directed all federal agencies to incorporate measures of cost effectiveness and program evaluation into their decisions. The guiding concept was that the policies and programs then being developed should be shaped by sound logic, firm data, and systematic thinking rather than by good intentions alone. (p. 1)

Also, President Johnson charged the Office of Economic Opportunity with implementing the War on Poverty, which established the IRP at the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1966 for experts to perform research, provide counsel, and deliver information on poverty (IRP, 2017; O’Connor, 2016).

The War on Poverty led to the rapidly growing body of government-funded official poverty research and writings from the 1960s to 1980s, much of which contributed to and/or was absorbed into public administration literature as well other disciplines’ literature. These poverty studies and writings were conducted by multidisciplinary researchers and examined income maintenance, antipoverty programs, welfare reform, welfare law and administration, evaluating public programs,

measurement of economic status and social mobility, relative significance of ability, family influences, schooling on adult achievement, financial aspects of aid to education for poor students, disability policy, social consciousness and class structure, child support reform, minority groups, interrelationship of poverty, family structure, reliance on public assistance, and single parenthood (IRP, 2017; Shafritz & Hyde, 2012).

With each new IRP director came a different focus of poverty study. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the IRP (2017) focused its studies on intergenerational dynamics of poverty, seeking to enhance understanding of the ways in which the circumstances experienced by children and youth influenced their well-being as adults. Many of the studies dealt with education and social welfare, ranging from the ecological context of schools to the needs of disadvantaged students and the diversity of approaches to intertwined educational and social problems and examined the well-being of children under stress and the relation of poverty and disabilities. Other studies focused on low-wage labor market, homelessness, welfare dependence, and the relation of family background to school attainment, methodology and program evaluation, child development, investments in children, state welfare reform initiatives, and child support policies. The U.S. Welfare Reform Act of 1996 and a strong economy resulted in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseload cut in half, poverty and employment rates reduced to record lows, and substantial increases in the income levels of single-mother families (Abramovitz, 2005; IRP, 2017; K. S. Newman & Massengil, 2006; O'Connor, 2016; Payne et al., 2001; Shafritz & Hyde, 2012).

The 2000s focused on research and conference themes of inequality, welfare reform evaluations, child support, multiple-partner fertility, qualitative research methods,

the politics of poverty and inequality faith-based organizations and social services delivery, third-party governance, child and family well-being, measurement of poverty, health and poverty, and education and poverty, and so forth. The end of an economic boom and the 2005 Hurricane Katrina brought poverty back to the center of attention with rises in poverty rates, growth of income poverty, and increasing numbers of the working poor (IRP, 2017; O'Connor, 2016; Payne et al., 2001; Shafritz & Hyde, 2012).

Thus, since the War on Poverty and the creation of the IRP, the union of public administration literature and poverty research literature is evidenced in the proliferation of literature from the 1960s to the present. These foundational writings are important because they demonstrate a need for examining poverty from a multidisciplinary approach. Similarly, there is also a necessity to understand the development of poverty literature in the scope of public administration as it relates to this study. For the sake of brevity, this literature review concentrates on current theorists and their writings pertaining to public administration and poverty.

Current Literature

The current literature on poverty and public administration discusses the wicked problem of poverty, the cause and effects of poverty, the aspects of impacts of poverty on the poor as well as the impacts of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on the public administrators who serve impoverished clientele. Such impacts on public service employees include diminished levels of effectiveness and increased severity of burnout, depersonalization of the poor, and a lesser sense of personal achievement. These impacts of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on individual public administrators could, in

turn, adversely impact public organizations that deliver services and benefits to impoverished communities.

Poverty

Prior to welfare reform, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was the federal entitlement to cash assistance that enabled single mothers to stay at home with young children. As a result of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, welfare reform replaced AFDC with TANF, a state-operated block grant designed to move mothers from welfare to work. Welfare rolls plummeted by more than 50% nationwide, driven by welfare's stricter rules and a booming economy of the 1990s. Despite the apparent success of welfare reform in its first few years, nobody could foresee the "impact of welfare reform on the job of social workers or the mission of human services agencies that had to absorb the fall-out of the welfare overhaul" (Abramovitz, 2005, p. 175) combined with massive tax and social spending cuts, sagging economy, and rising unemployment. Welfare workers reported less time for social services because of welfare-related regulations, penalties, work mandates, crises, and paperwork. They also reported more service dilemmas including less control of the job, loss of clients, less time to think and plan, lack of access to information, lack of government resources, more ethical/value conflicts, and feeling less effective. Concerning ineffectiveness, public service employees expressed that they were running in place, less able to help, demoralized, dissatisfied, and burned out. However, public administrators exposing themselves to poverty through serving the poor still maintained a positive mindset that they felt needed, had a sense of accomplishment, and were making a difference (Abramovitz, 2005).

Dalton et al. (2017) argued that the affective state associated with exposure to the poverty of others, on its own, leads to lower individual productivity, differentiating in the study these psychological effects from those directly stemming from one's own experience of and exposure to poverty. The exposure to poverty in the study was brief and not intense, yet Dalton et al. found that the

mere exposure to a video showing the reality of poverty ha[d] an effect on subsequent performance in a relatively simple task. It also induce[d] a more negative emotional state . . . the effect of exposure to poverty of others on performance is cognitive rather than emotional, as the exposure appear[ed] to impede the focus of attention on performing the task. (p. 2)

In other words, exposure to poverty can induce a psychological state in individuals that negatively affects productivity. Based on this research, it is possible that when public administrators expose themselves to poverty through serving their impoverished clientele, this sustained and prolonged exposure could lower individual productivity as well as organizational productivity.

Since the 1960s War on Poverty and the 1990s welfare reform, the picture of American poverty has changed drastically with the persistence of the working poor, child poverty, and the feminization of poverty. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2017b), these various categories of the population represent the highest percentage of poverty: unemployed (31%), single mothers (27%), adults with disabilities (27%), adults without a high school diploma (25%), Black (22%), Hispanic (19%), children under 18 years (18%), living in rural areas (16%), and women (14%). The trend toward more single-parent families has worsened the poverty situation, making women and children more

vulnerable to poverty. Today's poor families are structured with over half (50.3%) of poor families headed by single mothers (Berrebi, 2011; DeSilver, 2014; Federal Safety Net, 2017; Talk Poverty, 2018a). It can be expected that a disproportionate number of impoverished clientele whom public administrators serve in social and welfare programs are women, children, minorities, veterans, and disabled.

Current poverty literature has indicated that those who are impoverished have little or no access to community and neighborhood resources, high status social contacts, or basic services. Such resources as shown in Figure 2 include financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems, relationships/role models, knowledge of hidden rules, and coping strategies (DeVol, 2010; Payne et al., 2001). This lack of access limits those who are impoverished with the ability to improve their economic position thereby perpetuating the social problem of poverty. Poverty encompasses several causes and effects: blaming the victim; deficient social capital; capitalistic economic system; hunger and thirst; illness and poor health; homelessness and transience; poor housing and living conditions; abuse and violence; crime; insecurity and instability; alcohol and substance abuse; exploitation; teenage pregnancy; broken families and broken systems; lack of education and life skills; truancy; childcare issues; unemployment; lack of transportation; and disproportionality for women, children, veterans, seniors, disabled, and minorities.

RESOURCES	
Financial	Having the money to purchase goods and services, save for emergencies, and to invest. Having an understanding of how money works—being fiscally literate.
Emotional	Being able to choose and control emotional responses, particularly to negative situations, without engaging in self-destructive behavior.
	This is the “state of mind” that determines the way we think, feel, and behave at any given moment. It’s an internal resource and shows itself through stamina, perseverance, and choice. This is about interpersonal skills for teamwork, teaching others, leadership, negotiation, and working with people from many backgrounds.
Mental	Having the mental abilities and skills (reading, writing, computing) to deal with daily life. This includes how much education and training a person has in order to compete in the workplace for well-paying jobs.
Spiritual	Believing in divine purpose and guidance and/or having a rich culture that offers support and guidance.
Physical	Having physical health and mobility.
Support Systems	Having social networks of trustworthiness and reciprocity that include people from outside one’s immediate circle. This is an external resource. Communities with rich social capital will improve life for everyone, even those with low personal social capital.
Relationships, Role Models	Having frequent access to people who are appropriate, who are nurturing to children, and who do not engage in self-destructive behavior.
Integrity, Trust	Trust is linked to two issues: predictability and safety. Can I know with some certainty that this person will do what he/she says? Can I predict with some accuracy that it will occur every time? The second part of the question is safety: Will I be safe with this person? This is an internal asset.
Motivation, Persistence	Having the energy and drive to prepare for, plan, and complete projects, jobs, and personal changes. This is another internal asset.
Knowledge of Hidden Rules	Knowing the unspoken cues and habits of both middle class and wealth.

Figure 2. Resources. From *Bridges to Sustainable Communities: A Systemwide, Cradle-to-Grave Approach to Ending Poverty in America*, by P. E. DeVol, 2010, p. 30. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process, Inc.

Jensen (2009) argued,

Poverty involves a complex array of risk factors that adversely affect the population in a multitude of ways. The four primary risk factors afflicting families in poverty are emotional and social challenges, acute and chronic stressors, cognitive lags, and health and safety issues. (p. 7)

Furthermore, Jensen (2013) “uncovered seven factors that correlate with student engagement and that are strongly tied to socioeconomic status (SES)” (p. 8). These seven factors are “1) health and nutrition, 2) vocabulary, 3) effort and energy, 4) mind-set, 5) cognitive capacity, 6) relationships, and 7) stress level” (Jensen, 2013, p. 8).

Being poor involves several physical and psychological stressors. Poverty is associated with

increased risks of cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, ulcers, rheumatoid disorders, psychiatric diseases, and a number of types of cancer. . . . It is associated with higher rates of people judging themselves to be of poor health, of infant mortality, and of mortality due to all causes. Moreover, lower SES predicts lower birth weight, after controlling for body size. (Sapolsky, 1994, p. 366)

Psychological stressors include lack of control, lack of predictability, reduced means of coping with stressors, lack of outlets, and lack of social supports. Sapolsky (1994) noted,

Poverty generally equals more stressors – and though the studies are mixed as to whether or not the poor have more major catastrophic stressors, they have plenty more chronic daily stressors. All these hardships suggest that low socioeconomic status (SES—typically measured by a combination of income, occupation, housing conditions, and education) should be associated with chronic activation of the stress-response. (pp. 365–366)

For children and youth, poverty is a critical risk factor for many of the mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders (Biglan, Flay, Embry, & Sandler, 2012; Yoshikawa, Aber, & Beardslee, 2012). Sapolsky (1994) argued,

The health risk of poverty turns out to be a huge effect, the biggest risk factor there is in all behavioral medicine – in other words, if you have a bunch of people of the same gender, age, and ethnicity and you want to make some predictions about who is going to live how long, the single most useful fact to know is each person's SES. (p. 366)

Thus, “SES influences health, and the greater cumulative percentage of your life you've spent poor, the more of an adverse impact on health” (Sapolsky, 1994, pp. 367–368).

Payne argued that “class, like race, is always experienced first at a very personal level where it impacts thinking” (psmothersuw, para. 4) and how it impacts navigation of one's life (Payne et al., 2001, 2006; Payne, 2013). This socioeconomic way of thinking can be manifested in one's attitudes, perceptions, and decisions about such key life areas as shown in Figure 3: possessions, money, personality, social emphasis, food, clothing, time, education, destiny, language, household dynamics, world view, love, driving forces, and humor.

Payne et al. (2001) examined such hidden rules and unspoken cues among classes who have the most impact on achievement in schools and success in the workplace, suggesting these cues or rules on how people in poverty, middle class, and wealth operate in these life areas are not formally taught but learned. According to Payne (2013),

When individuals move from poverty to middle class or middle class to wealth as their resource base grows and stabilizes, they use some of the rules they grew up with and some of the rules they are moving to. When someone has been in a given group for two generations or more, those tend to be the only rules he/she knows. (p. 45)

Hidden Rules of Class			
	Poverty	Middle Class	Wealth
POSSESSIONS	People.	Things.	One-of-a-kind objects, legacies, pedigrees.
MONEY	To be used, spent.	To be managed.	To be conserved, invested.
PERSONALITY	Is for entertainment. Sense of humor is highly valued.	Is for acquisition and stability. Achievement is highly valued.	Is for connections. Financial, political, social connections are highly valued.
SOCIAL EMPHASIS	Social inclusion of the people they like.	Emphasis is on self-governance and self-sufficiency.	Emphasis is on social exclusion.
FOOD	Key question: Did you have enough? Quantity important.	Key question: Did you like it? Quality important.	Key question: Was it presented well? Presentation important.
CLOTHING	Clothing valued for individual style and expression of personality.	Clothing valued for its quality and acceptance into norm of middle class. Label important.	Clothing valued for its artistic sense and expression. Designer important.
TIME	Present most important. Decisions made for moment based on feelings or survival.	Future most important. Decisions made against future ramifications.	Traditions and history most important. Decisions made partially on basis of tradition and decorum.
EDUCATION	Valued and revered as abstract but not as reality.	Crucial for climbing success ladder and making money.	Necessary tradition for making and maintaining connections.
DESTINY	Believes in fate. Cannot do much to mitigate chance.	Believes in choice. Can change future with good choices now.	<i>Noblesse oblige.</i>
LANGUAGE	Casual register. Language is about survival.	Formal register. Language is about negotiation.	Formal register. Language is about networking.
HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS	Tends to be matriarchal.	Tends to be patriarchal.	Depends on who has money.
WORLDVIEW	Sees world in terms of local setting.	Sees world in terms of national setting.	Sees world in terms of international view.
LOVE	Love and acceptance conditional, based upon whether individual is liked.	Love and acceptance conditional and based largely upon achievement.	Love and acceptance conditional and related to social standing and connections.
DRIVING FORCES	Survival, relationships, entertainment.	Work, achievement.	Financial, political, social connections.
HUMOR	About people and sex.	About situations.	About social <i>faux pas</i> .

Figure 3. Hidden rules among classes. From *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, by R. K. Payne, P. E. DeVol, & T. Dreussi Smith, 2001, pp. 44–45. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

For individuals operating in the poverty class, if they cannot learn or decipher the hidden or unspoken rules of the middle and wealthy classes early in life, they will remain in the poverty class and/or have challenges in social mobility or transitioning into the middle and wealthy classes.

Recognizing the hidden rules and cues of socioeconomic classes and which class impoverished clientele operate in can bring awareness and understanding to public administrators into their clienteles' plight of poverty and stories of hardships, loss, and failures. In the same way, public organizations should recognize that public service employees witnessing these circumstances of poverty through their daily (and long-term)

interactions of serving impoverished populations can become impacted in their levels of effectiveness, resulting in employee burnout.

For people operating in poverty, these individuals focus on various aspects of relationships and survival such as food, clothing, housing, jobs, safety, friends, family, and so forth (see Figure 4). Those individuals operating in middle class spend their time focusing on areas of achievement such as education, career, hobbies/sports, volunteering, retirement, vacations, and so forth (see Figure 5). Individuals in the wealth class spend their time emphasizing aspects of connections such as memberships, associations, boards, sponsorships, philanthropies, lawyers and accountants, properties, travel, and so forth (see Figure 6). Recognizing these mentalities and priorities of each class can help public administrators to better understand and to better serve impoverished clientele.

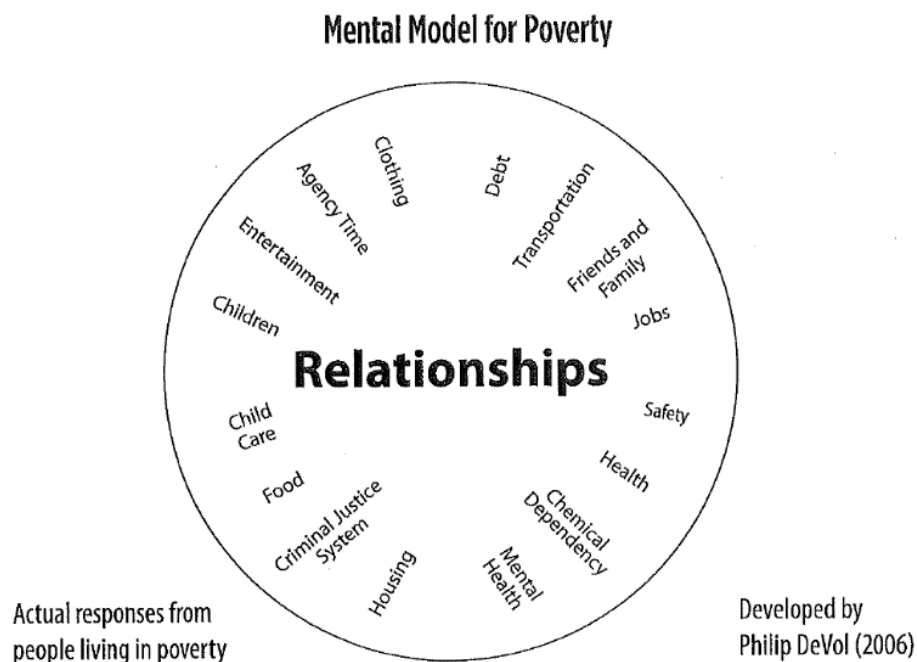


Figure 4. Mental model for poverty. From *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* (5th ed.), by R. K. Payne, 2013, p. 44. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

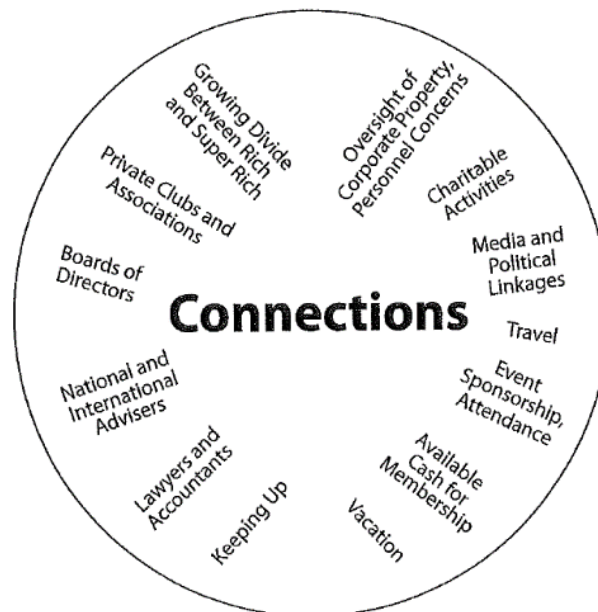
Mental Model for Middle Class



Developed by
Philip DeVol (2006)

Figure 5. Mental model for middle class. From *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* (5th ed.), by R. K. Payne, 2013, p. 44. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

Mental Model for Wealth



Developed by
Ruby Payne (2005)

Figure 6. Mental model for wealth. From *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach* (5th ed.), by R. K. Payne, 2013, p. 45. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

By knowing that relationships are central to individuals operating in poverty, for example, public administrators can understand the importance of the relationship between themselves and their impoverished clients because the impoverished clients depend on their welfare caseworkers as an important part of their support system. By the same token, public organizations recognize that public service employees operate in middle-class value achievement in their careers/jobs. When public service employees become burned out from sustained and prolonged poverty exposure in serving impoverished clientele, not only are levels of effectiveness lower but also feelings of personal achievement are reduced, which could lower effectiveness on the job and increase severity of burnout. Payne et al. (2001) noted,

When students and workers who have been in poverty (and have successfully made it to middle class) are asked how they made their journey, the answer nine times out of 10 has to do with a relationship – a teacher, counselor, coach, or boss who made a suggestion or took an interest in them as an individual. (p. 147)

Payne (2013) referred to Stephen Covey's (1989) notion of an emotional bank account to cover crucial aspects of relationships with regard to clients from poverty. Payne et al. (2001) noted,

A successful relationship occurs when emotional deposits are made to the client or employee, emotional withdrawals are avoided, and clients and employees are respected. Are there boundaries to the relationship? Absolutely – and that is what is meant by clarifying expectations. But to honor clients as human beings worthy of respect and care is to establish a relationship that will provide for enhanced learning and achievement. (p. 148)

By understanding these emotional deposits (as shown in Table 1) that are valued by clients from poverty, the public administrator demonstrates compassion, and the relationship is stronger.

Table 1

Deposits and Withdrawals

Deposits made to individual in poverty	Withdrawals made from individual in poverty
Appreciation for humor and entertainment provided by the individual	Put-downs or sarcasm about the humor of the individual
Acceptance of what the individual cannot say about a person or situation	Insistence and demands for full explanation about a person or situation
Respect for the demands and priorities of relationships	Insistence on the middle-class view of relationships
Using the adult voice	Using the parent voice
Assisting with goal setting	Telling the individual his/her goals
Identifying options related to available resources	Making judgments on the value and availability of resources
Understanding the importance of personal freedom, speech, and individual personality	Assigning pejorative character traits to the individual

Note. From *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, by R. K. Payne, P. E. DeVol, & T. Dreussi Smith, 2001, p. 148. Highlands, TX: Aha! Process.

Burnout

The concept of burnout arrived on the scene only in the last 50 years in the interdisciplinary fields of social work, psychology, nursing, education, mental health, and public administration. Professional burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger (1974) with these early writings exploring the “potentially negative impact of trauma exposure on helping professionals” (Walsh, Mathieu, & Hendricks, 2017, p. 124).

Although burnout is often associated with medical, health, and nursing professionals and

with emergency room trauma and intensive care unit professionals, current literature has shown that professionals working in the fields of trauma, victim assistance, mental health, law enforcement, fire response, emergency medical response, human services, harm reduction, social work, counseling, and other professions are also exposed to traumatic events on a regular basis; in some cases, workers are exposed every day (Molnar et al., 2017; Turgoose, Glover, Barker, & Maddox, 2017; Turgoose & Maddox, 2017).

Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leitner (2001) identified three dimensions of burnout syndrome: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Exhaustion is a central quality of burnout, the most obvious sign of burnout, and the most widely reported of the three aspects of burnout. It is feelings of being drained, emotionally overextended, and exhausted by one's work. Exhaustion, whether emotional, creative, or physical, undermines effectiveness, health, and well-being. Depersonalization is an "attempt to put distance between oneself and service recipients by actively ignoring the qualities that make them unique and engaging people. Their demands are more manageable when they are considered impersonal objects of one's work" (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 403). Depersonalization is detachment, isolation, cynicism, indifference, and loss of connections with people. Depersonalization is an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's service, care, treatment, or instruction (Maslach, Jackson, & Leitner, 1996; Maslach & Leitner, 1997). Finally, people who feel diminished personal accomplishment experience feelings of ineffectiveness, lack of achievement, and a growing sense of inadequacy. They feel

overwhelmed and lose confidence in themselves and in their ability to make a difference (Maslach et al., 1996; Maslach & Leitner, 1997).

Maslach and Leitner (1997) created a job-person model that suggests that degrees of match or mismatch between people and the six areas of work life could lead to burnout. The six domains of job environment and sources of burnout are (a) work overload, (b) loss of control, (c) insufficient reward, (d) unfairness, (e) breakdown of community, and (f) value conflict (Maslach & Leitner, 1997). When the workload becomes more intense, demands more time, is more complex, work creates the exhaustion of overload. The lack of control is loss of control over important dimensions of work such as problem-solving and decision-making. Loss of control is also unpredictability, change, and micromanagement or lack of autonomy. Insufficient reward is doing more for less and losing the joy of work. Unfairness is lack of trust, openness, and respect in the workplace. Breakdown of community happens with fragmenting personal relationships, undermining teamwork, and working separately, not together. Value conflict is undermining quality, poor customer service, limiting services, insincerity in organizational values, and ethical/moral dilemmas in the workplace (Maslach & Leitner, 1997; Maslach et al., 2001).

Todaro-Franceschi (2013) identified 12 phases of burnout, which do not have to occur in order and do not all have to be present for someone to experience burnout. The phases are (a) compulsion to prove oneself, (b) working harder, (c) neglecting one's needs, (d) displacement of conflicts, (e) revision of values, (f) denial of emerging problems, (g) withdrawal, (h) obvious behavioral changes, (i) depersonalization, (j) inner emptiness, (k) depression, and (l) burnout syndrome (Lanier, 2017).

Current literature has suggested that certain situational and individual factors have a propensity for burnout. Situational factors include job, occupational, and organizational characteristics. Individual factors are demographics, personality, and job attitudes.

Research has indicated that certain job characteristics or job-related stressors lead to burnout. Work overload and time pressure are strongly and consistently related to burnout, particularly the exhaustion dimension. Role conflict and role ambiguity show moderate-to-high correlation to burnout. Absence of job resources such as social support from supervisor and coworkers is linked to burnout. A lack of information, control, and feedback are also consistently related to all three dimensions of burnout—exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Burnout is also higher for people who have little participation in decision-making and/or lack autonomy (Maslach et al., 2001; Micklevitz, 2001). Furthermore, Zhang, Redfern, Newman and Ferreira-Meyers (2016) noted, “Emotional exhaustion is reported to occur most frequently among front-line service providers engaging in service encounters” (p. 261), as in the case of public service employees delivering welfare benefits through frequent face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with impoverished clients. Zhang et al. (2016) further noted, “Some studies examining emotional exhaustion have also clearly indicated that employees who have intense customer interactions are supposed to experience high levels of emotional exhaustion” (p. 262).

Certain organizational characteristics also promote burnout. Organizations usually have factors such as hierarchical and bureaucratic structure, management, operating rules, resources, and space distribution that could potentially impact employee burnout (Carlotto, Gil-Monte, & Figueiredo-Ferraz, 2015). The organizational context is

also shaped by larger social, cultural, and economic forces with such changes as downsizing and mergers, multigenerational and diverse workforce, telecommuting, technology and communication, and so forth. According to Maslach et al. (2001),

Now employees are expected to give more in terms of time, effort, skills, and flexibility, whereas they receive less in terms of career opportunities, lifetime employment, job security, as so on. Violation of the psychological contract is likely to produce burnout because it erodes the notion of reciprocity, which is crucial in maintaining well-being. (p. 409)

Micklevitz (2001) stated, “A stressful work environment that offers little or no opportunity for personal growth, has an overwhelming workload, and offers little or no support, can lead to burnout” (p. 4).

Individual factors that could lead to burnout are personality characteristics, demographics, and work-related attitudes. Prosocial behaviors are a precursor of civic engagement. Prosocial behaviors are voluntary behaviors directed at benefiting others such as giving, donating, helping, caring, consoling, volunteering, and so forth to alleviate others’ needs. Luengo Kanacri et al.’s (2016) study explored “whether giving behaviors (i.e., monetary donations) are potential drivers of civic engagement and, in turn, whether giving behaviors are predicted by affective (empathy toward poverty) and cognitive (beliefs promoting autonomy or dependency) reactions to poverty” (p. 256). Luengo Kanacri et al. found that empathetic individuals are more prone to engage in prosocial behaviors, and citizens who demonstrate prosocial behaviors are more inclined to be empathetic toward impoverished people. Luengo Kanacri et al. noted,

People who care about others in need are probably those who care are more prone to care about the common good in their daily life. In particular, . . . the more empathy people felt with impoverished people, the more they exhibited higher levels of monetary donations; and the more they held beliefs assigning importance to facilitating the autonomy of people in need, the more they donated money and engaged in civil life [thus, becoming at greater risk for burnout]. (p. 267)

This civic-minded and compassionate population is also more inclined to work in public organizations serving the public and/or working with impoverished clientele to make a difference in people's lives and to show commitment to public service (Eldor, 2018; Mastracci, Newman, & Guy, 2010). Helping professions could include but are not limited to public service, social work, mental health, counseling/therapy, nursing, public health, criminal justice/law enforcement, first responders, human services, psychology, education, human resources, victim advocacy, rehabilitation, clergy, and so forth. Street-level public service delivery is labor intensive, requiring face-to-face or voice-to-voice exchanges between workers and citizens. In these communications, emotional labor enables the transaction: workers make split-second decisions based on the emotive state of the citizen and adjust their own display of emotion to elicit the desired response from the citizen (Hsieh, Jin, & Guy, 2012; Yang & Guy, 2015).

In customer service, Zhang et al. (2016) noted that “for individuals, the occupational choice of a customer service job originates from their social motives and values. The opportunity to serve and interact directly with customers represents a resource gain (e.g., feelings of self-efficacy or recognition of social skills)” (p. 260). In nursing, Lanier (2017) noted, “People who are attracted to care giving often enter the

field already burned out. They come from a tradition where they are taught to care for the needs of others before caring for themselves” (p. 21). According to Lavee and Strier (2018),

Social work is the profession most commonly associated with families living in poverty. . . . Social work with these families requires a high level of emotional investment, usually depleting the emotional capital of social workers. . . .

Moreover, in the context of increasing levels of poverty, social workers must play a key role in the management of emotional situations with these families. (pp. 504–505)

Lanier (2017) argued,

[Burnout is] more common today among professional caregivers because of increased patient loads, a shortage of nurses and other health care professionals, and financial constraints/budgetary realities that force difficult economic choices to be made. Regardless of the cause, the result is costly both from a personal perspective as well as from a financial one. (p. 23).

Besides being helping professions, certain professions such as police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, military personnel, mental health counselors, and social workers responding to disasters, suicidal clients, assault survivors, family violence, and child protection already have direct and greater exposure to trauma and traumatized clients (Kwak, McNeeley, & Kim, 2018; Turgoose et al., 2017; Turgoose & Maddox, 2017; Van Gelderman, Konjin, & Bakker, 2017). According to Ivicic and Motta (2017), “The most thoroughly investigated workplace variable in the development of secondary traumatic stress is exposure to traumatic material by way of time spent with

traumatized clients” (p. 197). Although research suggests that the amount of exposure to a client’s traumatic material does, in fact, increase the likelihood of secondary traumatic stress (Kwak, McNeeley, & Kim, 2018; Turgoose et al., 2017; Turgoose & Maddox, 2017; Van Gelderman, Konjin, & Bakker, 2017), there are also contradictory findings indicating that exposure to trauma cases was not a significant factor in the development of secondary traumatic stress. The research of Caringi et al. (2017) and Ivicic and Motta (2017) found that work-related variables such as workplace stressors, workload, clear expectations, supervision, job satisfaction, experience, training, occupational commitment, workplace and organizational support, and other factors could predict, promote, or mitigate burnout.

In addition to those who are civic-minded and compassionate, people who display “low levels of hardiness [resilience], poor self-esteem, and external locus of control, and an avoidant coping style typically constitute the profile of a stress-prone individual” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 410). Burnout is also linked to the dimension of neuroticism, which includes trait anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, and vulnerability. The exhaustion dimension of burnout is also linked to Type-A behavior (competition, time-pressured lifestyle, hostility, and an excessive need for control). Also, individuals who are “feeling types” rather than “thinking types” are more prone to burnout, especially to cynicism (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 411).

Current research has indicated that the demographic of age is most consistently related to burnout. Maslach et al. (2001) noted,

Among younger employees, the level of burnout is reported to be higher than it is among those over 30 or 40 years old. Age is confounded with work experience, so burnout appears to be more at risk earlier in one's career. (p. 409)

There are gender differences in prosocial behavior. Research has consistently demonstrated that females are more empathetic than men. Willer, Wimer, and Owens (2015) found that "women's greater orientation toward relational and communal prosocial behavior fits well with work showing that women typically exhibit higher levels of empathy and compassion" (p. 85). A nationally representative survey conducted by Willer et al. determined there was a gender gap in charitable giving and that men were less willing to give money or volunteer time to a poverty relief organization as a result of men's lower feelings of empathy toward others while women exhibited higher charitable giving and higher levels of empathy. This gender difference in burnout is relevant to public organizations because the majority of the public service workforce is women who are more prevalent in welfare and social services agencies. Maslach et al. (2001) found that males often score higher on cynicism and women scored higher in exhaustion. This could be related to gender role stereotypes but could also reflect the confounding of sex with occupation (i.e., police officers are more likely to be male, nurses are more likely to be female). Burnout is still more a female experience, with women being more prone to burnout.

On marital status, those who are unmarried, especially men, could be more prone to burnout compared with those who are married or in a relationship. Singles seem to experience even higher burnout levels than those who are divorced (Maslach et al., 2001).

Research also found that people with higher levels of education report higher levels of burnout than less educated employees. People with higher education could have jobs with greater responsibilities and higher stress. Or maybe highly educated people have higher expectations of their jobs and, thus, are more distressed and disappointed if they do not meet these expectations (Maslach et al., 2001).

Current literature has also suggested a linkage between religious orientation and compassion, suggesting that compassion is a component of religiosity and that people who live by religious values are more inclined to serve and help the poor and those in need (Watson, Hood, Morris, & Hall, 1984). Moxley, Washington, and McElhaney (2012) asserted that the combination of faith, spirituality, and compassionate service makes for an effective approach in working with people who are homeless and impoverished, emphasizing the importance of creating a culture of empathy and compassion. Religious-oriented people tend to gravitate toward the public service field as a career or calling, serving those in need and showing compassion toward the poor. Thus, religious-oriented public service employees serving impoverished clientele could be at greater risk for burnout.

On work attitudes, idealistic professionals who set high or unrealistic expectations are a risk factor for burnout (Micklevitz, 2001). Maslach et al. (2001) noted, “Presumably, high expectations lead people to work too hard and do too much, thus leading to exhaustion and eventual cynicism when the high effort does not yield the expected results” (411).

Thus, the current literature suggests that helping professions and certain situational and individual factors have a propensity for burnout. Helping professions

include social work, nursing, mental health, and so forth. Situational factors include occupational and organizational characteristics. Individual factors are demographics, personality, and job attitudes. Having this awareness and understanding of burnout factors in other fields and professions can help welfare public service employees and public organizations that serve impoverished populations be able to identify, address, and mitigate burnout.

Current public administration HRM literature confirms that stress often results in employee burnout. Burnout can have negative effects on individuals and organizations. Burnout can cause behavioral, psychological, and physiological problems for employees and have a negative impact on mental and physical health such as stress, depression, irritability, lowered self-esteem, anxiety, fatigue, headaches and migraines, insomnia, gastrointestinal disturbances, ulcers, chest pains and heart attacks, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, weakened immune system, and impaired fertility. Burnout also promotes adverse health behaviors such as smoking, lack of exercise, excessive calorie intake, and drug and alcohol abuse (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012; Lombardo & Eyre, 2011; Maslach & Leitner, 1997; Phillips & Gully, 2014; Singh & Singh, 2008; see Figure 7).

Burnout can also lead to negative consequences for organizations such as absenteeism, intention to leave the job, and actual turnover. This translates to substandard customer service and the loss of potentially successful professionals who might choose less stressful careers. However, for people who stay on the job, burnout leads to lower productivity and effectiveness and increases compensation claims and associated costs at work. Consequently, burnout is associated with decreased job

satisfaction and a reduced commitment to the job or the organization (Cropanzano et al., 2003; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012; Maslach et al., 2001; Micklevitz, 2001; Phillips & Gully, 2014). According to Maslach et al. (2001),

People who are experiencing burnout can have a negative impact on their colleagues, both by causing greater personal conflict and by disrupting job tasks. Thus, burnout can be “contagious” and perpetuate itself through informal interactions on the job. There is also some evidence that burnout has a negative “spillover” effect on people’s home life. (p. 406)

Physical	Emotional	Work Related
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Digestive problems: diarrhea, constipation, upset stomach • Muscle tension • Sleep disturbances: inability to sleep, insomnia, too much sleep • Fatigue • Cardiac symptoms: chest pain/pressure, palpitations, tachycardia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood swings • Restlessness • Irritability • Oversensitivity • Anxiety • Excessive use of substances: nicotine, alcohol, illicit drugs • Depression • Anger and resentment • Loss of objectivity • Memory issues • Poor concentration, focus, and judgment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance or dread of working with certain patients • Reduced ability to feel empathy towards patients or families • Frequent use of sick days • Lack of joyfulness

Figure 7. Symptoms of burnout. From “Compassion Fatigue: A Nurse’s Primer,” by B. Lombardo & C. Eyre, 2011, *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, 16(1), p. 3.

While the causes of burnout can be divided into three categories, individual, interpersonal, and organizational, at least two of these burnout categories impact

organizations. Individual burnout is regarded as the outcome of intrapersonal factors. Interpersonal burnout is seen as the result of difficult relations with others at work. Organizational burnout is viewed as a mismatch between the employee and the job (Salminen, Andreou, Holma, Pekkonen, & Makikangas, 2017). Although chronic exposure to the poverty of others may not be the sole or direct cause of organizational stress and employee burnout, public administrators who continually work with impoverished clientele could be significant contributors to lowered levels of effectiveness and increased levels of stress and burnout (see Figure 7).

Burnout is not necessarily attributed to a public service employee's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure from serving poor clientele but could be attributed to the exposure to the trauma, poverty related or not, of impoverished clientele. Burnout, if not addressed appropriately, not only diminishes a public administrator's levels of effectiveness for impoverished clientele but could also negatively impact professional functioning, compromises client welfare, and contributes to ethical violations (Foreman, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

This study rests on the groundwork of two important theories: (a) poverty and scarcity theory and (b) motivation theory. Each of these theories is used to illustrate the connections among impoverished populations, public service employees, and public organizations when discussing the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure. Poverty and scarcity theory explains certain behaviors and mindsets associated with poverty. Motivation theory examines employee motivation and job satisfaction in the workplace.

Poverty and Scarcity Theory

The first theory, poverty and scarcity theory, examines the behaviors and circumstances of poverty from the perspectives of public administrators who work directly with impoverished populations to determine what impacts the agency psychology of poverty have on service delivery and treatment of customers in terms of (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout. Shah, Mullainathan, and Shafir (2012) argued that the poor tend to engage in behaviors and live in environments that promote and perpetuate and reinforce poverty as well as have a distinct outlook on problems and decision-making. Certain behaviors such as excessive borrowing, playing the lottery, not enrolling in assistance programs, saving too little, and so forth stem from having less. Shah et al. (2012) examined the circumstances of poverty, such as education, health, living conditions, political representation, and numerous demographic and geographic variables, and found that the poor live in environments (for sociological, political, economic, or other reasons) that promote these behaviors.

This theory also focuses on personality traits of the poor, suggesting that “resource scarcity creates its own mindset, changing how people look at problems and make decisions” (Shah et al., 2012, p. 682). Shah et al. (2012) suggested that scarcity changes how people allocate attention “because scarcity elicits greater engagement in some problems, it leads them to neglect of others” (p. 682) or attentional neglect. For example, focusing on groceries week to week while neglecting next month’s rent is a scarcity mindset that is also manifested in behaviors such as overborrowing and taking short-term, high-interest (800%) loans to meet current pressing needs and expenses while ignoring future expenses. Researchers have also suggested that cognitive load arises

because people are more engaged with problems where scarcity exists (Feinberg, 2015; Mani, Mullainathan, Shafir, & Zhao, 2013; Nesterak, 2013; Shah et al., 2012).

The poverty and scarcity theory and its associated behaviors and mindsets are important for public administrators to understand when serving impoverished clientele whose focus or priority may not match that of the public service employee. Recognizing these behaviors and mindsets of poverty through working with impoverished clientele can help public administrators understand the urgency and challenges of poverty so that public service employees can show compassion and be effective in serving the poor. Likewise, public administrators should also become aware of the need for self-care and recognize signs of burnout such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal achievement as well as lowered levels of effectiveness.

Dalton et al. (2017) also stressed that the psychological aspects of poverty can impact one's productivity.

[Researchers have] identified additional channels through which poverty affects individual decisions in a way that can become counterproductive. These mechanisms include risk and time preferences or individuals' motivations and aspirations. According to the economic and social conditions under which poor people live may lower their willingness to take risks and to forgo current income in favor of higher future incomes, even though the intrinsic time and risk preferences of the poor may be identical to those of wealthier people. (Dalton et al., 2017, p. 1)

For example, given the choice between a current and a delayed payment, the poor person may opt for the current payment because of its being more liquidity-constrained. On

motivations and aspirations, the poor are more likely to choose a low-aspiration level and effort relative to the best outcome they can achieve because of scarcity and poverty reasons of lower access to credit, contacts who are less influential, or less access to relevant information, and so forth, which make it more difficult for the poor to achieve a given outcome (Dalton, Ghosal, & Mani, 2016; Dalton et al., 2017).

This explanation could help public administrators understand the negative effects of the behavioral bias that society may have about poor people setting low aspirations so as not to make those same societal judgments against the poor. Recognizing this behavioral bias through working with impoverished clientele, public administrators can set aside judgment and blame by demonstrating compassion and becoming effective in serving the poor. At the same time, it is important for the public service employees to recognize the need for self-care when they begin to experience a lack of compassion and effectiveness and signs of burnout.

Motivation Theory

In HRM, motivation theory

seeks to explain why employees are more motivated by and satisfied with one type of work than another. It is essential that managers have a basic understanding of work motivation because highly motivated employees are more likely to produce a superior-quality product or service than employees who lack motivation. (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012, p. 59)

The two-factor theory of motivation, developed by Frederick Herzberg (1987), proposes two types of factors that employees find satisfying and dissatisfying about their jobs: (a) motivators (satisfiers) or intrinsic factors and (b) hygiene (dissatisfiers) or

maintenance factors. Motivators or intrinsic factors are “internal job factors that lead to job satisfaction and higher motivation. In the absence of motivators, employees will probably not be satisfied with their work or motivated to perform up to their potential” (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012, p. 61). Examples of such motivators are the work itself, achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth and advancement. Hygiene or maintenance factors are “external to the job: they are located in the work environment. The absence of a hygiene factor can lead to active dissatisfaction and demotivation and, in extreme situations, to avoidance of the work altogether” (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012, p. 61). Examples of hygiene or maintenance factors include company policies, working conditions, job security, salary, status, employee benefits, relationships with supervisors and managers, relationships with coworkers, and relationships with subordinates. According to Herzberg (1987), if management provides the appropriate hygiene factors, employees will not be dissatisfied with their jobs, but neither will they be motivated to perform at their full potential because hygiene factors are not potent enough to satisfy or motivate employees when they are present. Management must provide a combination of intrinsic and hygiene factors (Condrey, 2010; Gomez-Mejia et al., 2012; Herzberg, 1987).

Related to Herzberg’s (1987) motivation theory is Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of needs. Maslow also recognized the need for employees to satisfy various personal needs in the context of work. He theorized that “a person could not recognize or pursue the next higher need in the hierarchy until her or his currently recognized need was substantially or completely satisfied” (Gawel, 1997, p. 1). Maslow identified eight levels of needs: (a) physiological (food, water, warmth, rest); (b) safety (security, stability,

protection); (c) love and belonging (intimate relationships, affection, work group); (d) esteem (status, achievement, responsibility, reputation); (e) cognitive (knowledge, meaning, self-awareness); (f) aesthetic (beauty, balance, form); (g) self-actualization (personal growth, fulfillment); and (h) self-transcendence (spiritual, integrity; Maslow & Lowery, 1998). When public service employees serving the poor experience burnout, they have difficulties meeting the deficiency needs of the first four levels and are unable to achieve the growth needs of the last four levels. As an employee advances within an organization, the employer supplies or provides opportunities to satisfy needs higher on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, but if the organization is unaware of and/or leaves unaddressed intrinsic and hygiene factors and fails to provide those deficiency needs of the first four levels, public service employees serving the poor could experience burnout.

For public organizations that serve impoverished clientele, HRM must recognize that agency psychology of sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty could impact public service employees as both intrinsic and hygiene factors in adverse and positive ways. When HRM professionals understand the importance of these intrinsic and hygiene factors of motivation, they can capitalize on this by celebrating client success stories and showing employee appreciation to create a positive organizational culture, increase productivity and effectiveness, boost morale and engagement, and fulfill employees' need for achievement. HRM can also enhance employee compassion through service learning, cultural sensitivity, burnout awareness, and poverty awareness training programs.

HRM professionals of public organizations that serve impoverished clientele, such as welfare and social services, must also bear the onus of creating and maintaining a

positive organizational culture and taking care of employees. HRM can accomplish this by recognizing and addressing causes and effects of employee burnout, providing awareness and training, and offering employee assistance services and programs to mitigate burnout and ineffectiveness among employees.

Literature and Knowledge Gaps

Although there is ample existing poverty and public administration literature and research discussing the impacts of poverty on the poor and attributing poverty to various and endless causes and effects of poverty, there remains insufficient literature and research in the public administration field on the examination and impacts of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on those who administer relief to impoverished communities, specifically, the street-level, front-line public administrators and public organizations that directly serve the public by delivering public assistance and benefits to impoverished clientele. First, there is inadequate research on whether and how sustained and prolonged poverty exposure adversely affects welfare workers. Second, there is insufficient research on how the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure impacts a public service employee's (a) level of effectiveness and (b) severity of burnout.

Figure 1 (repeated here for ease of reference) conceptualizes this study by proposing that public administrators, who deliver services to impoverished populations, experiencing sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty over time will demonstrate greater severity of burnout and decreased levels of effectiveness. This study reviewed existing public administration literature through the lens of poverty scarcity theory and motivation theory burnout model and identified a gap in the body of public

administration literature for the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure of public administrators to impoverished clientele.

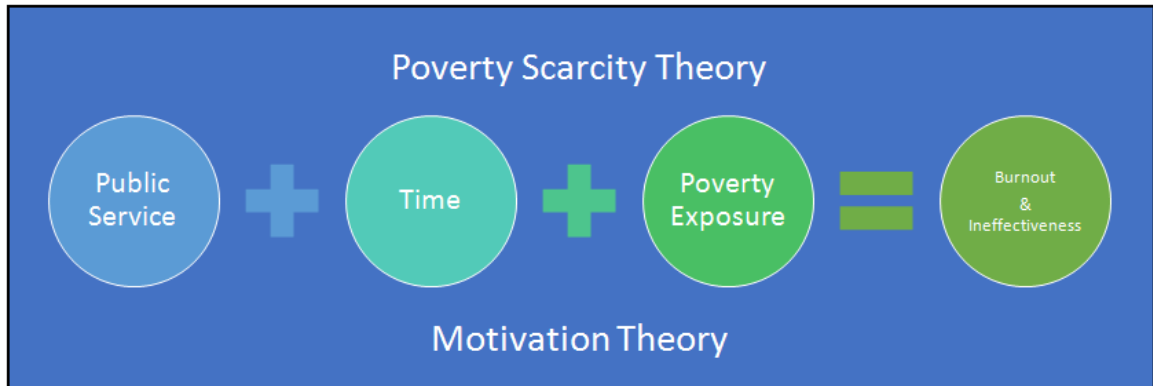


Figure 1. Concept map.

These impacts of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on public administrators may have adverse effects on the public service employees in terms of behavioral, psychological, and physiological health as well as job performance and productivity. The public service employee may experience difficulties managing workload and work-life balance. This could lead to work performance and disciplinary issues and, consequently, worries about job security and health and medical issues. Such negative impacts could lead to burnout. Decreased productivity and job performance may also be manifested in public administrators' attitudes about poverty and treatment of impoverished clientele in decreased feelings of compassion and effectiveness, increased feelings of depersonalization, and cynicism. According to Hsieh et al. (2012),

Burnout is pivotal in worker performance because it is related to decreasing performance levels of formerly productive workers, absenteeism, turnover, increased use of sick leave, psychological withdrawal, aggression, alienation, depersonalization, and dysfunctional coping mechanisms. This is germane to

public service because most human services are delivered by governmental and nonprofit agencies. (p. 41)

These individual impacts, when taken collectively, could have negative consequences on a public organization in terms of effectiveness, commitment, federal and state funding or sanctions, performance measures, employee turnover, absenteeism, increase in compensation claims and associated costs, reputation and branding, customer service, training, and so forth. For example, a public service employee who serves impoverished clientele experiences burnout. The public administrator's burnout manifests in poor customer service, missed deadlines, and mistakes, which could result in not meeting performance measures and state and federal sanctions or funding cuts. The public administrator takes an extended leave of absence to recuperate, resulting in increased claims and costs in health care, disability, worker's compensation, and employee assistance program. In the meantime, the supervisor and colleagues cover the absent employee's workload, impacting their own workload and, ultimately, the efficiency and effectiveness, customer service delivery, and branding and reputation of the public agency. Although this scenario may seem extreme, burnout can have such impacts in individual employees and public organizations when burnout goes unrecognized and left unaddressed.

Figure 8 illustrates some of the potential impacts and manifestations that poverty experience and exposure have on poor people, public administrators, and public organizations. The literature review has indicated that this research on the impacts of the agency's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on street-level public administrators

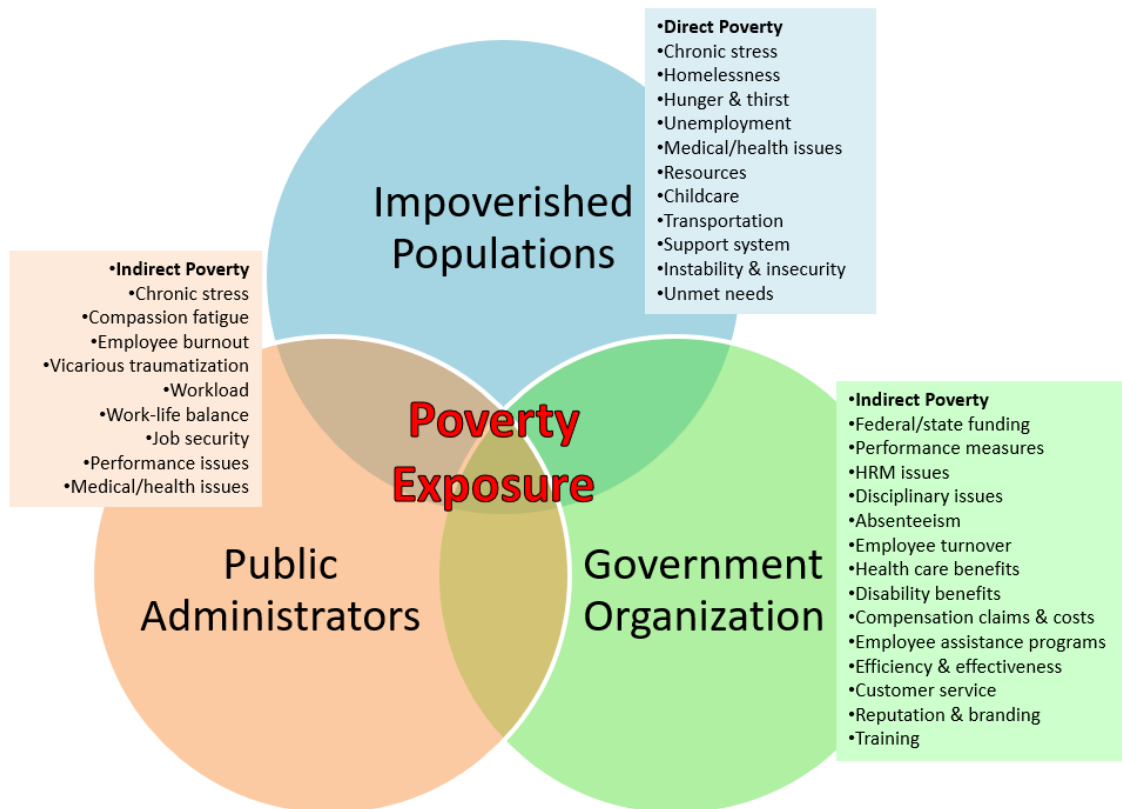


Figure 8. Impacts of poverty exposure.

who directly serve impoverished populations is relevant to the field of public administration because it prompts public administration to examine the manifestations and potential ramifications that the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure could have on a public service employee's attitudes and perceptions of poverty, levels of compassion, effectiveness, burnout, and quality of service delivery to impoverished clientele. This research also could serve as insight for public leaders and public organizations to the challenges of being exposed to poverty that public service employees must face when serving an indigent clientele. This research also helps HRM professionals understand the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty

exposure to better manage HRM issues and repercussions on organizational life and workplace.

Summary

This literature review section has served as a brief survey of the literature and has (a) briefly discussed the historical and foundational perspective of poverty research literature and public administration literature as separate, not-yet canonical writings in their early years; (b) discussed the union between the field of public administration and the social and economic condition of poverty in literature; (c) examined the recent body of literature on public administration and poverty; (d) reviewed the major theories and theoretical frameworks that pertain to public administration and poverty—poverty and scarcity theory and motivation theory; and finally, (e) identified the need for new literature and research to fill in the gaps of the current literature and knowledge on poverty and public administration for the field of public administration, public service practitioners, and HRM professionals to better understand the impacts that the agency's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure could have on public administrators and public organizations that deliver public benefits and services to impoverished clientele.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methods and strategy that this quasidescriptive study employed to research and gather data on the impacts of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on public administrators in the treatment of and service delivery to impoverished populations in terms of effectiveness and burnout. This methods chapter discusses the research questions, measures, designs, procedures, participants, instruments, materials, and proposed analysis. This study was designed to discover and identify any correlation between a public administrator's time spent serving the impoverished populations and severity of burnout and levels of effectiveness.

The research methods used in this study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and level of effectiveness?
2. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

For this study, the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS) was used to capture the responses of a purposeful, nonrandom sample of public service employees who worked with the public sector. The respondents were employees of a public organization located in three offices.

Each research subject was asked to participate in the MBI-HSS, a predetermined survey designed by Christina Maslach, researcher and pioneer of the Maslach Burnout Inventory for various professions (Maslach et al., 1996).

The researcher used the online survey development cloud-based software, SurveyMonkey, to administer the MBI-HSS, which comprised two sections:

(a) SurveyMonkey MBI-HSS and (b) a demographic section created by the researcher.

The SurveyMonkey MBI-HSS comprised statements pertaining to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The demographic section comprised questions about professional and personal background such as job/position title, work experience, time spent working with impoverished clientele, age, sex, marital status, education level, and socioeconomic status. The researcher also provided open-ended questions at the end as an opportunity for respondents to ask questions and provide comments.

Protocol and Ethical Considerations

In keeping with California Baptist University (CBU) regulations on research of human subjects, the researcher submitted an application to conduct research to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The researcher conducted this research study with the full support of CBU's IRB. The public organization's agency managers also authorized site approval to conduct research, which entailed permission to distribute the online survey by e-mail to employees on organizational e-mail distribution lists.

All data were obtained through the use of a SurveyMonkey online questionnaire, and all research participants remained anonymous. The researcher embedded the electronic consent form to the questionnaire (Appendix C). After the research participants completed the online survey (Appendix D), the researcher transferred their responses to paper from the MBI-HSS survey forms for scoring and then to an Excel spreadsheet for recording. By separating the participants' responses from the electronic

consent form, the researcher was able to remove any connection between the research subjects and their consent forms, thus maintaining anonymity and confidentiality throughout.

The researcher set a data collection period of no more than 3 weeks because this timeframe allowed for adequate response time for research participants and an adequate number of responses. The researcher also sent out weekly and final-day reminder e-mails with links to the online survey for participants to complete the survey before it closed.

The researcher also provided referral and contact information for the public organization's HRM Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for employees experiencing workplace stress and coping difficulties caused by their sustained and prolonged poverty exposure in providing services and benefits to impoverished clientele.

The public organization's EAP provided support, resources, and information for personal and work issues. Services were confidential and provided at no charge to qualifying employees and their dependents. Services included financial information and resources, legal support and resources, work-life solutions, clinical counseling, and critical incident stress management. The following EAP services are currently provided by ComPsych Corporation's GuidanceResources®:

- Toll free: (888) 972-4732
- TDD: (800) 697-0353
- www.guidanceresources.com (enter company web ID)

Population and Sample Size

Using purposeful, nonrandom, convenient sampling, the researcher focused on opportunistic or emergent and maximum variation sampling techniques to further identify

qualified participants of interest to this study. The intended target population and sample was a cross section of male and female, adult (18 years and older) public sector employees, ranging in ethnicity, age, education, and years of experience, working in similar government organizations that provided public services and benefits/subsidies to impoverished populations. The researcher identified and recruited the participants of interest for sampling based on the following criteria: (a) working directly with low-income and impoverished population and (b) willing to participate in the study by sending an informational e-mail about the research study and asking for voluntary participation.

The researcher considered similar government organizations that provide similar public service and benefits, specifically Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), General Relief (GR), childcare subsidies, housing subsidies, and employment training to impoverished populations. These ideal organizations and sites shared the following characteristics:

- Public/government (state-level)
- Interface with an indigent public
- Deliver public assistance and benefits (TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid)

The sample size was three sites or agencies and 199 possible survey participants total. The researcher needed to obtain a minimum or acceptable return rate of 102 (51%) responses to conduct the study. The study achieved a return of 112 (56%) responses to report the findings. Of the 199 surveys that were distributed, 112 (56%) surveys were

completed and submitted, two (1%) surveys were declined, and 85 (43%) surveys had no response.

Research Method and Design

This quasidescriptive, correlational study employed the quantitative research method to study sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts because this research method allowed the researcher to identify correlations in variables of poverty exposure: (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout. The researcher used the measure of the survey to gather data. Survey research “is a specific type of field study that involves the use of a questionnaire” (Visser, Krosnick, & Lavrakas, 2000, p. 223). The survey used was a cross-sectional survey, involving the

collection of data at a single point in time from a sample drawn from a specific population. This design is most often used to document the prevalence of particular characteristics in a population [and allows for] the opportunity to assess relations between variables and differences between subgroups in a population.

(Visser et al., 2000, p. 225)

The survey employed the Likert scale created by Rensis Likert and the Likert-type response anchors created by Wade M. Vagias (Dowdie, 2017; SurveyMonkey, 2018; Vagias, 2006).

The researcher generated an online survey/questionnaire using SurveyMonkey, an online survey development, cloud-based software. The researcher conducted a computer-assisted, self-administered survey on public administrators working in government agencies that serve impoverished populations for the purpose of collecting public

administrators' demographic data. Research participants who received the survey were asked to respond to the SurveyMonkey MBI-HSS and demographic questions.

The survey/questionnaire comprised 22 statements about emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The statements were closed-ended, requiring the research participants to select an answer from a range of choices offered explicitly by the researcher. Each survey statement included a rating scale beneath. The survey choices were ranked on a Likert system to measure the severity of agency poverty exposure by public administrators working with impoverished clientele. The Likert scale used in this research study ranged from 0 to 6: 0 (*never*), 1 (*a few times a year or less*), 2 (*once a month or less*), 3 (*a few times a month*), 4 (*once a week*), 5 (*a few times a week*), and 6 (*every day*).

The survey also included a demographic section with closed-ended questions on professional experience, age, gender, sex, ethnicity, relationship status, education level, and SES. The participants were able to type their responses into a text box and select from a multiple-choice or drop-down list of options. The final two questions were open-ended, allowing for the research participants to ask questions or make comments.

Statistical Instrumentation

On data gathering instruments, the researcher used the research design of the survey for gathering data, specifically the MBI-HSS, which has been “recognized for more than a decade as the leading measure of burnout, incorporating the extensive research that has been conducted in the more than 25 years since its initial publication” (Statistics Solutions, 2020, para. 1).

According to Maslach and Leitner (1997), “Managers and researchers use the MBI with other inventories in order to establish the relationship between burnout and organizational policies, productivity, or social support” (p. 156). There are three versions of the MBI, and the original Human Services Survey is most appropriate for human service workers.

The MBI-HSS has proven reliability in its subscales using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha, reporting “.90 for emotional exhaustion, .79 for depersonalization, and .71 for personal accomplishment” (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 16). The MBI-HSS also demonstrates validity through “correlating scale scores with the observations of others, with job conditions that were hypothesized to be associated with burnout, and by relating burnout to other personal attitudes and reactions, and various other longer-term outcomes” (Maslach et al., 1981, p. 17).

The SurveyMonkey MBI-HSS comprised 22 statements within a Likert scale to measure the degree of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The survey statements represented feelings that public service employees might experience while working with impoverished clientele in their public organizations. With respect to their own feelings and organizations, the public administrators were instructed to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement by circling one of the seven alternatives listed below each statement.

The survey responses were ranked on a Likert system to measure the severity of agency poverty exposure by public administrators working with impoverished clientele. The Likert scale used in this research study ranged on a 7-point frequency scale from 0 to

6: 0 (*never*), 1 (*a few times a year or less*), 2 (*once a month or less*), 3 (*a few times a month*), 4 (*once a week*), 5 (*a few times a week*), and 6 (*every day*).

The SurveyMonkey MBI-HSS statements were as follows:

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
4. I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.
5. I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.
6. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
7. I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.
8. I feel burned out from my work.
9. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
10. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
12. I feel very energetic.
13. I feel frustrated by my job.
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
15. I don't really care what happens to some recipients.
16. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
17. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.
18. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.
19. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.

21. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.
22. I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.

The survey also included a demographic section with closed-ended questions on professional experience, age, sex, ethnicity, relationship status, education level, and SES. The participants were able to type their responses into a text box and select from multiple-choice or drop-down list options. The final two questions were open ended, allowing for the research participants to ask questions or make comments.

The questions in the demographic section of the survey were as follows:

1. What is your title/position?
2. How long have you worked for [name of public organization]?
3. How long have you worked in your current position/job?
4. How long have you worked in the public service field?
5. How long have you worked with poor populations?
6. What is your age?
7. What is your sex?
8. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?
9. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?
10. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
11. Which of the following describes your socioeconomic status?
12. Questions?
13. Comments?

In all, the MBI-HSS and demographic questions took about 15 minutes to complete.

Data Collection

The researcher organized the survey data to identify trends, patterns, anomalies, and correlations in public administrators' sustained and prolonged poverty exposure with the variables of (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout. The study also took into consideration other integral variables such as age, sex, ethnicity, relationship status, education level, SES, duration serving in public service, the public organization, the welfare agency, and serving the poor.

At the end of the 3-week data collection period, the researcher transferred the responses from SurveyMonkey to MBI-HSS score sheets for tabulation. Then, the researcher transferred the data and scores to Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for data analysis.

The researcher hoped to obtain a more than adequate level of statistical significance to affirm that the public administrator's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure does have statistical significance in areas of (a) burnout and (b) effectiveness when delivering services and benefits to impoverished clientele.

The researcher anticipated that the statistical significance and quantitative correlational approach would provide more information and insight into the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators and public organizations that serve impoverished populations. The researcher also hoped that the findings and results could be used by public administrators and leaders of public organizations to better understand and to address public service employees' sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty that could significantly impact a

public organization in terms of HRM issues, fulfilling the agency's mission, and accomplishing its goals. Maslach et al. (1996) explained that the MBI-HSS

assesses three core aspects of the burnout syndrome: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. The frequency with which the respondent experiences feelings related to each scale is assessed using a seven-point, fully anchored response format. Each aspect is measured by a separate scale/subscale. (p. 15)

Nine survey items (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 20) were measured and scored on the Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscale. EE measures "feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work" (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15). Higher EE scores indicated greater experienced burnout. Five survey items (5, 10, 11, 15, and 22) were measured and scored on the Depersonalization (DP) subscale. DP measures "an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's service, care, treatment, or instruction" (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15). Higher DP scores indicated greater degrees of experienced burnout. Eight survey items (4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, and 21) were measured and scored on the Personal Accomplishment (PA) subscale. PA measures "feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people" (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15). Lower PA scores indicated greater experienced burnout. "Those with the opposite pattern – scoring low on Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization and high on Personal Accomplishment – are experiencing many aspects of engagement with work" (Maslach & Leitner, 1997, p. 156).

For this research, the EE subscale can be substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout; the DP subscale can be substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness.

The survey responses were ranked on a Likert system to measure the severity of agency poverty exposure by public administrators working with impoverished clientele. The Likert scale used in this research study ranged on a 7-point frequency scale from 0 to 6: 0 (*never*), 1 (*a few times a year or less*), 2 (*once a month or less*), 3 (*a few times a month*), 4 (*once a week*), 5 (*a few times a week*), and 6 (*every day*).

Importance of the Study

This research is significant because it adds to the body of knowledge concerning the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators and public organizations. This research also could serve as insight for public leaders and public organizations of the wicked problem and challenges of poverty that public service employees must face when serving an indigent clientele. The results of this study could help public organizations and HRM professionals recognize, monitor, intervene, and/or address early onset of burnout in public service employees who serve impoverished populations. The results of this study could also help leaders of public organizations and HRM professionals promote empathy and compassion through cultural sensitivity training, poverty awareness training/workshops such as Bridges out of Poverty workshop, burnout awareness, service-learning, and so forth. Finally, this research also helps leaders and HRM professionals better understand the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure to better manage HRM issues in organizational life and workplace environments.

Delimitations and Limitations

The researcher was limited in studying the agency psychology of poverty experience and its impacts on public administrators for a variety of reasons. The research

was limited to studying public administrators' professional experience with poverty instead of personal experience. The research was limited to a public organization located in Nevada. The research did not consider nongovernmental, nonprofit, or faith-based agencies and organizations. The research specifically focused on welfare and social services professionals who deliver entitlements, benefits, and services (i.e., TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid) to impoverished clientele and did not include other public administrators who also have direct contact with the poor such as law enforcement and public safety personnel, first responders, medical and healthcare workers, educators, and so forth. There was also a geographical limitation in this study that concentrated on the highly populated and urban areas and their associated welfare offices. This research excluded offices located in rural areas.

Summary

This methodology section discussed the research methods and designs, protocols and ethical considerations, sample and population, statistical instrumentation, data collection, importance of the study, and delimitations and limitations in studying the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter covers the results and analysis of the data collected from the researcher's SurveyMonkey Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS). The survey comprised various statements assessing the three fundamental aspects of burnout (exhaustion-energy, depersonalization-involvement, and inefficacy-accomplishment), participant demographics section, and questions/comments section. Quantitative data and descriptive analysis were used in the research.

Data Analysis and Results

The MBI-HSS assesses three core dimensions of the burnout syndrome: exhaustion-energy, depersonalization-involvement, and inefficacy-accomplishment. The frequency with which the respondent experiences feelings related to each scale is assessed using a 7-point, fully anchored response format. Each aspect is measured by a separate scale and subscale (Maslach et al., 1996). Nine survey items (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 20) were measured and scored on the Emotional Exhaustion (EE) subscale. EE measures “feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one’s work” (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15). Higher EE scores indicated greater experienced burnout. Five survey items (5, 10, 11, 15, and 22) were measured and scored on the Depersonalization (DP) subscale. DP measures “an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one’s service, care, treatment, or instruction” (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15). Higher DP scores indicated greater degrees of experienced burnout. Eight survey items (4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, and 21) were measured and scored on the Personal Accomplishment (PA) subscale. PA measures “feelings of competence and successful achievement in one’s work with people” (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 15).

The survey responses were ranked on a Likert system to measure the severity of burnout through agency sustained and prolonged poverty exposure by public administrators working with impoverished clientele. As shown in Figure 9, the Likert scale used in this research study ranged on a 7-point frequency scale from 0 to 6: 0 (*never*), 1 (*a few times a year or less*), 2 (*once a month or less*), 3 (*a few times a month*), 4 (*once a week*), 5 (*a few times a week*), and 6 (*every day*).

Example:

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

Figure 9. Example of MBI-HSS frequency scale. From Maslach Burnout Inventory: Instruments and Scoring Keys, by C. Maslach, S. E. Jackson, M. P. Leitner, W. B. Schaufeli, & R. L. Schwab, 1981, p. 2, Menlo Park, CA: Mind Garden.

Table 2 indicates the levels of perceived burnout for each subscale. Since burnout is measured on this multidimensional construct, the subscales are not combined into one burnout score but examined as separate aspects of burnout. The MBI-HSS measures severity of burnout as high, moderate, or low for each of the subscales. Each subscale score can be taken as a sum or average. Higher EE and DP contribute to burnout while higher PA reduces burnout. Lower PA scores indicate greater experienced burnout. Conversely, those with the opposite pattern—scoring low on EE and DP and high on PA—are experiencing many aspects of engagement with work (Maslach & Leitner, 1997). For this research, the EE subscale can be substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout; the DP subscale can be substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness.

Table 2

MBI-HSS Range of Scores Indicating Severity of Burnout by Subscale

Category	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
High	27+	13+	0-31
Moderate	17-26	7-12	32-38
Low	0-16	0-6	39+
Range	0-54	0-30	0-48

The MBI-HSS normative data and mean scores results indicated that all of the welfare agency's mean survey scores in this survey fell below the normative scores for each burnout scale. However, the scores were close enough to the normative range to indicate moderate levels of burnout in all subscales for welfare professionals (see Appendix E, Table E1).

The MBI-HSS frequency scores and percentages indicate severity of burnout of participants for each category and subscale of burnout. A majority of participants indicated they experienced low or moderate levels of perceived burnout (see Appendix E, Table E2).

MBI-HSS burnout dimension by questionnaire item shows how each survey statement was categorized according to a dimension of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal achievement. Nine survey items (red; 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, and 20) pertained to the burnout dimension of EE. Five survey items (green; 5, 10, 11, 15, and 22) applied to DP. Eight survey items (blue; 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19, and 21) related to PA. For this research, the EE subscale was substituted as a synonymous

measure of burnout; the DP subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness (see Appendix E, Tables E3 and E4).

Participants

A total of 199 public service professionals were purposefully selected from a local welfare agency and contacted via e-mail. Of the 199 surveys that were distributed, 112 (56%) surveys were completed and submitted, two (1%) surveys were declined, and 85 (43%) surveys had no response. A minimum of 102 (51%) responses were required and 112 (56%) were returned and used to report the findings. Participants were recruited for the study based on their front-line, street-level work in public service with populations who live in poverty. Participants were selected because welfare workers experience high levels of work-related stress, work directly with impoverished populations, and were exposed to their impoverished clientele's poverty trauma. Studies have shown that sustained and prolonged exposure to stress and trauma can create burnout and compassion fatigue. All participants were active welfare employees who comprised 94 women and 18 men. Participants ranged in age from 20s to 60s, with a mean age bracket of 30–39. The majority of respondents had some college or held college degrees (80%). The majority of participants were married (61%). The majority of participants considered themselves to be in the middle class (88%). Respondents were a fair representation of the area: White (78%), Hispanic (12%), multiple ethnicities/other (3%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (2.6%) Asian (3%), and Black (1%). Participants ranged in work seniority from 1 month to 39 years with an average of 10.5 years working in public service, an average of 6 years working in public organization, an average of 3.5

years in the welfare agency, and an average of 8.8 years serving the poor (see Appendix E, Table E5).

Burnout by Office

Three agency offices participated in this study. Office A had 29 of 50 (58%) staff participate, contributing to 26% of total agency participation; Office B had 66 of 120 (55%) contributing to 59%; and Office C had 17 of 29 (59%) contributing to 15%. Overall agency participation was 112 ($n = 112$) of 199 (56%). This overall agency participation rate of 56% was acceptable for conducting the study because a minimum of 101 (51%) participation rate was required. The results indicated that each of the welfare office's mean survey scores in this survey fell below the normative scores for each burnout subscale and indicated moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales for welfare professionals. However, when compared with the overall agency average, Office A rated highest in burnout in all subscales while Office C ranked lowest in burnout in all subscales. Offices B and C fell under the agency average in all burnout subscales (see Appendix E, Table E6).

Burnout by Sex

Participants comprised 18 (16%) men and 94 (84%) women. The results showed that women are more prevalent than men in this welfare and social services workforce, making up the majority of public service employees serving impoverished populations at almost a 5 to 1 ratio compared to their male counterparts. Female participants indicated they experienced higher levels of perceived burnout than male participants and higher than the agency average levels of burnout. However, both sexes fell below the normative

scores for each burnout scale and indicated moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales (see Appendix E, Table E7).

Burnout by Age Group

The majority of the research participants in the agency workforce who served impoverished clientele were in their 30s, 40s, and 50s, making up over three-quarters of the workforce. All age groups scored moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales. Compared with the agency average, the 60–69 age group consistently scored higher in all burnout scales, experiencing higher levels of burnout. Compared with the normative scores, the 20–29 age group consistently scored lower in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout (see Appendix E, Table E8).

Burnout by Relationship Status

All relationship groups scored moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales. Compared with the agency average and normative scores, the domestic partnership/civil union and single/never married groups consistently scored lower in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout. More than half (54%) of participants are in a married relationship (see Appendix E, Table E9).

Burnout by Education Level

All education levels scored moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales. Compared with the agency average, public service employees who graduated from high school, graduated from college, and had some graduate school scored below the agency average in all burnout subscales. Compared with the normative scores, all education levels, except those who completed graduate school, scored below the normative scores in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout. The data showed that 80%

of public service employees serving impoverished clientele were pursuing and/or had completed a college undergraduate and/or graduate education (see Appendix E, Table E10).

Burnout by Socioeconomic Status

All SES levels scored moderate and low levels of burnout in all subscales. Compared with the agency average, public service employees who perceived themselves in the lower class consistently scored above the agency average in all burnout subscales, experiencing higher levels of burnout. Compared with the normative scores, those in the middle-class and upper-class consistently scored below the normative scores in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout. The data showed that a majority (88%) of public service employees serving impoverished populations identified themselves as belonging in the SES of the middle-class (see Appendix E, Table E11).

Burnout by Race/Ethnicity

Compared with the agency average and the normative scores, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and multiple ethnicities/other consistently scored below the agency average in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout, while Whites/Caucasians consistently scored above the agency average in all burnout subscales, experiencing higher levels of burnout. The data showed that a majority, more than three fourths (78%), of public service employees serving impoverished populations identify themselves as White/Caucasian (see Appendix E, Table E12).

Burnout by Public Assistance Use

Participants self-identified whether they have ever used public assistance (i.e., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF], Supplemental Nutritional Assistance

Program [SNAP], and Medicaid) in their childhood and/or adulthood. More than half (57%) of public service employees serving in welfare identified as having used public assistance as a child and/or adult, but there was no indication of burnout on any subscales (see Appendix E, Table E13).

Burnout by Duration of Time in Public Service, Public Organization, Public Agency

Research participants provided information on how long they had worked in the areas of public service, the public organization, and the welfare agency. The data showed that a majority of participants were within their first 5 years of working in public service (35%), with the public organization (57%), and with the public agency (66%; see Appendix E, Table E14).

Burnout by Duration of Time Serving the Poor

Compared with the agency average and the normative scores, employees with less than 1 year, 1–5 years, 20–25 years, and more than 30 years of serving the impoverished consistently scored below the agency average in all burnout subscales, experiencing lower levels of burnout. Employees who served in the middle ranges of 6–10 years, 11–15 years, and 16–20 years consistently scored above the agency average in all burnout subscales, experiencing higher levels of burnout. The data also showed that a majority (64%) of research participants worked in the ranges of 1–5 years and 6–10 years serving impoverished populations. These lower levels of burnout among agency employees with less than 1 year, 1–5 years, 20–25 years, and more than 30 years could be indicative of an employee’s career stage within the agency, which could be related to an agency’s employee attrition rate and retirement rate and/or tenure/vesting and retirement requirements. The higher levels of burnout among agency employees in the middle

ranges of 6–10 years, 11–15 years, and 16–20 years of service could also indicate an employee’s career stage within the agency and the employee’s obligations to the agency to meet retirement requirements (see Appendix E, Table E15).

Correlations

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), Version 25. This research used descriptive statistics to measure the variables. The researcher conducted independent *t* tests to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means in public administrators who had experienced poverty in their childhood and/or adulthood and the severity of burnout. Significance value was tested at $p < 0.05$.

The researcher also computed the Spearman’s Rho rank-order correlation coefficient to identify variables for possible statistical significance between duration in each area of interest (public service, the public organization, the welfare agency, and serving the poor) with each of the burnout subscale scores in EE, DP, and PA. Significant correlations were determined by comparing the correlation coefficient to the significance number (two-tailed). Significance was tested as $p < 0.05$ level of confidence, two-tailed.

Childhood Poverty

First, the researcher conducted an independent samples *t* test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means in public administrators who were poor and were aware of using public assistance (i.e., TANF, SNAP, and Medicaid) in their childhood and the level of effectiveness and severity of burnout.

According to the MBI-HSS, the childhood poverty group ($n = 24$) was associated with numerically lower burnout subscale scores: EE $M = 18.58$ ($SD = 13.61$), DP $M = 7.04$ ($SD = 5.64$), and lesser sense of PA $M = 36.46$ ($SD = 9.31$). By comparison, the childhood nonpoverty group ($n = 82$) was associated with numerically higher burnout subscale scores: EE $M = 20.38$ ($SD = 12.13$), DP $M = 7.37$ ($SD = 6.48$), and greater sense of PA $M = 38.88$ ($SD = 6.29$).

To test whether childhood poverty was associated with statistically significant difference between the means in public administrators who experienced childhood poverty and the level of effectiveness and severity of burnout, an independent samples t test was performed. Significance value was tested at $p < 0.05$. Equal variances not assumed, the independent samples t test for childhood poverty was not associated with a statistically significant effect in effectiveness or burnout: EE $t(.582) = 34.12$, $p = .564$; DP $t(.239) = 42.40$, $p = .812$; and PA $t(1.20) = 29.41$, $p = .241$. Thus, public administrators who experienced childhood poverty were not associated with a statistically significant higher level of burnout and ineffectiveness than public administrators who did not experience childhood poverty.

Adulthood Poverty

Second, the researcher also conducted an independent samples t test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the means in public administrators who had used public assistance in adulthood and the level of effectiveness and severity of burnout.

According to the MBI-HSS, the adulthood poverty group ($n = 49$) was associated with higher burnout subscale scores: EE $M = 20.02$ ($SD = 13.00$), DP $M = 7.47$ ($SD =$

6.33), and greater sense of PA $M = 39.39$ ($SD = 6.99$). By comparison, the adult nonpoverty group ($n = 57$) was associated with lower burnout subscale scores: EE $M = 19.93$ ($SD = 12.07$), DP $M = 7.14$ ($SD = 6.28$), and lower sense of PA $M = 37.42$ ($SD = 7.14$).

To test whether adulthood poverty was associated with statistically significant difference between the means in public administrators who experienced adulthood poverty and the level of effectiveness and severity of burnout, an independent samples t -test was performed. Equal variances not assumed, the independent samples t test for adulthood poverty was not associated with a statistically significant effect in effectiveness or burnout: EE $t(-.037) = 98.98$, $p = .971$; DP $t(-.268) = 101.39$, $p = .789$; and PA $t(-1.43) = 102.23$, $p = .156$. Thus, public administrators who experienced adulthood poverty were not associated with a statistically significant higher level of ineffectiveness or greater severity of burnout than public administrators who did not experience adulthood poverty.

Public Service, Public Organization, Public Agency, and Serving the Poor

Third, the researcher computed the Spearman's Rho rank-order correlation coefficient to identify variables for possible statistical significance between duration in each area of interest (public service, the public organization, the welfare agency, and serving the poor) with each of the burnout subscale scores in EE, DP, and PA. Significant correlations were determined by comparing the correlation coefficient to the significance number (two-tailed). Significance was tested as $p < 0.05$ level of confidence, two-tailed.

Based on the results of the study, despite numerically significant levels of burnout and ineffectiveness shown by the MBI-HSS subscales and demographics, the lack of statistically significant correlations between any of the demographics and the MBI-HSS subscales indicated that burnout is not related to the public administrator's gender, age, marital status, education level, SES, race/ethnicity, or childhood and adulthood poverty.

For variables dealing with length of time, the results showed there was no statistically significant correlation between duration in public service (EE $p = .102$, DP $p = .276$, PA $p = .965$; see Table 3) or duration serving impoverished clientele (EE $p = .156$, DP $p = .240$, PA $p = .746$; see Table 4) with levels of burnout and ineffectiveness. Significance was tested as $p < 0.05$ level of confidence, two-tailed. For this research, the EE subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout; the DP subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness.

Table 3

Years in Public Service Spearman's Rho Correlation

Subscale	Correlation	Significance
Emotional exhaustion	Correlation coefficient	.155
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102
	<i>N</i>	112
Depersonalization	Correlation coefficient	-.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.276
	<i>N</i>	112
Personal achievement	Correlation coefficient	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.965
	<i>N</i>	112

Table 4

Years Serving the Poor Spearman's Rho Correlation

Subscale	Correlation	Significance
Emotional exhaustion	Correlation coefficient	.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.156
	<i>N</i>	112
Depersonalization	Correlation coefficient	-.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.240
	<i>N</i>	112
Personal achievement	Correlation coefficient	-.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.746
	<i>N</i>	112

However, the results showed significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's public organization (EE $p = .032$) and the burnout subscale of EE (see Table 5). There was also significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's welfare agency (EE $p = .008$) and the burnout subscale of EE (see Table 6). Significance was tested as $p < 0.05$ level of confidence, two-tailed. As mentioned earlier, the EE subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout; the DP subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness.

Summary

The researcher hoped to obtain a more than adequate level of statistical significance to affirm that the public administrator's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure does have statistical significance in areas of (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout

Table 5

Years in Public Organization Spearman's Rho Correlation

Subscale	Correlation	Significance
Emotional exhaustion	Correlation coefficient	.203
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032*
	<i>N</i>	112
Depersonalization	Correlation coefficient	0.25
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.791
	<i>N</i>	112
Personal achievement	Correlation coefficient	-.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.527
	<i>N</i>	112

* $p < 0.05$, two-tailed.

Table 6

Years in Welfare Agency Spearman's Rho Correlation

Subscale	Correlation	Significance
Emotional exhaustion	Correlation coefficient	.250
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008*
	<i>N</i>	112
Depersonalization	Correlation coefficient	.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.366
	<i>N</i>	112
Personal achievement	Correlation coefficient	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.674
	<i>N</i>	112

* $p < 0.05$, two-tailed.

when delivering services and benefits to impoverished clientele. This study attempted to answer the following two research questions:

1. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and level of effectiveness?
2. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

The study was able to partially answer the second question by identifying a statistically significant correlation between working for the study's public organization and the variable of burnout as demonstrated by the burnout subscale EE. There was also significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's welfare agency and the burnout subscale of EE. The study was unable to answer the first research question by failing to establish any statistically significant relationship between the duration in public service, public organization, welfare agency, or serving the poor with the variable of effectiveness. This could be an indication that mitigating factors such as social support and recognition, trust, ethical leadership, caring peers and supervision, positive workplace culture, training, and so forth contributed to maintaining positive levels of effectiveness when serving impoverished clientele. Another indication is that while there is not a statistical significance in public administrators experiencing burnout in working in public service or in serving impoverished clientele, there is statistical significance in public administrators experiencing burnout in their public organization and agency, suggesting more could be done within the public organization and agency's levels to recognize, monitor, and mitigate burnout.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Chapter 1 introduced the research topic of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators and the purpose and importance of this study. Chapter 2 reviewed public administration literature as related to (a) poverty and scarcity theory and (b) motivation theory and identified the gaps in the knowledge in the field of public administration. Chapter 3 described the research method and design, population and sample size, and data collection. Chapter 4 presented the findings of this quantitative research study collected through survey/questionnaire. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes this research on the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators by reviewing the findings, conclusions based on the research questions, limitations of the study, implications for the field of public administration, and recommendations for further research.

Findings and Conclusions

The purpose of this quasidescriptive study was to examine the impacts of working in public service and serving impoverished clients and the effects on the public administrator's severity of burnout. Little research currently exists on the influence of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on public administrators, public organizations, or organizational life. This study attempted to answer the following two research questions:

1. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and level of effectiveness?

2. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

As defined earlier, Maslach and Leitner (1997) recognized burnout as an individual becoming chronically exhausted, becoming cynical and detached from work, and feeling increasingly ineffective on the job. Energy, involvement, and efficacy are the direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout—exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Maslach and Leitner argued that burnout is not a problem of the individual but rather of the social environment in which people work:

The structure and functioning of the workplace shape how people interact with one another and how they carry out their jobs. When the workplace does not recognize the human side of work, then the risk of burnout grows, carrying a high price with it. (p. 18)

This study is relevant because as a quantitative analysis, this quasidescriptive study focused on sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators. Although it is a public administrator's duty to serve the public and to care for those in need, it is important to understand not only how poverty impacts communities but also how sustained and prolonged poverty exposure impacts street-level public service employees and public organizations that deliver services and benefits to impoverished clientele. Furthermore, this study is relevant to the field of public administration because it examines public administrators' years of public service, sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty, and severity of burnout, which can provide insight into a public organization's understanding, attitudes and perceptions, effectiveness and efficiency, and service delivery to indigent populations. This research

topic is also applicable to the field of public administration in providing a better understanding of how to serve impoverished clientele from the perspectives of human resource management (HRM) and public administrators. By examining public administrators' years serving in public service, in a public organization, in a public agency, and the sustained and prolonged exposure to poverty through serving the impoverished public in terms of level of effectiveness and severity of burnout, public organizations and leaders could more effectively identify the ramifications of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on public administration. They can gain better insight into organizational and HRM areas of concern such as federal and state funding, performance measures, employee engagement and commitment, employee burnout, employee turnover, employee absenteeism, emotional labor, compassion fatigue, workplace stress, workplace violence, counterproductive work behaviors, health care benefits, employee assistance programs, emotional intelligence and cultural sensitivity training, poverty and burnout training, disciplinary issues, customer service, efficiency and effectiveness, and reputation and branding.

The study rested on the groundwork of two important theories: (a) poverty and scarcity theory and (b) motivation theory. Each of these theories was used to illustrate the connections among impoverished populations, public service employees, and public organizations when discussing the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure. Poverty and scarcity theory explains certain behaviors and mindsets associated with poverty. Motivation theory examines employee motivation and job satisfaction in the workplace.

Although there is ample existing poverty and public administration literature and research discussing the wickedness and impacts of poverty on the poor and attributing poverty to various and endless causes and effects of poverty, there remains insufficient literature and research in the public administration field on the examination and impacts of the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on those who administer relief to impoverished communities, specifically the street-level public administrators and public organizations that directly serve the public by delivering public assistance and benefits to impoverished clientele. First, there is inadequate research on how sustained and prolonged poverty exposure adversely affects welfare workers in terms of burnout and ineffectiveness. Second, there is insufficient research on how the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure impacts a public service employee's (a) level of effectiveness and (b) severity of burnout. The research questions aimed to identify the gaps in public administration literature on the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure on public administrators who deliver services to impoverished populations in terms of effectiveness and burnout.

This quasiscriptive, correlational study employed the quantitative research method to study sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts because this research method allowed the researcher to identify correlations in variables of poverty exposure: (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout. The researcher used the measure of the survey to gather data, specifically the SurveyMonkey Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS). The survey comprised various statements assessing the three fundamental aspects of burnout (exhaustion-energy, depersonalization-involvement, and inefficacy-accomplishment), participant demographics section, and

questions/comments section. Quantitative data and descriptive analysis were used in the research.

Based on the results of the study, despite numerically significant levels of ineffectiveness and severity of burnout shown by the MBI-HSS subscales and demographics, the lack of statistically significant correlations between any of the demographics and the MBI-HSS subscales indicated that burnout is not related to the public administrator's gender, age, marital status, education level, SES, race/ethnicity, or childhood and adulthood poverty. However, the results showed a significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's public organization and the burnout subscale of Emotional Exhaustion (EE). There was also a significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's welfare agency and the burnout subscale of EE. As mentioned earlier, for this research, the EE subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of burnout; the DP subscale was substituted as a synonymous measure of effectiveness.

The researcher hoped to obtain a more than adequate level of statistical significance to affirm that the public administrator's sustained and prolonged poverty exposure does have statistical significance in areas of (a) effectiveness and (b) burnout when delivering services and benefits to impoverished clientele. This study attempted to answer the following two research questions:

1. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and level of effectiveness?
2. Is there an associative relationship between a public service employee's length of service in working with an impoverished population and severity of burnout?

The study was able to partially answer the second question by identifying a statistically significant correlation between working for the study's public organization and the variable of burnout as demonstrated in correlation with the burnout subscale EE. There was also significant statistical correlation between years of service in the study's welfare agency and the burnout subscale of EE. The study was unable to answer the first research question by failing to establish any statistically significant relationship between the duration in public service, public organization, welfare agency, or serving the poor with the variable of effectiveness. This could be an indication that mitigating factors such as social support and recognition, trust, ethical leadership, caring peers and supervision, positive workplace culture, training, and so forth contributed to maintaining positive levels of effectiveness when serving impoverished clientele. Another indication was that while there is not a statistical significance in public administrators experiencing burnout in working in public service or in serving impoverished clientele, there is statistical significance in public administrators experiencing burnout in their public organization and agencies, suggesting more could be done within the public organization and agency's levels to recognize, monitor and mitigate burnout.

Limitations of the Research

The researcher was limited in studying the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure and its impacts on public administrators for a variety of reasons. The research was limited to studying public administrators' professional experience with poverty instead of personal experience. The research was limited to public organizations in Nevada. The research did not consider nongovernmental, nonprofit, or faith-based agencies and organizations. The research specifically focused

on welfare and social services professionals who deliver entitlements, benefits, and services to impoverished clientele and did not include other street-level public administrators who also have direct contact with the poor such as law enforcement and public safety personnel, first responders, medical and healthcare workers, social workers, and educators. There was also a geographical limitation in this study that concentrated on the highly populated and urban areas and their associated social services welfare offices. This research excluded offices located in rural areas. The research also did not survey research subjects on mitigating factors of burnout such as agency and office culture, social support and recognition, caring supervision, trust, ethical leadership, coping and adapting mechanisms to burnout, poverty and burnout training, and so forth that could have lowered severity of burnout. While the raw data in the form of participants' comments (see Appendix F) inferred agency and office culture as a factor for mitigating burnout, this was not identified or further explored in this research study. Finally, while the research focused on public administrators' level of effectiveness and severity of burnout, the research was limited because it did not examine the potential impacts of chronic exposure to poverty on public administrators' behavioral, psychological, and physiological well-being or how this chronic exposure to poverty's effects on clients could, in turn, affect a public agency or organization at large in areas of federal and state funding, HRM issues, performance measures, disciplinary issues, absenteeism, employee turnover, increased use in health care and disability benefits and employee assistance programs, efficiency and effectiveness, commitment, customer service, reputation and branding, and training.

Recommendations for Further Research

This research examined three public agencies in Nevada using the quantitative research method of survey/questionnaire, quasidescriptive study. The researcher recommends that further research should be conducted that explores the following:

1. Conduct a study with a more heterogeneous sample size to determine whether findings are comparable among other offices and other states.
2. Conduct a study that explores poverty workers in nongovernmental, nonprofit, or faith-based agencies and organizations that serve impoverished populations.
3. Conduct a study that explores other street-level public administrators who also have direct contact with impoverished populations over a long period of time such as law enforcement and public safety personnel, first responders, medical and healthcare workers, social workers, and educators.
4. Conduct a qualitative study that examines subjects' responses (see Appendix F) to obtain more in-depth data through one-on-one interviews or open-ended survey/questionnaire response analysis.

Summary

This research study on the agency psychology of prolonged and sustained poverty exposure on public administrators is significant because it adds to the body of knowledge in the field of public administration. This research also could serve as insight to public leaders, public policy makers, and public organizations of the wicked problem and challenges of poverty that public service employees must face when serving an indigent clientele. The results of this study could help public organizations and HRM professionals recognize, monitor, intervene, and/or address early onset of burnout in

public service employees who serve impoverished populations. The results of this study could also help leaders of public organizations and HRM professionals promote empathy and compassion through poverty awareness training/workshops such as Bridges Out of Poverty workshop, cultural sensitivity training, burnout awareness, service-learning, and so forth. Finally, this research also could help leaders and HRM professionals better understand the agency psychology of sustained and prolonged poverty exposure to better manage HRM issues in organizational life and workplace environments.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Poverty Statistics

Prosperity Now Scorecard Nevada 2018

EXPLORE OUTCOME MEASURES IN BUSINESSES & JOBS

45 OUT OF 51

Select to compare outcome measures.

COMPARE PLACES

OUTCOME MEASURE	NV	USA	NV RANK	RELATED
EMPLOYMENT				
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment Rate	5.2%	4.5%	44	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment by Race	1.9x as high for workers of color	1.6x as high for workers of color	34	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Underemployment Rate	11.4%	8.9%	49	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Low-Wage Jobs	23.3%	23.3%	28	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Average Annual Pay	\$48,076	\$53,621	37	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Employers Offering Health Insurance	54.6%	45.3%	5	Trend Data
ENTREPRENEURSHIP				
<input type="checkbox"/> Microenterprise Ownership Rate	16.6%	17.8%	30	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Business Ownership Rate	1.25%	1.39%	49	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Ownership by Race	1.74x as high for white workers	1.22x as high for white workers	42	Data By Race
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Ownership by Gender	1.1x as high for men	1.3x as high for men	6	
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Value by Race	3.3x as high for white bus. owners	2.9x as high for white bus. owners	38	Data By Race
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Value by Gender	2.9x as high for men	3x as high for men	21	

From: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/data-by-location#state/nv>

EXPLORE OUTCOME MEASURES IN FINANCIAL ASSETS & INCOME

43 OUT OF 51

Select to compare outcome measures.

COMPARE PLACES

OUTCOME MEASURE	NV	USA	NV RANK	RELATED
INCOME & TAXATION				
<input type="checkbox"/> Income Poverty Rate	12.9%	13.4%	26	Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Income Poverty by Race	1.8x higher for HHs of color	2x higher for HHs of color	16	Data By Race
<input type="checkbox"/> Income Inequality	4.3x as high for top 20%	4.9x as high for top 20%	9	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Income Volatility	26.2%	20.9%	43	
SAVINGS & ASSETS				
<input type="checkbox"/> Liquid Asset Poverty Rate	43.6%	36.8%	34	Data By Race Data By Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Asset Poverty Rate	26.2%	26.6%	n/a	Data By Race Data By Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Net Worth	\$56,860	\$76,708	n/a	Data By Race Data By Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Households with Zero Net Worth	17.0%	16.9%	n/a	Data By Race Data By Disability
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Savings	64.8%	66.3%	34	
CREDIT & DEBT				
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumers with Prime Credit	43.4%	61.0%	46	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Revolving Credit	73.2%	71.9%	27	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Borrowers Over 75% Credit Card Limit	30.6%	26.4%	47	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Severely Delinquent Borrowers	17.8%	14.7%	42	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumers with Collections	29.7%	24.6%	39	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Bankruptcy Rate	2.9	2.4	36	Trend Data
FINANCIAL ACCESS				
<input type="checkbox"/> Unbanked Households	8.9%	7.0%	39	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Underbanked Households	27.3%	19.9%	61	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Households with Savings Accounts	70.4%	70.8%	31	Trend Data

From: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/data-by-location#state/nv>

EXPLORE OUTCOME MEASURES IN HOMEOWNERSHIP & HOUSING

48 OUT OF 51

Select to compare outcome measures.

COMPARE PLACES ›

OUTCOME MEASURE ↕	NV ↕	USA ↕	NV RANK ↕	RELATED
HOMEOWNERSHIP ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership Rate ⓘ	54.9%	63.1%	48	Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership by Race ⓘ	1.5x as high for white HHs	1.6x as high for white HHs	18	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership by Income ⓘ	2.4x as high for top 20%	2.1x as high for top 20%	41	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership by Gender ⓘ	1.03x as high for single women	1.03x as high for single women	n/a	
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeownership by Family Structure ⓘ	2.1x higher for 2-parent HHs	1.9x higher for 2-parent HHs	45	
HOUSING STABILITY ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> Foreclosure Rate ⓘ	1.41%	1.29%	31	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Delinquent Mortgage Loans ⓘ	1.25%	1.20%	29	Trend Data
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> High-Cost Mortgage Loans ⓘ	16.3%	7.6%	51	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordability of Homes ⓘ	4.3x higher than median income	3.6x higher than median income	42	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Cost Burden - Homeowners ⓘ	31.5%	28.3%	44	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Cost Burden - Renters ⓘ	49.8%	49.7%	40	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data

From: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/data-by-location#state/nv>

EXPLORE OUTCOME MEASURES IN HEALTH CARE

Select to compare outcome measures.

46 OUT OF 51

COMPARE PLACES >

OUTCOME MEASURE	NV	USA	NV RANK	RELATED
HEALTH				
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninsured Rate ⓘ	13.1%	10.0%	44	Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninsured by Race ⓘ	2.1x as high for people of color	2.1x as high for people of color	30	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninsured by Income ⓘ	3.5x as high for poorest 20%	4.7x as high for poorest 20%	15	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninsured by Gender ⓘ	1.2x as high for men	1.2x as high for men	16	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Uninsured Low-Income Children ⓘ	9.3%	6.1%	46	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Employer-Provided Insurance Coverage ⓘ	57.1%	58.6%	33	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Share of Premium ⓘ	31.5%	28.0%	41	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Forgoing Doctor Visit Due to Cost ⓘ	16.0%	13.0%	44	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor or Fair Health Status ⓘ	20.9%	17.8%	44	Data By Race Trend Data

From: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/data-by-location#state/nv>

EXPLORE OUTCOME MEASURES IN EDUCATION

Select to compare outcome measures.

42 OUT OF 51

COMPARE PLACES >

OUTCOME MEASURE ↕	NV ↕	USA ↕	NV RANK ↕	RELATED
■ EARLY EDUCATION ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Enrollment ⓘ	39.8%	48.0%	45	Trend Data
■ K-12 EDUCATION ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> Math Proficiency - 8th Grade ⓘ	26.1%	32.1%	42	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading Proficiency - 8th Grade ⓘ	27.4%	34.3%	43	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> High School Graduation Rate ⓘ	73.6%	84.1%	49	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Disconnected Youth ⓘ	14.3%	11.7%	42	Data By Race Data By Disability Trend Data
■ POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ⓘ				
<input type="checkbox"/> Four-Year College Degree ⓘ	23.5%	31.3%	46	Data By Disability Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Four-Year Degree by Race ⓘ	1.7x higher for white adults	1.5x higher for white adults	34	Data By Race Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Four-Year Degree by Income ⓘ	2.9x as high for top 20%	4.3x as high for top 20%	6	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Four-Year Degree by Gender ⓘ	1.07 x as high for women	1.03 x as high for women	n/a	
<input type="checkbox"/> Borrowers with Student Loan Debt ⓘ	18.4%	22.2%	4	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Median Student Loan Debt ⓘ	\$15,345	\$17,711	5	Trend Data
<input type="checkbox"/> Severely Delinquent Student Loan Debt ⓘ	20.4%	15.8%	47	Trend Data

From: <https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/data-by-location#state/nv>

APPENDIX B

Poverty Thresholds and Guidelines

U.S. Census Bureau Poverty Threshold 2017

Poverty Thresholds for 2017 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years									
Size of family unit	Related children under 18 years								Eight or more
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	
One person (unrelated individual):									
Under age 65.....	12,752								
Aged 65 and older.....	11,756								
Two people:									
Householder under age 65.....	16,414	16,895							
Householder aged 65 and older.....	14,816	16,831							
Three people.....	19,173	19,730	19,749						
Four people.....	25,283	25,696	24,858	24,944					
Five people.....	30,490	30,933	29,986	29,253	28,805				
Six people.....	35,069	35,208	34,482	33,787	32,753	32,140			
Seven people.....	40,351	40,603	39,734	39,129	38,001	36,685	35,242		
Eight people.....	45,129	45,528	44,708	43,990	42,971	41,678	40,332	39,990	
Nine people or more.....	54,287	54,550	53,825	53,216	52,216	50,840	49,595	49,287	47,389
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.									

From: "Poverty thresholds," U.S. Census Bureau, n.d. (<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>).

Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines 2018

2018 HHS Poverty Guidelines

2018 Poverty Guidelines for the 48 Contiguous States and the District of Columbia		
Persons in Family/Household	Poverty Guideline	125% of Poverty Guideline (OCS/CED)
1	\$12,140	\$15,175
2	\$16,460	\$20,575
3	\$20,780	\$25,975
4	\$25,100	\$31,375
5	\$29,420	\$36,775
6	\$33,740	\$42,175
7	\$38,060	\$47,575
8	\$42,380	\$52,975
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,320 for each additional person. Then multiply by 1.25 for 125% of Poverty Guidelines (for OCS/CED).		

2018 Poverty Guidelines for Alaska		
Persons in Family/Household	Poverty Guideline	125% of Poverty Guideline (OCS/CED)
1	\$15,180	\$18,975
2	\$20,580	\$25,725
3	\$25,980	\$32,475
4	\$31,380	\$39,225
5	\$36,780	\$45,975
6	\$42,180	\$52,725
7	\$47,580	\$59,475
8	\$52,980	\$66,225
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$5,400 for each additional person. Then multiply by 1.25 for 125% of Poverty Guidelines (for OCS/CED).		

2018 Poverty Guidelines for Hawaii		
Persons in Family/Household	Poverty Guideline	125% of Poverty Guideline (OCS/CED)
1	\$13,960	\$17,450
2	\$18,930	\$23,663
3	\$23,900	\$29,875
4	\$28,870	\$36,088
5	\$33,840	\$42,300
6	\$38,810	\$48,513
7	\$43,780	\$54,725
8	\$48,750	\$60,938
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,970 for each additional person. Then multiply by 1.25 for 125% of Poverty Guidelines (for OCS/CED).		


For more information see: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>

From: "Poverty guidelines," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, n.d. (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>).

APPENDIX C

Electronic Consent Form

SurveyMonkey Electronic Consent Form

	The Organizational Psychology of Poverty Experience and Its Impacts on Public Administrators
1. Electronic Consent for Participation in the Research Study	
<p>The Organizational Psychology of Poverty Experience and Its Impacts on Public Administrators</p> <p>You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by doctoral student, Cynthia A. Donahe, at California Baptist University, Online Professional Studies, Doctorate of Public Administration Program. The results will contribute to a doctoral dissertation. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your firsthand knowledge and experience in working with customers living in poverty and because of your employment in a public-sector organization.</p> <p>Purpose of the Study</p> <p>The study is designed to assess the organizational psychology of poverty experience/exposure and its impacts on public administrators and public organizations that deliver services/benefits to impoverished populations.</p> <p>Procedures</p> <p>If you decide to participate, you will be asked to do the following:</p> <p>Voluntarily complete an online Survey Monkey Maslach Inventory-Human Services Survey and provide demographic information. The survey and demographic questions will take approximately 15 minutes.</p> <p>Potential Risks & Discomforts</p> <p>This study is dependent on the participant's voluntary participation – given this fact, there are no foreseeable physical or psychological risks involved. Some of the survey statements and questions might evoke negative or unpleasant feelings about poverty. If at any time during the study you feel uncomfortable about your participation, you have the option and the right to terminate your participation and/or resume later. The researcher can provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) referrals and resources for help as needed. This research study is not intended to cause harm or discomfort to you but rather to understand the organizational psychology of poverty experience and exposure and its impacts on public service employees and public organizations.</p> <p>Potential Benefits to Participants and/or Society</p> <p>Participation in this study will assist in better understanding of the organizational psychology of poverty experience and exposure and its impacts on public service employees and public</p>	

organizations that specialize in delivery of services and benefits to impoverished populations. Participants may gain a better understanding of themselves in their perceptions and attitudes about poverty. Additionally, managers and supervisors may gain a better understanding of how social poverty experience and exposure could impact public service employees and public organizations.

Payment for Participation

No payment will be issued for the participants.

* 1. I have read and understand the procedures described above.

☐ Yes

☐ No



2. Electronic Consent for Participation in the Research Study

Confidentiality

Any information obtained in this study that can be identified with you remains confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Subject identities will be kept confidential by a numeric coding system and alias throughout the study, so at no time will your true name be mentioned, linked, or used in this study. All data gathered for this study will be safeguarded in a file cabinet under lock and key in the researcher's home office. Also, all electronic files will be protected using an encrypted password that only the researcher knows. Confidentiality will be maintained always by means of destroying the participant's response at the end of the study.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose whether to participate in this study. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and remain in the study.

Whether you choose to participate will not affect your standing with your employer. No information will be reported to your agency.

Contacts & Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact the researcher:

Cynthia Donahe at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] You can also contact my program advisor: [REDACTED]

* 2. Consent

- ☐ Yes, I would like to participate in this study. I have read and understood all of the above information. I consent to participate in this study.
- ☐ No, I do not want to participate in this study.



3. Electronic Consent for Participation in the Research Study

Signatures of Researcher & Participant

Researcher: Cynthia A. Donahe

Date: 05/11/2018

* 3. Please type your first name and last name as your Electronic Signature. (Example: Jane Doe)

* 4. Please enter today's date. (Example: MM/DD/YYYY)

Date / Time



4. Contact Information

If you have selected to participate in the study please provide the following contact information:

* 5. Contact Information

Name

Company

City/Town

State/Province

Email Address


Phone Number

APPENDIX D

SurveyMonkey

Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey

SurveyMonkey Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey

**The Organizational Psychology of Poverty Experience and Its Impacts on Public Administrators**

5. Maslach Inventory - Human Services Survey

MBI - Human Services Survey - MBI-HSS: Copyright ©1981 Christina Maslach & Susan E. Jackson. All rights reserved in all media. Published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com

The purpose of this survey is to discover how various people working in human services or the helping professions view their job and the people with whom they work closely.

Because people in a wide variety of occupations will answer this survey, it uses the term recipients to refer to the people for whom you provide your service, care, treatment, or instruction. When answering this survey please think of these people as recipients of the service you provide, even though you may use another term in your work.

Instructions: Below are various statements of job-related feelings. Please feel comfortable about providing honest answers and expressing true feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, write the number "0" (zero) in the space before the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by writing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

* 6. I feel emotionally drained from my work.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 7. I feel used up at the end of the workday.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 8. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 9. I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 10. I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 11. Working with people all day is really a strain for me.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 12. I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 13. I feel burned out from my work.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 14. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 15. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 16. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 17. I feel very energetic.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 18. I feel frustrated by my job.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 19. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 20. I don't really care what happens to some recipients.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 21. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 22. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 23. I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 24. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 25. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 26. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 27. I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.

Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



6. Demographics

Instructions: Please provide background about yourself.

* 28. What is your title/position?

* 29. How long have you worked for ?

* 30. How long have you worked in your current position/job?

* 31. How long have you worked in the public service field?

* 32. How long have you worked with poor populations?



7. Demographics

Instructions: Please provide background about yourself.

* 33. When you were growing up, did your family receive public assistance? (I.e. TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know.

* 34. As an adult, have you ever received public assistance? (I.e. TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

* 35. Do you currently receive public assistance? (I.e. TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



8. Demographics

Instructions: Please provide background about yourself.

* 36. What is your age?

- ☐ Under 20
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70 or older

* 37. What is your sex?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

* 38. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian / Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ White / Caucasian
- ☐ Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)

* 39. Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ In a domestic partnership or civil union
- ☐ Single, but cohabiting with a significant other
- ☐ Single, never married

* 40. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

* 41. Which of the following describes your socioeconomic status?

- ☐ Upper-Class
- ☐ Middle-Class
- ☐ Lower-Class

42. Questions?

43. Comments?



9. End of Survey

You have completed the Maslach Inventory-Human Services Survey on the research study entitled "The Organizational Psychology of Poverty Experience and Its Impacts on Public Administrators." Thank you for your time and participation.

APPENDIX E

Data Tables E1 to E15

Table E1

MBI-HSS Normative Data and Mean Scores

Category	Emotional exhaustion (EE) Frequency (%)	Depersonalization (DP) Frequency (%)	Personal accomplishment (PA) Frequency (%)
Welfare agency	19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative	21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E2

MBI-HSS Frequency Scores and Percentages Indicating Severity of Burnout by Subscale

Category	Emotional exhaustion (EE) Frequency (%)	Depersonalization (DP) Frequency (%)	Personal accomplishment (PA) Frequency (%)
High	31 (27%)	20 (18%)	17 (15%)
Moderate	32 (29%)	25 (22%)	31 (28%)
Low	49 (44%)	67 (60%)	64 (57%)
Total	112 (100%)	112 (100%)	112 (100%)

Table E3

MBI-HSS Burnout Dimension by Item and Frequency

Item	Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal Accomplishment (PA)
1	X		
2	X		
3	X		
4			X
5		X	
6	X		
7			X
8	X		
9			X
10		X	
11		X	
12			X
13	X		
14	X		
15		X	
16	X		
17			X
18			X
19			X
20	X		
21			X
22		X	
Total	9	5	8

Table E4

MBI-HSS Burnout Dimension by Item (Detail)

Item	Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal Accomplishment (PA)
(EE)	Emotional Exhaustion		
1	I feel emotionally drained from my work.		
2	I feel used up at the end of the workday.		
3	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.		
6	Working with people all day is really a strain for me.		
8	I feel burned out from my work.		
13	I feel frustrated by my job.		
14	I feel I'm working too hard on my job.		
16	Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.		
20	I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.		
(DP)	Depersonalization		
5	I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.		
10	I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.		
11	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.		
15	I don't really care what happens to some recipients.		
22	I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.		
(PA)	Personal Accomplishment		
4	I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.		
7	I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.		
9	I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.		
12	I feel very energetic.		
17	I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.		
18	I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.		
19	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.		
21	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.		
Total	9	5	8

Table E5

Demographics

Demographics	Frequency	%
Sex		
Male	18	16%
Female	94	84%
Age		
20-29	16	14%
30-39	36	32%
40-49	28	25%
50-59	34	22%
60-69	9	7%
Marital Status		
Married	61	54%
Widowed	2	2%
Divorced	18	16%
Separated	2	2%
Domestic Partnership/Civil Union	3	3%
Single/Cohabiting	11	10%
Single/Never Married	15	13%
Education Level		
Graduated High School	23	20%
Some College	47	42%
Graduated College	36	32%
Some Grad School	3	3%
Completed Grad School	3	3%
Socioeconomic Status		
Lower-Class	9	8%
Middle-Class	99	88%
Upper-Class	4	4%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaskan Native	3	3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	3%
Black/African American	1	1%
Hispanic	13	12%
White/Caucasian	88	78%
Multiple Ethnicity/Other	4	3%
Total	112	100%

Table E6

MBI-HSS Burnout by Office

Office	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
A	29	26%	23.07	9.69	36.14
B	66	59%	19.26	6.62	39.03
C	17	15%	16.82	5.06	40.82
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E7

MBI-HSS Burnout by Sex

Sex	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
Men	18	16%	17.28	6.28	40.28
Women	94	84%	20.37	7.35	38.22
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E8

MBI-HSS Burnout by Age Group

Age	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
20-29	16	14%	18.69	7.44	38.50
30-39	36	32%	19.00	7.56	38.86
40-49	28	25%	21.32	7.61	37.39
50-59	24	22%	19.39	5.17	39.71
60-69	8	7%	22.63	9.50	37.88
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E9

MBI-HSS Burnout by Relationship Status

Relationship status	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
Married	61	54%	19.61	7.56	38.13
Widowed	2	2%	25.00	3.50	40.00
Divorced	18	16%	21.78	7.22	39.11
Separated	2	2%	11.50	5.00	31.50
Domestic partnership/ civil union	3	3%	19.33	4.00	42.00
Single /cohabiting	11	10%	19.91	9.00	39.73
Single /never married	15	13%	19.20	5.67	38.80
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E10

MBI-HSS Burnout by Education Level

Highest level of education	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
Graduated HS	23	20%	17.74	7.09	39.09
Some college	47	42%	20.81	7.70	37.15
Graduated college	36	32%	19.67	6.97	39.67
Some grad school	3	3%	19.67	3.67	42.67
Completed grad school	3	3%	24.33	5.67	39.00
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E11

MBI-HSS Burnout by Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status (SES)	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
Upper-class	4	4%	15.50	7.25	38.25
Middle-class	99	88%	19.96	7.14	38.67
Lower class	9	8%	20.89	7.56	37.44
Total	112				
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E12

MBI-HSS Burnout by Race/Ethnicity

Race/ethnicity	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
American Indian /Alaskan Native	3	3%	28.33	8.00	41.67
Asian /Pacific Islander	3	3%	19.67	3.33	41.33
	1	1%	28.00	3.00	48.00
Black /African American	13	12%	17.54	6.31	39.00
Hispanic	88	78%	20.03	7.59	38.14
White /Caucasian	4	3%	15.75	4.25	39.50
Multiple ethnicity/other	112	100%			
Total					
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E13

Public Assistance Use

Has ever received public assistance (i.e., TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, etc.)	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
<i>Ever</i>					
Yes	64	57%	19.56	7.30	39.03
No	48	43%	20.29	7.02	37.92
<i>As a child</i>					
Yes	24	21.4%	18.58	7.04	36.46
No	82	73.2%	20.38	7.37	38.88
I don't know	6	5.4%	18.17	5.17	42.50
<i>As an adult</i>					
Yes	52	46.4%	19.85	7.31	39.48
No	60	53.6%	19.90	7.07	37.75
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

Table E14

Participants by Duration/Type of Service/Frequency

Duration/ type	Public service	X Public organization	X Welfare agency	Serving the poor
< 1 Yr	4 (3%)	7 (6%)	18 (16%)	2 (2%)
1-5 Yrs	39 (35%)	64 (57%)	74 (66%)	46 (41%)
6-10 Yrs	22 (20%)	19 (17%)	11 (10%)	26 (23%)
11-15 Yrs	17 (15%)	12 (11%)	7 (6%)	19 (17%)
16-20 Yrs	15 (13%)	8 (7%)	1 (1%)	14 (12%)
21-25 Yrs	10 (9%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)
26-30 Yrs	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)
> 30 Yrs	3 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)
Total	112 (100%)	112 (100%)	112 (100%)	112 (100%)

Table E15

MBI-HSS Burnout by Duration Serving the Poor

Duration	Frequency	%	Emotional exhaustion (EE)	Depersonalization (DP)	Personal accomplishment (PA)
< 1 Yr	2	1.7%	18.00	12.00	41.00
1-5 Yrs	46	41%	17.33	6.98	38.63
6-10 Yrs	26	23.2%	22.04	8.46	37.08
11-15 Yrs	19	16.9%	22.05	5.68	37.37
16-20 Yrs	14	12.5%	21.71	7.14	37.07
21-25 Yrs	2	1.7%	25.00	12.00	43.05
26-30 Yrs	1	0.08%	2.00	2.00	47.00
> 30 Yrs	2	1.7%	16.00	1.50	47.50
Total	112	100%			
Agency average			19.88	7.18	38.55
*Normative			21.35	7.46	32.75

APPENDIX F

Participants' Comments

Participants' Comments

I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, my rock. Without Him, I would not be able to handle a single day in this world.

I am not fit for this field of work. It's not that I don't like helping people I just want to do it in a different way and I have little patience for those who seek assistance and have the means to work and earn more money than we provide.

Working at [REDACTED] has opened my eyes to the struggles of the poor on a much larger scale than when I worked at [REDACTED]. I have had a perspective change about the poor since working here. I am thankful and happy to come to work every day. Good luck with your study and I hope we will get to see your final product.

Question #24 was difficult to answer because of its vagueness: "things."

I do enjoy helping people when it is needed, but the rules that are in place, cater towards people who could help themselves and not to those who actually need assistance, like the elderly and disabled. This is the hardest part for me. We take away from the elderly and or disabled and allow able bodied people to use the system for their benefit.

The morale in the office is severely low. When caring for other people we need to feel cared for as workers. We get zero recognition for how extremely difficult our job is. We are told to turn off our feelings in order to deal with people. Really, we should be taught how to deal with these feelings. When someone wants to commit suicide and you're the only thing that saved them from the brink, I think we need a break after that. Instead we are chastised for it taking too long with the client. We need to view these impoverished people as human and not numbers. The disconnect between the understanding of the supervisory staff and the workers is also extremely low. Supervisors hate dealing with clients and it is often treated as a punishment. I feel that people with exceptional skills interacting with clients should be recognized for this.

It can be very rewarding helping people who genuinely need food and medical assistance. The job can become draining because an overwhelming number of people we assist have spent their whole lives receiving food and medical assistance. Given their work history it appears most would rather receive the handouts because it's easier than working every day. I do however understand these assistance programs can make it hard climb out of needing the help given the income guidelines and some other factors. I have always loved helping people who need it but in my 2 short years of experience in this field most say thank you for the help but do nothing with it. Even after I tell them we can pay for a higher education, clothing, tools, etc. at no cost to them. The only people that have taking the help we offer are the ones who have worked their whole lives and have never needed assistance and life just tossed them a curve ball. They have exhausted all avenues, and this is their only other way of getting by. To summarize my answers to the survey and my comments, it doesn't feel we are helping a majority of the clients in these programs. Only keeping them at the level they are at with no real way of improving their lives.

Regarding question number 32, many of our clientele are not considered "Poor Population."

#41-Low end of Middle class.

I am happy to answer any and all further questions if people are needed to voluntarily go more in-depth on this subject matter. Please help make our system work better!

The high turnover rate among co-workers (always training new people-compensating for new hires that don't know policy), the focus on "efficiency" and quantity of work vs quality of work is the hardest aspects of my job.

It is heartbreaking to see the devastating situations my clients find themselves in, typically through no fault of their own. It makes it easier to see day in and day out knowing I am doing something to help ease their suffering. However, we only assist the poorest of the poor. Many needy families have to be turned away because they are over income, when in fact they barely have enough to keep their homes. Mostly this happens to the elderly. I find it infuriating to hear the way people think about the clients I have. They have no idea what is really going on and take opinions as fact. This area of public service is really lacking in factual public awareness.

I feel stuck in the middle between the clients and administration that has not clue nor do they care about us and everything is blamed on us. So, client's issues and blame and administration's issues and blame.

Frustrations come mostly from having inadequate privacy in the cubicle settings and computer programs that are outdated. Timeliness and paperwork requirements that are required for reporting to the administration are frustrating as they are time consuming and not realistic. The time could be used to case manage our clients to self-sufficiency better. Also, it is difficult because training is minimal for new hires and pay not so good anymore. I was fortunate and hired under better benefits. I feel very rewarded from the clients that I see move forward. I think in general they appreciate what services and guidance we can give them. As a generalist, practitioners we see them go from hungry and homeless to on their feet so that is rewarding. It is important that public servants so not judge people and remain objective, also it appears as the economy is getting better with better paying jobs the recipients are able to go to work and actually live in their means. Before when the wages were lower it did not make sense to many of them to go to work because then their income-based housing would end, and they could not afford the rent. Many of them get into housing from the TANF making them eligible so they want to remain on TANF, SNAP and use the free phones and stay home with their children. I am seeing more hope and pride as the wages are up from minimum wage 8.25 -just a couple years ago up to 10 to 14 + dollars an hour starting pay now. Now we have a childcare provider shortage though. My SO thinks the job taints me so that I do not believe what everyone says but I always believe everyone until they give me a reason not to and even then I will give them second chances and third even. It seems the less paperwork I require of them the quicker they get on their feet for some reason. It is very important to like people- recipients in this job. I have seen so many come and go over the last 12 years, In the last 5 years I have had 3 supervisors and in a unit of 5 social workers in 5 years we have had 15 social workers in and out. Only 2 of us have over 2 years out of 5 including the supervisor. That is the hardest to me-- I don't want to get to close to coworkers since they come and go so fast. The being the remaining workers we have to pick up the cases they leave and sort them out which takes time. It is frustrating because we are discouraged from offering ideas and the chain of command is lengthy. I just focus on the families and gave up on trying to help the system. I really do feel hopeful though that our better economy is going to keep going. I find many of our clients have lived in survival mode so long once the barriers are removed- and you ask them what they would do if they could get all their issues behind them they really get excited and hopeful because I do not think they have ever even thought what their goals are or that they are possible. I am glad we can now offer them to get the GED and Hset now as activities. Thank for researching this. It is a thankless job usually the public does not like us government workers very much either. With elections every couple years our jobs change on every budget too. I like that we are 5 days a week and with regular hours as many social work positions are not. I try to help the newbies learn to work on a need to know

basis because things constantly change. This makes the day go by fast for me. It is very nice too that we can use the e-mail communication now also with the recipients. I think this is a great tool for us.

I just wanted to state that I have always considered myself very open and sympathetic towards the less fortunate. I have always given money to the homeless and felt bad they were in such a dire situation. If I had cash in my wallet I would give, even once as a broke single mom I gave \$100 to a homeless man on the street since I had just received my tax return. When I started as a Welfare worker I felt so proud to be able and help so many families but as the years have passed, I feel like my sympathy towards the less fortunate/poor has changed dramatically. When I see a homeless person I automatically assume they have a drug/alcohol problem and that they are not hungry because they have \$192/month in SNAP available to them. I feel like with all of the assistance available in addition to welfare such as housing, shelters, work programs, free schooling, etc. there is no excuse in today's society to be homeless or without employment. Seeing firsthand day by day for 3 years people taking advantage of the Welfare system due to the lack of want for self-sufficiency or substance abuse takes a large toll on your ability to sympathize for the poor. People have out right told me they have to intention of being self-sufficient since they receive help from so many other places, and you see this constantly. I myself was on all programs for approx. 4 months as a single mother, 7 years ago but I always worked full-time and did not use it as a crutch. I used it as intended; to help temporarily. I worked with people directly in the lobby for over a year and it took a hard toll on me. I know that your thesis is to write about how helping the poor perhaps, in majority, takes a toll on us because we feel so badly for them but for myself and I know many other workers it is the opposite. I myself as a single mother have missed out on so much like my child's first steps, field trips, etc. because I have worked so hard to support my family with no help such as child support, etc. When you come to work and help person after person obtain assistance who simply chose not to work, better their lives in any way, or have substance abuse problems it is really hard knowing that your hard-working tax dollars are going to fund them. I have found myself in the bathroom crying or not wanting to come back to work simply because of the nature of the beast. I have found satisfaction in knowing that I have helped people regardless of their situation. I have received thank you notes and clients in tears due to their thankfulness, but the majority of cases are not so. I have had drug addicts pass out in front of me, had things thrown at my face when an addict was upset he didn't get his SNAP card to sell that Friday night, and when you have people consistently lie to your face it is a hard job. When I sit back and think of all my cases worked, I would say 2 out of 10 are a family/person that is truly struggling and intends to use welfare for its purpose. It's even more frustrating when the people in authority of this division don't work directly with the public and find it their sole mission to make obtaining assistance easier for all. I believe in helping those less fortunate and that's why I continue to do this job, but it can be very difficult at times seeing how much welfare is overridden with those who chose to live a lifestyle on welfare and even passing it on to other generations.

I am currently looking for other job opportunities because I feel burned out. I am still empathetic to the clientele but need a professional change.

I don't resent the recipients at all, generational poverty is a real problem, and there are not enough widely known programs to teach recipients how to overcome this. The work environment and queue-based system is efficient; but being on a timer that's closely watched is not conducive to thinking of recipients as human beings, instead of just another number in the queue.

The negative feelings I have towards my job are mainly due to frustration from the system and how we issue benefits to recipients. It is rarely the recipients that cause issues.

Good luck on your dissertation!
