



School of Management

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

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THESIS DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) – updated March 2014. The proposed research studies received human research ethics approval from:

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ABSTRACT

Extreme work environments are settings test the limits of human functioning and performance. The safety-critical and unpredictable nature of work in these settings requires workers to sustain optimal performance and operational readiness across a given duration – such as a mission, operation, expedition, or project. Moreover, workers in these settings face challenging working and living conditions, such as isolated, confined environments and/or dangerous environments (Brasher et al., 2010; Landon et al., 2019; Suedfeld & Steel, 2000). The overall aim of this thesis is to advance knowledge of how the demands and constraints within extreme work environments impact sustained human performance over time. Guided by this overarching aim, the goals of this thesis are to develop a theoretical framework of endurance that models how human performance is sustained over an intense long duration mission, and to provide a better understanding of how different types of work demands impact endurance in real-world extreme work environments. In Chapter 1, I provide a general introduction to the thesis and an overview of the studies in this thesis. In Chapter 2, I develop a theoretical framework that explains endurance in terms of sustainable energy management within an interconnected work-life system (work, non-work, and sleep). In Chapter 3, I focus on the work portion of the work-life system and conduct a cross-sectional investigation into how overload and underload impact endurance in the context of long-haul seafaring. The findings revealed that overload and underload showed differential relationships with fatigue-related outcomes, with underload being more detrimental to seafarer fatigue and wellbeing. In Chapter 4, I extend my investigation by taking a dynamic approach to exploring how overload and underload are linked to chronic and acute forms of fatigue in submarine operations. Results showed that the within-person relationships between overload and underload, and fatigue, looked qualitatively different over a working day. Moreover, there was evidence that overload and fatigue are reciprocally related, which poses risks of accumulation of fatigue over an operational activity. In Chapter 5, I consolidate these findings and discuss the theoretical contributions that this thesis makes to our understanding of how people function and perform over time in extreme work environments, as well as increasingly dynamic and complex conventional work environments. I conclude the thesis with a summary of practical implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

CONTENTS

THESIS DECLARATION	II
ABSTRACT.....	III
CONTENTS.....	IV
LIST OF TABLES	VII
LIST OF FIGURES	VIII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	IX
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	X
RESEARCH OUTPUTS.....	XII
AUTHORSHIP DECLARATION: CO-AUTHORED PUBLICATIONS	XIII
1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	3
1.2 PURPOSE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS	5
1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS	8
2 ENDURANCE IN EXTREME WORK ENVIRONMENTS	10
2.1 FOREWORD	11
2.2 ABSTRACT	12
2.3 INTRODUCTION	13
2.3.1 <i>Defining Endurance</i>	14
2.4 DISTINGUISHING ENDURANCE FROM RELATED CONSTRUCTS	17
2.5 THE DYNAMICS OF ENDURANCE	18
2.5.1 <i>Energy Management</i>	18
2.5.2 <i>Energy Management within an Interconnected Work-Life System</i>	21
2.6 DESIGNING A WORK-LIFE SYSTEM TO OPTIMISE ENDURANCE	24
2.6.1 <i>Organisational and Individual Strategies for Optimising Endurance</i>	25
2.7 DISCUSSION	27
2.7.1 <i>Research Implications</i>	28
2.7.2 <i>Applied Research to Inform Practical Interventions</i>	30
2.8 CONCLUSION.....	33
2.9 APPENDIX 2A.....	34

3	INVESTIGATING THE JOINT EFFECTS OF OVERLOAD AND UNDERLOAD ON CHRONIC FATIGUE AND WELLBEING.....	39
3.1	FOREWORD	40
3.2	ABSTRACT.....	41
3.3	INTRODUCTION.....	42
3.3.1	<i>Theoretical Background.....</i>	<i>43</i>
3.3.2	<i>The Present Study.....</i>	<i>46</i>
3.4	METHOD	48
3.4.1	<i>Sample and Procedure</i>	<i>48</i>
3.4.2	<i>Measures</i>	<i>48</i>
3.4.3	<i>Statistical Analyses</i>	<i>49</i>
3.5	RESULTS	49
3.5.1	<i>Descriptive Statistics.....</i>	<i>49</i>
3.5.2	<i>Measurement Model.....</i>	<i>50</i>
3.5.3	<i>Latent Interaction Effects Between Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue</i>	<i>50</i>
3.5.4	<i>Latent Interaction Effects Between Overload and Underload on Psychological Wellbeing.....</i>	<i>50</i>
3.6	DISCUSSION	52
3.6.1	<i>Limitations and Future Research.....</i>	<i>55</i>
3.6.2	<i>Practical Implications and Conclusion.....</i>	<i>56</i>
3.7	APPENDIX 3A.....	57
3.8	APPENDIX 3B	60
4	INVESTIGATING THE DYNAMICS OF OVERLOAD AND UNDERLOAD IN SUBMARINE OPERATIONS	61
4.1	FOREWORD	62
4.2	INTRODUCTION.....	63
4.2.1	<i>Theoretical Development</i>	<i>65</i>
4.2.2	<i>Overload and Underload</i>	<i>66</i>
4.2.3	<i>The Present Research.....</i>	<i>68</i>
4.3	METHOD	71
4.3.1	<i>Participants.....</i>	<i>71</i>
4.3.2	<i>Field Study Design and Measurement Protocol Procedure</i>	<i>72</i>
4.3.3	<i>Measures</i>	<i>73</i>

Preamble: Contents

4.4	ANALYTICAL PHASE 1: CHANGE IN BURNOUT OVER AN OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	74
4.4.1	<i>Sample & Measures</i>	75
4.4.2	<i>Results</i>	75
4.5	ANALYTICAL PHASE 2: RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN OVERLOAD AND UNDERLOAD, AND STATE FATIGUE AND AFFECT	78
4.5.1	<i>Sample & Measures</i>	79
4.5.2	<i>Results</i>	80
4.6	DISCUSSION	90
4.6.1	<i>Analysis One Findings: No Evidence for Change in Submariners' Burnout</i>	90
4.6.2	<i>Analysis Two Findings: Overload and Underload are Associated with Different Patterns of State Fatigue and Affect</i>	91
4.6.3	<i>Practical Implications</i>	93
4.6.4	<i>Limitations and Future Directions</i>	94
4.6.5	<i>Conclusion</i>	95
4.7	APPENDIX 4A.....	96
5	GENERAL DISCUSSION	98
5.1	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	99
5.2	THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS	101
5.2.1	<i>An Integrated Approach to Understanding Performance and Functioning in Complex Work Environments</i>	101
5.2.2	<i>Underload as an Under-researched but Critical Work Demand</i>	103
5.2.3	<i>Incorporation of the Role of Time to Enrich Theory and Research</i>	105
5.3	PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS	108
5.4	LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	111
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	114
6	REFERENCES.....	115

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 2.1. DIFFERENTIATING ENDURANCE FROM RELATED CONSTRUCTS	18
TABLE 2.2. ILLUSTRATIVE EXPERIENCES AND ACTIVITIES ACROSS A WORK-LIFE SYSTEM	22
TABLE 3.1. MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, ALPHA-CRONBACH RELIABILITIES, AND BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS AMONG STUDY VARIABLES (AFTER LISTWISE DELETION, N = 887)	50
TABLE 3.2. RESULTS OF LATENT MODERATED STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING	51
TABLE 4.1. OVERVIEW OF THE THREE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS, INCLUDING YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THEIR CURRENT ROLE AND IN THE NAVY OVERALL.	72
TABLE 4.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ALL THREE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.	76
TABLE 4.3. CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES	76
TABLE 4.4. MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS AND CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ANALYSIS VARIABLES	81
TABLE 4.5. PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR MULTI-LEVEL VAR(1) MODEL LOOKING AT FATIGUE AND OVERLOAD	83
TABLE 4.6. PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR MULTI-LEVEL VAR(1) MODEL LOOKING AT FATIGUE AND UNDERLOAD	85
TABLE 4.7. PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR MULTI-LEVEL VAR(1) MODEL LOOKING AT AFFECT AND OVERLOAD	87
TABLE 4.8. PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR MULTI-LEVEL VAR(1) MODEL LOOKING AT AFFECT AND UNDERLOAD.....	89

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1. A TEMPORAL FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND THE FACTORS THAT IMPACT AND PREDICT ENDURANCE.	16
FIGURE 2.2. MODEL OF ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROCESSES	20
FIGURE 3.1. PLOT OF THE TWO-WAY INTERACTION OF UNDERLOAD AND OVERLOAD ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING.	52
FIGURE 4.1. MEAN RATINGS OF OVERLOAD FOR LOW, NORMAL, AND HIGH INTENSITY OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES	77
FIGURE 4.2. MEAN RATINGS OF UNDERLOAD FOR LOW, NORMAL, AND HIGH INTENSITY OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES	77
FIGURE 4.3. AVERAGE LEVELS OF BURNOUT MEASURED PRE-OPERATION AND POST-OPERATION ACROSS THE THREE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES.	78
FIGURE 4.4. EXPERIENCE SAMPLING DESIGN ON THE 6-ON-6-OFF WATCH SCHEDULE. OVERLOAD, UNDERLOAD, STATE FATIGUE AND STATE AFFECT WERE MEASURED TWICE A DAY AFTER EACH WORK PERIOD.....	79
FIGURE 4.5. OVERVIEW OF MODELS TESTED. THE TIME LAG WAS APPROXIMATELY 12-HOURS.....	79

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AL	Allostatic Load Model
BFs	Bayes Factors
CoR	Conservation of Resources Theory
DV	Dependent variable
DSEM	Dynamic structural equation modelling
ER	Effort-recovery model
ESM	Experience sampling methodology
ILD	Intensive longitudinal data
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources Theory
PDR	Phenomenon-driven research

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RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Directly related to thesis

Manuscripts in Press

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Manuscripts in Preparation

Cham, B. S., Wilson, M. D., Andrei, D. M., & Griffin, M. A. (in preparation). Examining the dynamic relationship between workload and fatigue over multiple shifts of work. Target journal: *Journal of Organizational Behavior*.

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Peripherally related to thesis

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Wilson, M. D., Ballard, T, Strickland, L., Boeing, A., **Cham, B.**, Griffin, M., & Jorritsma, K. (2021). Understanding Fatigue in a Naval Submarine: Applying Biomathematical Models and Workload Measurement in an Intensive Longitudinal Design. *Applied Ergonomics, 94*, 103412.

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AUTHORSHIP DECLARATION: CO-AUTHORED PUBLICATIONS

This thesis contains work that has been published and/or prepared for publication.

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<p>The original concepts were developed as part of a research project funded by the Maritime Division of the Defence Science Technology Group (RES-61297) that the candidate worked on as a Research Officer.</p>						
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Co-author: Karina Jorritsma	10	N/A	N/A	0	5	5
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Contributor	Conceptualisation & design	Data Source & Collection	Analysis & Statistical Method	Writing Original Draft	Review & Editing	Total % contribution
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Co-author: Michael David Wilson	5	5	5	0	10	5
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Date 03/05/2021

1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

“The problem to be faced is the confinement of men in a sealed tube in complete isolation from the rest of the world and encompassed by sea. In this they must work, eat, sleep and play for a period of months, during which a high standard of health and morale has to be maintained.”

Miles, 1960

The determinants of human functioning and performance in extreme work environments have been an ongoing topic of interest for many decades (Driskell et al., 2018; Harrison & Connors, 1984). Extreme work environments can be defined as (a) task contexts that are atypical in terms of the level of demands (e.g., time pressure) or the type of demands (e.g., confinement, danger), and (b) contexts in which ineffective performance has severe consequences (Bell et al., 2018). Extreme work environments typically studied include military operations (e.g., Brasher et al., 2010), long-duration spaceflight (e.g., Salas et al., 2015), nuclear plant control rooms (e.g., Stachowski et al., 2009) and Antarctic winter-over stations (e.g., Sandal et al., 2006).

Understanding the factors that drive performance in extreme environments is critical as ineffective performance has potentially serious consequences for individuals, teams, the organisation, and wider community. For example, time pressure was a key factor in the accidental collision that occurred between the USS Greeneville submarine and a Japanese trawler in 2001, which resulted in the deaths of 16 civilians (Drumheller & Benoit, 2004; Shattuck & Miller, 2006). However, it is important to note that understanding performance in these environments is a complex endeavour because the constraints and demands posed by extreme contexts mean conventional approaches towards work performance offer limited guidance.

For instance, in many extreme contexts, work, non-work, and sleep activities take place in the same confined environment and the boundaries between these life domains can be blurred (Brasher et al., 2010; Landon et al., 2019; Suedfeld & Steel, 2000). Although there is much research that explores the work, non-work, and sleep factors that impact human performance and functioning, this research exists in often disconnected bodies of literature (Crain et al., 2018). Moreover, previous research usually investigates contexts in which work and non-work domains of life are

physically separated, such as office work (e.g., Kinnunen et al., 2017), teaching (e.g., Simbula, 2010) or hospitals (e.g., Hornung et al., 2013). As such, it is unclear how knowledge from these diverse areas should be integrated to fully understand how workers perform and function in situations where work, non-work, and sleep life domains overlap in terms of physical space and time. Additionally, workers in extreme work environments are typically required to sustain high performance over long duration missions. To understand the factors that predict fluctuations in performance over time, a within-persons research paradigm is most useful (McCormick et al., 2020). Despite this, previous research usually adopts a ‘static’ between-persons approach to investigating performance and its predictors (Navarro et al., 2015; Roe, 2018). That is, broad differences between individuals are compared, with little focus on change or variability over time.

The overall aim of this thesis was to advance knowledge of how the demands and constraints within extreme work environments impact sustained human performance over time. Guided by this overarching aim, the goals of this thesis are to develop a theoretical framework of endurance that models how human performance is sustained over an intense long duration mission, and to provide a better understanding of how different types of work demands impact endurance in real-world extreme work environments.

The remainder of this general introduction consists of three sections. First, I briefly recap on how performance in extreme environment has typically been studied, highlighting how current approaches do not provide a comprehensive understanding and thereby providing a rationale for why an endurance approach towards performance is a necessary and useful theoretical angle. Second, I describe the purpose, scope, and contributions of this thesis. Last, I provide an overview of the thesis chapters.

1.1 Background

Research on human performance in extreme environments gained initial momentum in the early 1960s (Harrison & Connors, 1984) and was spurred by several factors, including the advent of the space program (e.g., Grether, 1962), the commissioning of the first nuclear submarines (e.g., Weybrew, 1971), and the establishment of research bases in polar environments (e.g., Nelson, 1962). Across several extreme environments, early research highlighted the need to understand human performance and functioning in relation to the unique problems and challenges posed by

Chapter 1: General Introduction

these unique contexts (e.g., Nelson, 1962; Harrison & Connors, 1984). For example, compared to the diesel submarines operated in WWII which could only stay submerged up to three days, the first nuclear submarines commissioned in the 1950s could stay submerged for months (or, theoretically, until food and consumables ran out). As such, a major problem emerged in how submariners could maintain optimal performance and health, despite being required to work, rest, and sleep under psychologically and physically demanding conditions for several months (Miles, 1960).

These same challenges are still relevant to extreme work environments today (e.g., Landon et al., 2019), and there is perhaps an even greater need to address these problems, as technology is paving the way for humans to operate in even more remote and demanding environments. For example, NASA's planned manned mission to Mars in the 2030s will involve a human crew undertaking a risky 3-year journey in a small and confined habitat; mission success and safety will depend on optimal performance and health being maintained on a daily basis (Drake, 2009). Despite the increasing rate at which technology is pushing humans into more intensive and challenging working situations, research in its current state is ill-equipped to inform the complexities inherent in how performance should be understood in extreme work environments. I consider two reasons for this below.

First, as stated earlier, extreme work environments require workers to sustain optimal performance each day, over a long duration mission. This means any understanding of performance in extreme work environments should account for the role of *time*, in order to capture how performance (and the factors that impact performance) might change or fluctuate over a mission (Roe, 2018). Previous research, however, has typically focused on more static conceptualisations of performance. For example, the individual attributes of grit and mental toughness have both been extensively studied as predictors of performance in stressful achievement contexts such as elite sports, military training, and medical surgery (Eskreis-Winkler et al., 2014; Mallett et al., 2014). While these individual attributes may be useful in predicting whether one individual is better suited for coping and performing within demanding situations, over another individual (i.e., a *between-person* research question), they do not inform why or how an individual's performance fluctuates within a day or over several days in response to dynamic changes in their environment. A better

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

understanding of sustained performance in extreme work environments requires an approach that incorporates the role of time and a focus on *within-person* variability (McCormick et al., 2020).

Second, a serious issue for many workers in extreme environments is that there is substantial blur between the life domains of work, non-work, and sleep. For instance, 24/7 operations mean work activities can disrupt non-work and sleep time, requiring workers to perform optimally in response to unpredictable events (Dawson et al., 2012; Krueger, 1989; Nicol & Botterill, 2004). Additionally, in some of the most extreme contexts, work, non-work, and sleep activities all take place in the same confined environment (Landon et al., 2019; Suedfeld & Steel, 2000). The implication of having work, non-work and sleep being closely linked is that experiences across all three life domains have more direct impacts on worker performance, compared to conventional environments where there is a greater degree of separation. Therefore, research seeking to unpack performance in extreme work environments would benefit from a comprehensive understanding of how factors across work, non-work, and sleep contribute to performance.

While a plethora of research on the work, non-work, and sleep drivers of performance exists as separate topics, there is little research that considers the associations amongst the three areas (Crain et al., 2018). For instance, research that examines fatigue and its effect on performance in 24-hour operations such as military environments, offshore oil and gas installations, and space exploration has generally focused on the role of inadequate sleep (e.g., Mallis & DeRoshia, 2005; Miller et al., 2008; Riethmeister et al., 2018), with very little consideration given to the impact of high workloads or cognitively demanding work tasks (cf. Parkes, 2017). Only recently have there been calls for more research to take a holistic approach to understanding performance in extreme work environments (e.g., Banks et al., 2019; Landon et al., 2019).

1.2 Purpose and Contributions of the Thesis

To address the challenges raised above, this thesis aims to advance knowledge of how the demands and constraints within extreme work environments impact sustained performance over time. This thesis will achieve this through two avenues. First, this thesis will establish a theoretical framework of endurance that models how human performance is sustained over time and impacted by work, non-work, and sleep

Chapter 1: General Introduction

factors over an intense long duration mission. Second, this thesis will conduct initial investigations into how different work demands impact endurance in real-world extreme work environments.

Developing an overarching theoretical framework of endurance is an important goal of this thesis because, as identified earlier, while there are many existing theories that inform performance, it is unclear how these various theories across different disciplines should be integrated to investigate performance in extreme work environments. The various characteristics of extreme work environments (e.g., long duration missions, blurring of work, non-work, and sleep elements) require a temporal and interdisciplinary approach towards understanding performance. An overarching framework of endurance that integrates diverse approaches to work stress, non-work recovery, and sleep science (among others), and adopts a within-person research paradigm, would be a significant contribution to advancing knowledge about how workers sustain ongoing high performance in extreme work environments.

Although a theoretical framework of endurance is inspired by the unique constraints posed by extreme environments, it can also be used to inform worker performance and wellbeing more generally. To illustrate, consider that many modern working environments share work features with extreme environments. Rapid technological advancements and an increasingly competitive environment mean that work features such as 24-hour operations, remote working, and work intensification are increasing (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Piasna, 2015). These features mean that modern work is characterised by a higher degree of blurring of work, non-work, and sleep life domains than ever before, with consequences such as a lack of psychological detachment and inadequate recovery becoming a widespread issue (Sonnetag et al., 2017; Sonnetag & Fritz, 2015). By offering a more comprehensive understanding of the interface between work, non-work, and sleep, developing an endurance framework would help to advance knowledge about how performance and recovery can be optimised in a range of modern working environments.

The second goal of this thesis is to provide evidence of how complex work factors impact endurance in extreme environments, as currently there is limited research on how work demands manifest and impact workers in these contexts. As mentioned earlier, most research to date conducted within extreme work environments has focused

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

on the role of sleep on worker fatigue (e.g., Mallis & DeRoshia, 2005; Miller et al., 2008; Riethmeister et al., 2018). By contrast, there is little research that identifies the types of work demands that cause stress and fatigue in these environments, and the mechanisms through which they impact ongoing performance. This is despite work activities arguably being the most critical activity that is required of workers in these extreme contexts. Given mission safety and success depends on effective task performance, all other activities such as sleep and non-work recreational activities are typically only seen as necessary to the extent that they are required to support the ongoing capability to perform safely and effectively (e.g., Moffitt, 2008; Shay, 1998). Moreover, organisations have significant leverage points through work-related interventions to support individual and team performance in extreme environments (Driskell et al., 2018).

Therefore, to complement the development of a theoretical framework of endurance which specifies more broadly how work, non-work, and sleep activities affect sustained performance, I also begin an empirical investigation focusing on the critical work aspects that impact endurance. Specifically, I seek to shed light on how overload (i.e., work with too many demands) and underload (i.e., work with too few demands) are related to fatigue and performance in extreme work environments. It is well known across different extreme environments that the unpredictable yet safety critical nature of operations means workers face intense periods of time pressure that alternate with monotonous monitoring tasks to produce “hours of boredom and moments of terror” (Hancock & Krueger, 2010, p. 2; Salas & Oglesby, 2012). Although overload, and to a lesser extent underload, are both separately implicated as critical work factors that affect human fatigue and performance (Young et al., 2015), we currently understand very little about the combination of these demands in extreme work environments. For instance, there is little to no research that informs the relative unique (and collective) contributions of overload and underload on human fatigue in operational environments (Andrei et al., 2020; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). There is also a gap in knowledge when it comes to understanding the day-to-day mechanisms by which these two demands cause changes in fatigue (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). By studying the combination of overload and underload in more detail, I hope to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex work factors that drive endurance in real-world extreme work environments.

1.3 Overview of the Thesis

The body of this thesis is composed of three papers written in the style of manuscripts. An overview of Chapter 2 through to Chapter 5 is provided next.

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of endurance, defining it as an individual's capacity to sustain performance at high levels for safe and effective operations over the extended duration of a mission, operation, deployment, or expedition. This chapter acts as the primary literature review of this thesis and lays out the theoretical foundation by presenting a theoretical framework of endurance that informs and guides the subsequent two empirical studies (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4). Chapter 2 reviews and integrates diverse streams of literature from work stress (e.g., Ganster & Rosen, 2013), recovery (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2009), sleep (e.g., Dawson & McCulloch, 2005) to describe endurance in terms of a complex interaction between a worker and their 'work-life system' (i.e., work, non-work and sleep experiences and activities) over short- and long-term timeframes.

Chapter 3 begins my empirical investigation into endurance by focusing on the *work* component of the work-life system. Specifically, I investigate how overload and underload impact endurance in the extreme context of long-haul maritime shipping. As discussed, overload and underload are key work factors that have been implicated in several endurance related outcomes, such as fatigue, performance, and wellbeing (Driskell et al., 2018; Salas & Oglesby, 2012; Young et al., 2015). Long-haul shipping provides an ideal context for studying how the combination of overload and underload impacts endurance as seafarers experience overload during high time pressure port activities (e.g., frequent berthing, loading and unloading of ships), as well as underload during watchkeeping activities on the open ocean (e.g., monitoring the ocean horizon and/or engine room equipment) (Andrei et al., 2020). This cross-sectional study also integrates existing theoretical approaches from work psychology and cognitive psychology such as the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) and the Motivational Control Theory of Fatigue (Hockey, 2011) to specify how these work demands should impact endurance.

Chapter 4 extends my investigation into the work factors that impact endurance by explicitly considering the role of time. Specifically, I explore the dynamics underlying the within-person relationship between overload, underload, and fatigue in a

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

different extreme work environment – submarine operations. The role of time is further unpacked by examining the effects of overload and underload across two different timeframes relevant to endurance: 1) the duration of a submarine operational activity, and 2) daily work shifts. Within Chapter 4, I also draw on theoretical models such as the Job Demands-Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) and Hockey's (1993) model of compensatory control.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings of all the studies and discusses the overall theoretical, empirical, and practical contributions of this thesis. Limitations and related future directions are also presented.

2 ENDURANCE IN EXTREME WORK ENVIRONMENTS

2.1 Foreword

In this chapter, I develop a theoretical framework of endurance that specifies how workers sustain their performance and functioning over an intense mission in an extreme environment. To understand the many factors that impact and shape endurance, it is necessary to first develop a working definition of endurance and explain the processes that underlie endurance. In this chapter, I achieve this by building on and integrating existing theories and concepts of performance, recovery, stress, and human physiology to inform how endurance is shaped within constrained and demanding environments.

This chapter is presented as a journal article manuscript. A version of this manuscript was published in *Organizational Psychology Review*. See Appendix 2A for a copy of the copyright transfer agreement. Note that I use the term ‘we’ throughout this chapter to refer to the collective contributions of the manuscript co-authors.

Cham, B. S., Boeing, A. A., Wilson, M. D., Griffin, M. A., & Jorritsma, K. (In Press). Endurance in Extreme Work Environments. *Organizational Psychology Review*.

2.2 Abstract

Extreme work environments are inherently stressful and involve challenging working and living conditions. In contexts ranging from space exploration to disaster response, people must sustain performance under pressure, and function with limited resources. In this paper we develop the concept of endurance for extreme work environments, which we define as the capacity to sustain performance at high levels for safe and effective operations over extended durations (e.g., a mission, operation, deployment, or expedition). We integrate diverse streams of literature (e.g., work stress, recovery, and sleep) to describe endurance in terms of short – and long-term energy management processes as individuals interact with their work-life system (i.e., work, non-work, and sleep environment). We conclude with practical and theoretical implications for a better understanding of endurance, such as considering multiple time perspectives, and the role that researchers, practitioners, and organisations can play in optimising endurance in the field.

2.3 Introduction

Space shuttles, submarines, and polar stations are vastly different settings, but all share an emphasis on safety with a high cost of failure. Workers in these environments experience chronic exposure to high and sustained levels of stress, providing real-world opportunities to investigate the limits of human performance. A better understanding of human performance in extreme work environments is important from two perspectives. First, in extreme work environments, poor performance can have catastrophic consequences for the team, organisation, customers, and the broader community. Second, insights derived from extreme work environments are increasingly relevant to work features in modern work environments such as unpredictable patterns of activity and rest, intensification of work, and managing complexity and uncertainty. For example, automation, robots, and artificial intelligence are removing routine aspects of some roles, while increasing the complexity and uncertainty of the remaining work (Griffin et al., 2019; Parker & Grote, 2020). Moreover, technology is increasing around-the-clock activity in many industries, which places more emphasis on the human capacity to sustain performance over long periods (Krueger, 1989). Therefore, it is not surprising that there is growing interest in understanding how humans perform in extreme environments (Bell et al., 2018; Driskell et al., 2018).

Extreme work environments require workers to sustain optimal physical and psychological states such that they are ready to respond effectively to routine demands and unanticipated challenges across an extended duration. This duration can range from weeks and months (e.g., a submarine deployment) to years (e.g., the spaceflight to Mars) (Brasher et al., 2010; Flynn-evans). In this article, we extend our understanding of the factors that inform performance by developing the concept of endurance for extreme work environments. To date, endurance has typically been studied in the context of sports and refers to the capability to resist physical fatigue while engaging in exercise for a prolonged duration (Sjostrom et al., 1987).

We begin by providing an overview of extreme work environments and defining the concept of endurance. We then show how endurance provides additive explanatory value relative to extant constructs such as grit and resilience. Next, we integrate diverse bodies of literature to explain how endurance is shaped within constrained and demanding environments. We focus on processes of energy management across work, non-work, and sleep life domains (i.e., a work-life system) and consider how an

interplay between short- and long-term dynamics impact endurance. We conclude by discussing implications for research and practice.

2.3.1 Defining Endurance

For extreme work environments, we define endurance as an individual's capacity to sustain performance at high levels for safe and effective operations over the extended duration of a mission, operation, deployment, or expedition. Our concept of endurance extends current approaches to work performance to capture the overall performance requirements of humans in extreme environments. In our paper we use the term 'mission' to encompass the various types of long-term goal-driven events such as expeditions (e.g., arctic expeditions), operations (e.g., counter terrorist operations), and deployments (e.g., combat deployments).

Endurance emphasises high performance because in extreme work environments such as spaceflight (Salas et al., 2015), high altitude mountaineering (Wickens et al., 2015), Special Forces operations (Urban, 2012), and polar workgroups (Leon et al., 2011), workers must perform safety critical tasks and activities over a long duration mission. Task demands evolve rapidly in these environments and failure to perform optimally—even for short periods—can result in mission risks and failure (Wickens & Huey, 1993). The exact standard of what constitutes 'high' or 'optimal' performance varies depending on the context. For example, the type of performance required during a high intensity combat situation will differ to the performance required during a prolonged and monotonous vigilance task.

Performance and safety are both important elements of endurance. In some contexts, high performance can come at costs to safety (Jiang & Probst, 2015). However, the need for individuals to maintain their own safety and the safety of others is imperative to mission success in many extreme work environments where threats to human lives can be immediate and significant. For example, submarine command teams must achieve mission objectives while also ensuring the safety of their own submarine and the safety of surrounding vessels (Stanton & Roberts, 2018).

An individual's underlying *capacity* for high performance is also central to our definition of endurance because extreme work environments require workers to maintain ongoing operational readiness to respond to unpredictable events. Operational

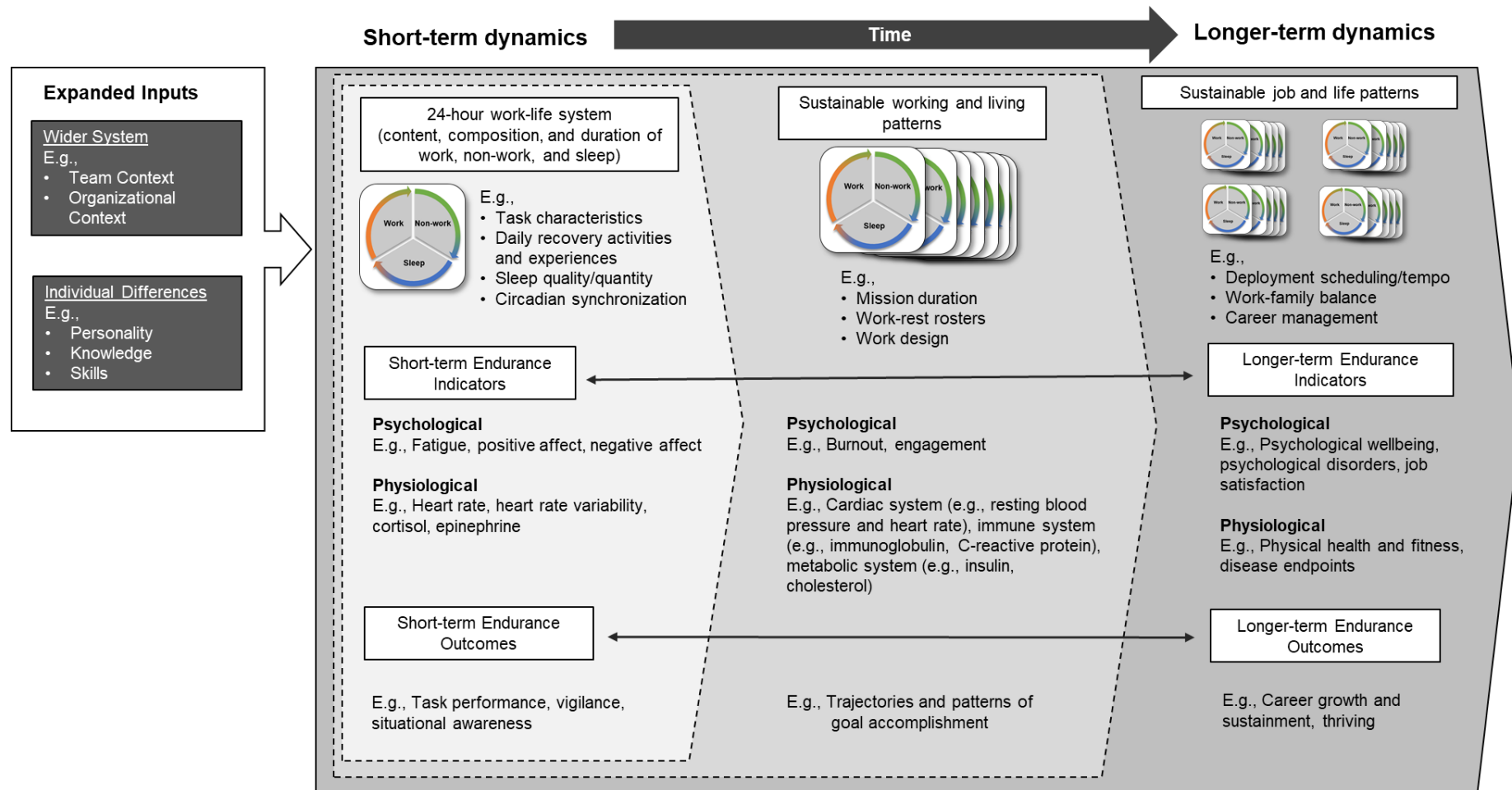
Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

readiness in a traditional military sense refers to a state of being able to react, respond, and carry out tasks at the required performance level (Cosenzo et al., 2007). It describes a latent potential for performance, as opposed to the observed actions, or ‘doing’ of performance (Roe, 2014).

We present a general model of endurance in Figure 2.1 depicting outcomes, indicators, and work-life patterns that constitute endurance. Temporal factors are inherently important in our model which differentiates short-term and long-term dynamics (Griffin & Clarke, 2011). A dynamic work-life system (i.e., work, non-work, and sleep experiences and activities) operates at multiple levels over time to affect psychological and physiological indicators of endurance. Outcomes related to endurance are also conceptualised at multiple levels, depending on the time frame of reference (e.g., task performance on a single day vs. a pattern of goal accomplishment over a several month-long mission). The dynamic process of energy management is central to our model and involves individuals adjusting their psychophysiological states in response to stressors and changes in their environment, for instance, expending energy to respond to demands and replenishing energy to reduce fatigue. The specifics of the processes are addressed in subsequent sections.

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

Figure 2.1. A temporal framework to understand the factors that impact and predict endurance.



2.4 Distinguishing Endurance from Related Constructs

Before presenting details of the endurance process, we consider how endurance is distinct from related constructs such as grit and resilience. First, grit is a personality trait defined as passion for and perseverance toward long-term goals (Duckworth et al., 2007). As such, the focus of grit is on the role of stable individual differences in how an individual approaches long-term challenges (i.e., between-persons approach). By contrast, endurance emphasises the dynamic interaction between an individual and their daily experiences (i.e., within-persons approach), although the extent to which individuals can endure in extreme work environments is likely driven by trait levels of grit. For instance, trait grit predicts retention and performance in military training programs (Maddi et al., 2017).

Resilience is another concept that is relevant to long-term functioning and performance in extreme work environments. Resilience is conceptualised as an emergent outcome and refers to the process of ‘bouncing back’ from adverse events (Hartwig et al., 2020). Defined in this way, resilience focuses on the specific temporal period *after* a triggering adverse event or chronic sequence of stressors that individuals and teams must respond to and recover from (Hartwig et al., 2020). Resilience plays an integral role in endurance, with individuals needing to be resilient and robust to the potentially significant adverse events they might face on long-duration missions. However, endurance focuses more broadly on complete trajectories of performance across an entire mission, which includes patterns leading up to and following potential acute and chronic stressors.

As summarised in Table 2.1, endurance is best viewed as an integrative concept that captures the dynamic processes through which humans not only survive but perform over the course of an inherently stressful and complex mission (Driskell et al., 2018). Endurance encompasses both short-term performance variability and long-term performance trajectories.

Table 2.1. Differentiating endurance from related constructs

Characteristic	Constructs		
	Endurance	Resilience	Grit
Explores high performance under adverse and stressful conditions	✓	✓	✓
Focus on person-environment interactions	✓	✓	✗
Described by short-term dynamics (e.g., processes that unfold daily)	✓	✓	✗
Described by long-term dynamics (e.g., processes that unfold over weeks - months)	✓	✓	✗
Focus on whole-of-mission trajectories of performance	✓	✗	✗

2.5 The Dynamics of Endurance

Performance, and the factors that impact performance, are dynamic and can fluctuate over time (Roe, 2014). For example, performance has been found to change in response to factors such as contextual workplace conditions and individual level factors (Alessandri et al., 2015). Recent research suggests that a within-person approach is most useful for understanding ongoing change in an individuals’ states and behaviours as they interact with the environment across periods such as hours, days, and weeks (McCormick et al., 2020). This approach contrasts with conventional between-persons research that focuses on static questions regarding stable constructs, and highlights differences between people. In the following sections we detail the within-person processes and mechanisms underlying endurance over short and longer periods of time. To set the stage, we first explain processes of energy management, and how they support performance in demanding contexts.

2.5.1 Energy Management

Energy management is the process of balancing energy expenditure in response to stressors and demands with recovery through processes of rest, sleep, and

Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

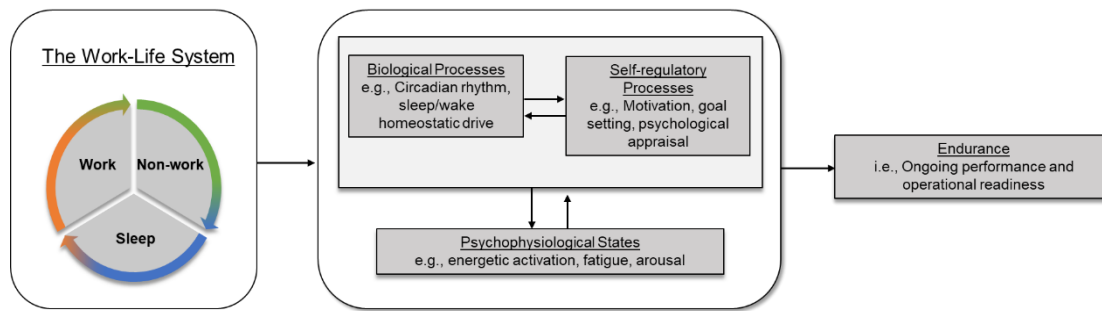
detachment (Meijman & Mulder, 1998). Over time, endurance is the successful management of these processes to maintain high levels of performance and safety.

Many studies concerned with human energy at work adopt the perspective of the Effort-Recovery (E-R) model (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) or its variations. The E-R model proposes that energy expenditure in response to work demands causes stress-related psychophysiological load reactions which are reversed by periods of recovery (Rau & Triemer, 2004). If adequate recovery does not occur, an individual may start the next working period in a suboptimal state, meaning compensatory effort is required to perform. This effort can lead to an accumulation of fatigue and negative health outcomes (Demerouti et al., 2009).

Recent research suggests the E-R model does not adequately explain the dynamics of energy expenditure and replenishment (Zijlstra et al., 2014). For instance, certain experiences during work (e.g., flow) can generate positive moods that help maintain short-term energy levels and overrule fatigue effects, and enjoyment of work tasks can have protective effects even if recovery is limited (Demerouti et al., 2012). Conversely, recovery outside of work can be hindered by work-related rumination (Querstret & Cropley, 2012). Therefore, it is not entirely clear when stress ends, and recovery starts. For extreme work environments where there is substantial blur between work and non-work domains, both in terms of physical space and time, it is critical to identify and understand the mechanisms underlying energy expenditure and energy restoration. A better understanding of these mechanisms will inform the specific factors that detract from or support an individual's ongoing capacity to perform.

We propose that effective energy management facilitates endurance by enabling the psychophysiological states that sustain performance across the changing demands of the external environment. We depict the main elements and processes involved in energy management in Figure 2.2. Psychophysiological states (e.g., fatigue, arousal) are shaped by biological processes such as circadian rhythms and sleep/wake cycles; and self-regulatory processes such as motivation and goal setting (Zijlstra et al., 2014). Endurance involves successful short- and long-term energy management over a sustainable pattern of work, non-work, and sleep.

Figure 2.2. Model of energy management processes



2.5.1.1 The Role of Biological and Self-Regulatory Processes

Drawing on recent approaches toward energy regulation (Zijlstra et al., 2014), we propose that endurance involves the interaction of biological rhythms and goal-driven self-regulation processes through which people upregulate or downregulate their psychophysiological state to respond to demands and changes in the external environment. We describe these two aspects of endurance below.

First, humans have evolved several biological patterns and rhythms which support homeostasis through physiological regulation and modulate basic energetic activation. For instance, one of the most important of these internal biological processes is the circadian rhythm, otherwise known as the ‘biological clock’. Human energy levels and alertness fluctuate in a predictable pattern over the course of a 24-hour day, and a large part of this pattern is determined by the circadian rhythm (Dijk & Czeisler, 1995). This timekeeping system governs many physiological parameters such as core body temperature and metabolism (Buxton et al., 2012; Wright et al., 2002). These biological processes are modulated to varying extents by the external environment (Wright et al., 2013). For example, circadian rhythms are disrupted due to the changes in light when travelling across multiple time zones.

Second, humans have the capacity to engage in more conscious goal-driven self-regulation to muster additional energy in line with psychological appraisal of the environment and the self (Neal et al., 2017). Self-regulation encompasses the various ways in which people modify their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to reach a desired end state or goal (Gross, 2015). Situational demands can mean an individual’s current psychophysiological state deviates from the state required, for example, they need to be more energetic, vigilant, or relaxed, depending on what they perceive is required in that moment. When the required state is one of higher

energetic activation, individuals can actively upregulate to a higher energetic state by mobilising compensatory effort to increase attention and focus (Hockey, 1997; Kahneman, 1973). For example, a night shift worker may be in a state of heightened sleepiness during their circadian low (03:00 am - 05:00 am) (Gander et al., 2011) and so must upregulate their energy and exert effort to compensate for their current state of fatigue. Similarly, there are times when the required state is one of lower energetic activation. For example, an individual ruminating after work about unsolved work problems may need to downregulate their psychophysiological state by engaging in activities (e.g., mindfulness exercises) to detach from work, which enables better sleep quality (Hülshager et al., 2014; Querstet et al., 2017).

Goal-driven self-regulation can be viewed as a process of making choices that involve an interaction between a person and their environment (Neal et al., 2017). Although individuals choose how to spend their time, how much effort to exert, and what strategies to employ; constraints in the environment determine the goal-related choices that are available. Consider a sonar operator in a surface vessel or submarine who must remain vigilant for many hours to detect low-probability signals (Mackie et al., 1994). Although the requirement to focus attention and remain alert over a prolonged period has been found to be fatiguing (Warm et al., 2008), the high-risk environment means they must continue to invest as much effort and energy as required (or as possible) to meet the goal of keeping the vessel and crew safe. Workers in conventional environments have more flexibility to adopt self-regulatory strategies, which includes disengaging attention from the primary task and switching to a secondary task momentarily (Ariga & Lleras, 2011), or redirecting attention towards internal thoughts such as through mind-wandering (Thomson et al., 2015).

2.5.2 Energy Management within an Interconnected Work-Life System

We next consider how energy management processes evolve over time across the three life domains (work, non-work, and sleep), creating a ‘work-life system’. Past research indicates that activities and experiences that occur in one domain within a work-life system can have flow-on effects to other domains (Crain et al., 2018). In extreme work environments where work, non-work, and sleep are often tightly coupled, this can have important implications for endurance, as ineffective

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

energy management in any single domain can have carry-over effects that impact ongoing performance.

Experiences across work, non-work, and sleep domains (see table 2.2 for a summary) have been shown to impact common psychological and physiological states (Crain et al., 2018). For instance, fatigue is a common outcome investigated across work ergonomics (e.g., Young et al., 2015), recovery research (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2009), and sleep science (e.g., Dawson & McCulloch, 2005). As such, research is increasingly recognising dependencies and interactions among work, non-work, and sleep, (Crain et al., 2018). For example, the amount and quality of sleep affects every day waking experiences at and away from work, with lack of sleep being associated with perceptions of stress (Minkel et al., 2012), and decreased cognitive functioning (Cohen et al., 2010). Similarly, work and non-work activities can impact the ability to obtain optimal sleep, such as work deadlines or social activity limiting the hours available for sleep (Basner et al., 2014).

Table 2.2. Illustrative experiences and activities across a work-life system

Key Life Domain	Illustrative experiences and activities
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Task workload (e.g., cognitive and attentional load, Hancock & Matthews, 2019)• Job characteristics (e.g., job demands and resources, Bakker & Demerouti, 2014)
Non-work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type of recovery activity (e.g., leisure vs. obligated duties, Sonnentag, 2001)• Type of recovery experience (e.g., psychological detachment; relaxation; mastery; control, Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007)
Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sleep quality/quantity (Barnes et al., 2016), sleep hygiene (Miller et al., 2011), circadian rhythms (Folkard, 1990)

An understanding of carry-over effects within the work-life system of an extreme environment is critical because work, non-work, and sleep are often highly interconnected in these contexts. Highly interconnected domains in a work-life system with little redundancy or flexibility mean disruptions can have an immediate and pervasive impact, with ripple effects throughout the entire system (Perrow,

Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

1999). That is, extreme work environments have little redundancy because workers have less flexibility and choice with energy management strategies (e.g., they must perform optimally during work for safety reasons). The consequences and carry-over effects of ineffective energy management in one domain (e.g., insufficient sleep) have more direct and far-reaching implications, as workers continually compensate to maintain high performance. To illustrate, we can consider work, non-work, and sleep in space and undersea missions, where operations represent a tightly coupled work-life system with little flexibility (Landon et al., 2019). Each element of the work-life system (work, non-work, and sleep) is discussed sequentially below.

In space and undersea missions, the safety critical and unpredictable nature of work, means crew members must be ready to perform, and upregulate if necessary, not only during scheduled work hours, but also during non-work and sleep time (Evans-Flynn et al., 2016; Moffitt, 2008). Requirements include being ‘on-call’ to respond to critical events and incidents 24-hours a day, as well as undertaking obligatory tasks that occur outside of scheduled work hours, such as maintenance of systems, participation in drills, and meetings (Shattuck & Matsangas, 2017). Fatigue from extended periods of work present a serious risk, as a crew or team must be self-reliant for the duration of an undersea or space mission, given the difficult or impossible option of extracting existing personnel or inserting backup personnel once the mission has started (Brasher et al., 2010).

Non-work time is important for psychological detachment from stressful work periods but can be hard to obtain in space and undersea missions, meaning stress from work demands spills over to non-work time (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). Psychological detachment implies not only refraining from performing work-related tasks, but also mentally disconnecting from work (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015). However, being constrained to work and live in close physical proximity to one’s workplace has been found to predict poorer psychological detachment and a reduced capacity for recovery (Searle, 2012). Moreover, psychological detachment is increased through engagement in enjoyable leisure activities such as exercise and joint activities with others (Feuerhahn et al., 2014; Hahn et al., 2012). With limited space, time, and choice of leisure activities impeding psychological detachment, workers are at risk of experiencing high levels of strain and negative affective states

after a stressful workday (e.g., work-related rumination) that prevent effective recovery (Sonnentag, 2018).

Last, despite the critical role of adequate sleep for optimal human functioning, sleep is often the first domain to suffer in an extreme work environment (Miller et al., 2008). Sleep plays an important part in returning psychophysiological states to baseline, with humans requiring on average 8–8.5 hours of sleep per night (Watson et al., 2015). However, factors such as operational pressures, uncomfortable sleeping environments, and a ‘can (and will) do’ attitude towards meeting work goals mean sleep loss and/or deprivation is a common occurrence in extreme environments (e.g., Miller et al., 2011; Moffitt, 2008). For example, astronauts typically obtain less than 6 hours of sleep per day (Barger et al., 2014), with sleep being disrupted by suddenly shifted work operations, uncomfortable ambient temperatures, and an absence of circadian cues such as light cycles (Stuster, 2010).

As our examples illustrate, there is a high potential for carry-over effects within a constrained extreme environment. These effects highlight a need to consider how elements of the entire work-life system interact over time to affect energy management, and ultimately, the capability to endure.

2.6 Designing a Work-Life System to Optimise Endurance

We propose that organisations and individuals can optimise endurance by designing a work-life system that integrates across work, non-work, and sleep components. Designing a work-life system for optimised endurance requires individuals and organisations to actively shape and manage the content, composition, timing, and environment of work, non-work, and sleep components to reduce or prevent negative carry-over effects that would otherwise contribute to an accumulation of fatigue and strain.

A work-life system designed to consider the interconnected nature of work, non-work, and sleep allows for more sustainable patterns of energy management, and reflects a systemic approach to reducing the degree to which individuals need to compensate across the demands of a mission. Although compensation efforts are a critical component in energy management, repeated short-term compensation in response to environmental challenges leads to accumulation of strain and fatigue that impairs functioning and performance over longer periods (Ford et al., 2014;

Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

McEwen, 2007). For example, although 24-hour sleep-deprived individuals may be able to maintain safety-critical task performance for a period using compensatory strategies (Hockey et al., 1998), chronic sleep loss has cumulative detrimental effects that are not easily reversed by short-term strategies, such as taking a single extended sleep (Cohen et al., 2010).

A systemic approach to mitigating a build-up of strain and fatigue is critical because the highly interconnected nature of extreme work-life systems means fatigue and strain can rapidly carry-over and accumulate from one working period to the next (Hockey, 1997). Additionally, there is less opportunity in extreme work environments to reverse any build-up of strain and fatigue. For instance, in the common working week pattern of five days of work and two days of rest, the weekend provides opportunity for respite to occur (Fritz et al., 2010). By contrast, extreme work environments often involve continuous work operations (i.e., 24/7), sometimes without weekends - for example, submarine crews are expected to work on a rotating shift schedule continuously for weeks to months before a dedicated rest period (Brasher et al., 2010; Moffitt, 2008).

Models of stress such as the allostatic load (AL) model (McEwen, 2007) specify that sustained exposure to stressors and/or sustained activation even when stressors are no longer present results in more permanent psychophysiological changes (e.g., elevated cortisol levels, hypertension) which impair functioning (e.g., increased sleep disturbances). Over time, as the body treats the stressful state as the new 'set point' (Selye, 1955), these changes decrease an individual's capacity to cope with future stressors. By designing a work-life system to minimise negative carry-over effects from the onset of a mission, organisations and individuals can reduce or mitigate the risk of a vicious and unsustainable cycle of ongoing compensation, where extra effort has to be exerted at the beginning of every new working period to prevent performance breakdown (Hockey, 1997).

2.6.1 Organisational and Individual Strategies for Optimising Endurance

Organisations and individuals can leverage different strategies to design work-life systems for endurance and protect against the accumulation of strain and fatigue (Crain et al., 2018). In extreme work environments, organisations largely

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

determine environmental constraints such as the physical working and living environment, the work design, and the degree of autonomy afforded to workers (Landon et al., 2019). A key strategy that organisations can implement is the design of work/rest schedules in line with criteria that support endurance across a whole work-life system. Work/rest schedule design is concerned with the daily structure and timing of work, non-work, and sleep elements across a mission. These schedules are critical in many extreme environments where work shifts need to support a platform (e.g., ship, submarine) to operate for 24-hours a day, while allowing individuals time for other duties, rest, and sleep (Colquhoun, 1985).

Although the design of work/rest schedules is not a new topic, an integrated work-life system approach is often missing. For example, while there is a large body of research on work/rest schedules in the offshore oil/gas industry, most research has focused on sleep-related issues (Riethmeister et al., 2019), with few studies accounting for work stressors or recovery opportunities (Parkes, 2017). Indeed, the offshore process industries still operate rosters that involve contracted 12-hour working shifts, and factors such as worker exposure to overtime are often not considered (Parkes, 2017).

Designing a work/rest schedule according to endurance criteria allows organisations to integrate human biological needs (e.g., sleep and recovery) with mission workload requirements as shaped by operational needs and constraints. For example, sleep criteria can include (a) allowing for an 8-hour block of uninterrupted sleep per 24-hour period (Watson et al., 2015) and (b) allowing for night-shift workers to have a circadian synchronised sleep period, which involves employing light-management techniques (Boivin & James, 2005). In terms of criteria for non-work, this may include allowing workers enough time to transition between work and sleep periods. For instance, an adequate amount of time should be factored into a schedule to allow for ‘winding down’ prior to sleep to maximise sleep quality/duration, as well as to mitigate the temporary effects of sleep inertia on work performance (i.e., grogginess and disorientation) after waking up (Tassi & Muzet, 2000). For work criteria, although these will be shaped by mission operational requirements, these criteria should aim to protect against excessive worker fatigue. For example, scheduled work periods should not exceed 8-hours of continuous work,

Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

as extended work shifts (e.g., 12-hour shifts) are associated with greater fatigue, and decrements in performance capacities and alertness, particularly where high workloads are concerned (Bendak, 2003; Macdonald & Bendak, 2000). We also note that work criteria such as those pertaining to working hours, will be related to and impacted by the number, skills, and experience levels of personnel an organisation deploys on a mission, as any additional/unexpected increase in demands must be absorbed by existing workers. Therefore, for a work/rest schedule to be operationally feasible, organisations are required to consider task allocations among team members and expected projections of workload to ensure teams set out from the beginning of a mission with sufficient levels of personnel to support around-the-clock work shifts.

Individual workers also shape the design of their work-life system when they interact with their environment on a day-to-day basis (Neal et al., 2017). Individuals optimise endurance and reduce negative carry-over effects by actively choosing what, when, and how they engage in activities and strategies that assist in regulating their energetic state effectively; whether this is a state of higher energetic activation to deal with high workloads, or a state of relaxedness and calmness for sleep and energy restoration. For example, how an individual integrates physical exercise as a non-work activity within their work-life system will have implications for endurance. Physical exercise is an important non-work activity that facilitates psychological detachment (Feuerhahn et al., 2014; Rook & Zijlstra, 2006). However, potential carry-over effects must be considered. For instance, engaging in high-intensity exercise ≤ 1 hour before bedtime can lead to sustained physiological activation (e.g., elevated heart rate) which can disrupt the onset of sleep (reducing total time slept) (Oda & Shirakawa, 2014). To optimise the benefits of physical activity for psychological detachment, workers would be best placed to engage in high-intensity exercise directly after work, or failing this, light exercise preceding a sleep period. This pattern creates the best opportunity for obtaining an adequate amount of sleep, which prepares the individual to deal with the demands of the next working period (Cohen et al., 2010).

2.7 Discussion

In this paper we have introduced 'endurance', a conceptualisation of performance that expands upon traditional approaches and is suited to understanding the unique demands of extreme work environments. We have explained, with focus

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

on processes that unfold over a mission, how endurance is the capacity to sustain high performance over an extended duration. Drawing on diverse perspectives of work stress, performance, and physiology, we have argued that an endurance-approach to performance is needed to understand how an individual sustainably manages energy across daily work, non-work, and sleep experiences. In the face of long-term stress and limited opportunity for respite, endurance depends on avoiding accumulation of strain, as this leads to negative changes in mental and physical health, which affects future readiness to perform. Below, we discuss how this theoretical approach can be applied to support researchers and practitioners.

2.7.1 Research Implications

The concept of endurance has important implications for how researchers approach long-term performance in complex and uncertain work environments. We highlight two themes for future research.

2.7.1.1 Temporal Perspectives

The concept of endurance highlights the importance of understanding performance and functioning as it unfolds within individuals in their natural environment across short- and long-term timeframes (Klonek et al., 2019). In ideal circumstances, workers would be able to perform optimally daily, and also endure, however, these two situations are not synonymous. Factors that enable workers to perform in the short-term might have different implications for long-term endurance. For example, Grech et al. (2009) found that the relationship between workload and fatigue changed over consecutive days during a naval mission, such that at the beginning of the mission, low workload was associated with fatigue, however at the end, high workload was associated with fatigue. This is relevant to extreme work environments because demands such as workload are often variable and unpredictable across a mission. Additionally, there is currently limited understanding about how ongoing combinations of stressors (e.g., lack of sleep in combination with high workloads) impact workers over longer durations (i.e., over several months) in an operational environment. Future research would benefit from exploring relationships and implications over different timeframes, with attention paid to longer time windows (e.g., mission, deployment, assignment, or roster), as well as shorter-term fluctuations in dynamic states (Klonek et al., 2019).

One approach to advancing temporal research involves using intensive longitudinal data (ILD) to study within-person processes as they unfold over time (Hamaker & Wichers, 2017). New techniques to analysing ILD such as continuous-time dynamic modelling and dynamic structural equation modelling examine how a preceding state of the system (e.g., a person) gives rise to a subsequent state and interactions between variables (Driver & Voelkle, 2018; Hamaker et al., 2018). These techniques extend on conventional approaches (e.g., growth modelling) which typically focus on concurrent relationships between variables, rather than their dynamic interplay over time. For example, an interesting application of ILD is looking at inertia, or otherwise referred to as autoregressive effects. To date, inertia has typically been explored in the research of affect and is defined in this context as how much carry-over an emotion has from one moment to the next (Albers & Bringmann, 2020). This may be a valuable avenue for understanding endurance. Detecting a certain degree of inertia or change in inertia in indicators such as mood or fatigue, could provide insight into trajectories of endurance and how factors in a work-life system affect an individual's ability to regulate their state.

A related future direction is to extend the temporal frame over a job/career, i.e., endurance across multiple missions (the right-hand portion of Figure 2.1). While a detailed discussion of endurance over a job/career is beyond the scope of this paper, we propose this perspective involves exploring how even longer-term processes and work/rest patterns over multiple years impacts outcomes such as retention, career development, and long-term health. For example, how much time does an individual require following a mission to recover sufficiently before the next mission? Relevant factors include how strenuous the previous mission was, how intense the upcoming mission is predicted to be, and what work-life looks like in-between missions (Castro & Adler, 1999). Additionally, work-related factors such as enriched work design (e.g., work that involves challenge, feedback and high-level skill use) and fulfilling career pathways (e.g., opportunities for personal and professional development) can facilitate overall job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Parker, 2014).

2.7.1.2 Adopting a Holistic Work-life System Approach

Endurance emphasises a whole work-life system approach towards exploring human performance and functioning. Modern work is characterised by significant

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

blurring between work, non-work, and sleep due to factors like technological advances, work intensification, and the proliferation of a 24/7 society. Despite this, little research adopts an integrated approach towards work, non-work, and sleep (for an exception see Crain et al., 2018). Organisational research focuses on the work-nonwork interface, often neglecting sleep, despite its role in effective human functioning, worker safety, and performance (Crain et al., 2018). Future research could begin to adopt a more holistic approach by examining how work demands and respite activities affect functioning and performance throughout the whole work-life system.

For the purpose of brevity, we have focused on individual level endurance and the immediate work-life system in this paper, however, it is important to acknowledge that the individual sits within several systems, as depicted in the top left of Figure 2.1 (i.e., team and organisational context). Many factors across these systems have implications for endurance. For example, effective leadership in an extreme team may buffer stressors specific to work tasks and support a positive social climate that encourages effective teamwork under difficult circumstances (Zaccaro et al., 2009). Training is also another important element. Specialised stress training that focuses on contextual factors (e.g., organisational, environmental, and task demands) that are imposed upon the team may help counter the negative effects of extreme conditions on team performance (Driskell et al., 2008).

2.7.2 Applied Research to Inform Practical Interventions

In addition to theoretical directions, it is important to explore how endurance can be practically investigated and optimised in real-world settings, both for extreme contexts and conventional work environments. Following from our earlier discussion on endurance criteria in the design of work/rest schedules, we now concentrate on how researchers and practitioners can conduct applied research to inform these criteria and interventions.

Although some endurance criteria are straightforward to specify, for example, it is widely known that adults should obtain 8-hours of sleep for optimal performance, health, and wellbeing (Watson et al., 2015), this is not always the case. Often, organisations have limited insight into how individuals or teams work and live within an extreme environment, and/or there is limited existing research that

Chapter 2: Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

provides actionable recommendations. This is where applied research conducted in real-world settings is important, as it allows for the capture of the complex factors that shape performance in extreme environments, which in turn generates context-specific recommendations to organisations (Bell et al., 2018). For example, even in a laboratory study where work tasks can be closely simulated, it is not practicable to replicate accumulative mission-level effects such as long-term sleep deprivation and isolation from loved ones due to ethical and logistical constraints (among others). In the following, we briefly discuss some challenges and opportunities associated with applied research and offer an example from our research.

Applied research that examines individuals and teams in extreme environments is not without challenges. First, access is a major obstacle. Even where access to is possible, it is often limited, as research goals cannot interfere with operations (Driskell et al., 2018). Additionally, it is not uncommon to rely on self-directed measurement protocols in settings where researchers cannot be present due to limited space and/or dangerous conditions (e.g., submarines, war zones). This raises questions as to how researchers can design measurement protocols that are robust, yet simple and flexible for minimal participant burden.

There are several ways researchers can tackle the challenges of field research. One promising avenue is wearable sensor technologies (Ganster et al., 2018). An increasing number of wearable devices are now equipped with sensors that allow for continuous measurement of the environmental context (e.g., audio/video streams) and physiological indicators (e.g., stress and health via heart rate variability). Second, where traditional experience sampling methodologies are too burdensome in a high-risk operational setting, researchers should consider using single-item measures (Fisher et al., 2016). Although multiple-item measures are traditionally preferred, single-item measures done systematically using validated items may increase response rates and minimise respondent burden (Fisher et al., 2016). This is pertinent if the intent is to capture dynamic fluctuations over time which requires high-frequency assessments (e.g., several times a day) (Kozlowski & Chao, 2018). Lastly, a useful complementary method is to draw on qualitatively rich sources of data such as case studies and focus groups studies. This can be a useful step in understanding the context, before diving into the often expensive and ‘one-shot’ opportunity to collect field data. For further discussions on conducting applied

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

research in dynamic and complex contexts, we refer readers to Kerrissey et al. (2020) and Bell et al. (2018).

Our research team has utilised several of the above-mentioned methods (among others) as part of a large-scale research program which aims to inform and optimise submariner endurance within a future submarine platform design, intended to replace an existing fleet of submarines in the next several decades (See Boeing et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2021). Existing literature offers limited guidance, with submariners facing several relatively unique operational constraints, such as tight limits on crew sizes, confined and isolated spaces (Brasher et al., 2010), and limited exposure to sunlight which has uncertain impacts on circadian processes (Bass & Lazar, 2016). Therefore, to develop appropriate endurance criteria to guide organisational interventions in a submarine context, it was critical to gather field data representative of the challenges inherent in a submarine work-life system.

As an initial step prior to collecting field data, the research team conducted qualitative research, which included desktop research (e.g., existing case studies/reports) and focus groups with submariners to understand the key features and constraints of the context. This data informed the development of a measurement protocol suited for ILD collection during live submarine operations, which consisted of wearable devices (i.e., actigraphy), daily diary surveys, and work/rest event logs, all of which enabled measurements at varying resolutions (e.g., minute-to-minute sleep/wake data to twice daily workload ratings) (see Wilson et al., 2021). A subset of the data including sleep/wake times, subjective fatigue and workload measurements was analysed with the Fatigue Impairment Predictions Suite (FIPS) (Wilson et al., 2020), which is an open-source framework that allows organisations, practitioners, and researchers to implement biomathematical models of fatigue (BMMs). BMMs are a family of dynamic phenomenological models that predict the neurobehavioural outcomes of fatigue (e.g., sleepiness, performance impairment) based on sleep/wake history (Dawson et al., 2017). Using this modelling tool, we compared hour-to-hour changes in submariner fatigue across different work/rest schedules. Drawing on these submarine-specific insights, as well as the multidisciplinary literature presented herein, we developed a comprehensive set of criteria for submariner endurance. These criteria have since been used to evaluate

and inform staffing requirements for the future submarine platform, as well as develop recommendations for how technical components such as automation capability and platform habitability (e.g., bunking spaces, leisure spaces) should be designed to support endurance (see Boeing et al., 2020).

2.8 Conclusion

The concept of endurance provides insight on how individuals withstand variable and unpredictable stressors while sustaining performance and readiness over a long duration mission. Endurance focuses on dynamic changes in an individual's capacity to perform as they interact with their work-life system over short- and long-term timeframes. Given the changing nature of work, which is characterised by increased uncertainty and complexity due to advanced technology, we hope that the endurance concept will facilitate momentum in adopting an integrated approach towards understanding human performance and long-term wellbeing in not only extreme work environments, but also increasingly demanding conventional work environments.

2.9 Appendix 2A

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3 INVESTIGATING THE JOINT EFFECTS OF OVERLOAD AND UNDERLOAD ON CHRONIC FATIGUE AND WELLBEING

3.1 Foreword

In Chapter 2, I developed a theoretical framework of endurance, in which a key component was the work-life system (i.e., the work, non-work, and sleep elements a worker engages in daily). A first critical step in understanding the specific work-life system factors that impact endurance is to consider the work tasks that individuals must perform. I argue this is because optimal work performance is critical not only to mission goals, but also a fundamental requirement for safe living in extreme contexts (e.g., Flynn-Evans et al., 2016; Larson et al., 2019; Sandal et al., 2006). In Chapter 3, I aim to advance knowledge on the work factors that impact endurance by clarifying how work overload and underload relate to long-term endurance indicators (i.e., chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing) in the real-world extreme setting of long-haul shipping. Long-haul seafarers, like most workers in safety critical and 24-hour operating environments, face sustained exposure to dynamic work demands that range from long periods of monotony and boredom to sudden periods of intense time pressure (Andrei et al., 2019). However, the combination of overload and underload, is not well understood, with one reason being that there is limited research on work situations involving underload in the first place (Bowling et al., 2005; Young et al., 2015). In this chapter, I present an empirical investigation into how overload and underload relate to seafarer chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing when experienced separately, as well as in combination.

This chapter is presented as a journal article manuscript. A version of this manuscript was published in *Work and Stress*. See Appendix 3A for a copy of the copyright transfer agreement. Note that I use the term ‘we’ throughout this chapter to refer to the collective contributions of the manuscript co-authors.

Cham, B. S., Andrei, D. M., Griffin, M. A., Grech, M., & Neal A. (In Press). Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing. *Work and Stress*.

3.2 Abstract

Workers in safety critical and 24-hour operating environments face sustained exposure to many stressful situations, ranging from long periods of monotony and boredom, to sudden periods of intense time pressure. This study examines how the combination of overload and underload contributes to fatigue and wellbeing in 943 seafarers. Using latent moderated structural equation modelling, we found that underload showed a stronger association with chronic fatigue and impaired wellbeing, compared to overload. An interaction between overload and underload was also significantly related to psychological wellbeing, with increasing levels of overload weakening the negative relationship between underload and psychological wellbeing. Our research highlights that underload, despite previously not receiving much attention, is an important area of concern. Our findings also underscore the importance of unpacking the joint effects of concurrent job demands, and to consider how certain job demands may help to reduce the negative effects caused by other demands. Where current and future jobs may be subject to a reduction in demands (e.g., automation), it is important to consider how underload may impact worker fatigue and wellbeing.

3.3 Introduction

Fatigue is a serious issue in safety critical and high-performance industries that involve 24-hour operations, such as manufacturing, security, transport, health, and defence (Banks et al., 2019). In these settings, shift work and extended work hours over a sustained period of time can lead to chronic fatigue, which in turn, is associated with serious consequences such as impaired performance, physical and mental ill-health, and accidents (van Dijk & Swaen, 2003).

To mitigate or reduce chronic fatigue in increasingly complex and dynamic working environments, it is important to understand how the combination of overload (i.e., work with too many demands) and underload (i.e., work with too few demands) contributes to fatigue. For example, increasing use of automation in the mining industry will expose workers to both overload and underload (Rogers et al., 2019). Where a team of individuals once manually drove haul trucks at a mine site, now a single individual will monitor several autonomous haul trucks 1500 km away in a remote-control operation centre. In this scenario, underload is caused by passive work such as monitoring of digital screens and leads to consequences such as errors and lapses (Young & Stanton, 2002), and negative physical health (Melamed et al., 1995). However, workers facing underload are also likely to face overload, for instance, they will be passively monitoring the system until they are confronted by a critical event and demands rapidly increase.

Despite the likely increase in roles that involve both overload and underload, limited research examines how their combination is related to fatigue. Previous literature has tended to focus on overload (Bowling et al., 2015), while less attention has been given to underload (Andrei et al., 2020). This is surprising, as underload has been identified as a key risk for many jobs that involve monitoring tasks and automated activities (Young & Stanton, 2002). Although there is growing awareness of the importance of examining combinations of job demands (e.g., unique and joint effects) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), with very few exceptions (see Jimmieson et al., 2017; van Woerkom et al., 2016), this perspective remains overlooked in the literature.

The current study aims to disentangle the unique and interactive effects of overload and underload by extending the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

(Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) and integrating the motivational control theory of fatigue (Hockey, 2011) to specify how overload and underload should operate in tandem. Motivational control theory assumes that fatigue is not caused by high demands per se, but rather the continued investment of high effort to meet demands that are unrewarding. We conduct our study in the maritime industry with seafarers, where both overload (e.g., frequent berthing, loading, and unloading of ships associated with hectic activity and high time pressure) and underload (e.g., watchkeeping activities involving monitoring the open ocean horizon and bridge and/or engine room equipment monitoring tasks) have been identified as important demands (Andrei et al., 2020). Next, we review past research on job demands, highlighting the existing literature's focus on overload and relative neglect of underload. We then integrate motivational control theory to specify how overload and underload might operate together within a job and affect outcomes.

3.3.1 Theoretical Background

For this study, we build on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) to generate a better understanding on how different types of demands such as overload and underload combine to impact on fatigue related outcomes. The JD-R model proposes that job characteristics can be classified either as job demands or job resources. Job demands (e.g., time pressure, emotional demands) refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of a job that require effort and are associated with costs such as burnout (a form of chronic fatigue), and ill-health (Alarcon, 2011). In contrast, job resources (e.g., autonomy, social support) are aspects of a job that mitigate the negative effect of job demands on exhaustion and support psychological needs.

To date, JD-R research has investigated combinations of job demands and resources, with many studies demonstrating interactions between the two constructs contributing to work outcomes (e.g., Bakker et al., 2005; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In comparison, less attention has been paid to how combinations of demands affect outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This is surprising, given early arguments that in order for stress research to have external validity, it must deal with combinations of stressors, and distinguish between their effects as single stressors and in combinations, where those combinations are commonly encountered in work (Kahn & Byosiére, 1992). As the JD-R model is one of the leading models for

investigating job stress (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014), and has been used to inform work design interventions and psychosocial risk policies on an organisational, regulator, and government level (e.g., Parker & Jorritsma, 2020), it is timely to expand on the model to consider the unique and combined effects of multiple demands. For this study, we focus on the demands of overload and underload.

3.3.1.1 Overload, Underload, and their Interaction

Overload is a function of high workload and/or high time pressure and describes a situation in which workers have too many demands (Perrewe & Ganster, 1989). The effects of overload are well documented, with meta-analyses demonstrating the negative implications that overload has for worker performance, and psychological and physical wellbeing (Bowling et al., 2015; Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991). Overload has been linked with various forms of fatigue, including chronic fatigue and burnout (Leone et al., 2011) and has been identified as a primary work stressor across many occupations and countries (Glazer & Beehr, 2005).

In contrast to overload, underload has received little attention in the work psychology literature (Fisher, 1993), despite becoming more and more relevant to many current jobs in high risk and 24-hour operation industries, as well as jobs in which technology and automation can reduce demands. Underload is characterised by tasks that require ongoing attention yet provide little stimulation in return, such as inspection tasks and monitoring for infrequent events (Young et al., 2015). Early research by Karasek (1979) argued that these forms of ‘passive work’ combined the experience of low demands with low decision latitude. Contexts where underload has been raised as an issue include long-distance driving (Hancock & Parasuraman, 1992), airport baggage inspection (Hancock & Hart, 2002), and medical monitoring (Weinger, 1990).

Although less is known about underload compared to overload, evidence suggests that underload is associated with negative outcomes. For example, using driving simulators, researchers have found that performance in automated conditions is consistently inferior to manual conditions, and this was attributed to a reduction in external task demands and lowered task engagement (Saxby et al., 2013). From a longer-term perspective, underload may lead to a gradual unlearning and atrophy of

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

skills (Karasek & Theorell, 1990), which presents risks for performance and safety in operational contexts. In terms of health, looking at jobs involving monitoring of automated technical processes, watchkeeping, sorting, and guarding tasks, Melamed et al. (1995) found that underload was associated with higher chronic heart disease risk factors. Lastly, recent evidence has found that vigilance demands, a construct closely related to underload, are more strongly related to chronic fatigue than overload (Andrei et al., 2020).

Research that systematically explores combinations of job demands is relatively limited (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Studies have either tended to group several demands into a composite index so that their independent effects cannot be isolated (e.g., Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), or where independent effects are examined, possible interactions are not explored (e.g., Andrei et al., 2020). Noting this limitation in the JD-R literature, Bakker and Demerouti (2017) suggested that future research should consider the potential stress-exacerbating effects that certain combinations of demands might show. The present study responds to this call by investigating the independent and interactive effects of overload and underload.

When the outcomes of overload and underload are considered together, it becomes apparent that both demands are not readily explained by the assumptions that typically apply to job demands, as the JD-R model assumes that an increase in job demands requires additional compensatory effort, which drains a worker's energetic resources, resulting in fatigue (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Such a mechanism does not readily explain the impact of underload, where workers experience fewer demands but still report negative consequences.

To provide a theoretical lens for investigating the joint effects of overload and underload, we extend the JD-R model by drawing on motivation-based approaches which explain fatigue by changes in motivation, attention, and goal-directed effort, as opposed to energy depletion (Hockey, 2011). According to Hockey's (2011) motivational control theory, fatigue is an adaptive motivational control mechanism that prevents fixation on unrewarding activities. For example, as people expend effort on "have-to" tasks (e.g., work tasks), increased feelings of fatigue prompt a cost-benefit analysis. This results in people either continuing to sustain efforts on the current task because they expect particular rewards or fear negative consequences of not continuing, or redirecting their effort and attention

elsewhere towards “want-to” tasks with less costs and more benefits. We use this motivational perspective, where fatigue is not a consequence of demands per se, but rather of sustained effort to maintain goals that are under threat from environmental/task factors or competing motivational tendencies to develop the hypotheses for the present study.

3.3.2 The Present Study

In the present study we examine how the combination of overload and underload in a job impacts fatigue related outcomes. We consider the unique and joint effects of overload and underload on chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing. In addition to chronic fatigue, we also examine how the demands impact psychological wellbeing because the “depressive element” of chronic fatigue, should impact longer-term psychological wellbeing (Winwood et al., 2005, p. 597).

In line with previous research that has found links between elements of overload (i.e., time pressure) and fatigue (e.g., Andrei et al., 2020; Grech et al., 2009), we expect overload to be related to higher fatigue and lower wellbeing in our sample. Overload occurs when individuals feel pressured by excessive workloads, difficult deadlines, and a general inability to meet goals and expectations in the time available (Perrewe & Ganster, 1989). When goals cannot be attained with a reasonable level of effort, motivational control theory suggests people will be increasingly reluctant to continue engaging in these goals, and other inherently enjoyable and easier pursuits (e.g., rest) will become increasingly attractive. Consequently, the sustained effort and self-control required to maintain the “have to” goal (e.g., facing and responding to overload) and resist alternative “want to” goals, results in feelings of fatigue. Consistent with these arguments, there is evidence that overload may be associated with shifts in goal-directed attention, for example, workers who experience overload also tend to withdraw or disengage from their work (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991). Hence, we hypothesise that:

H1a: Overload positively predicts chronic fatigue

H1b: Overload negatively predicts psychological wellbeing

Underload has been proposed to be an unrewarding and even aversive experience, associated with feelings of boredom, dissatisfaction, and frustration

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

(Karasek, 1979). For example, Ainslie (2013) argues that monotonous tasks are even less rewarding than sitting idle and doing nothing at all, because even in idleness individuals can generate their own rewards and stimulation (e.g., daydreaming), whereas boring and monotonous tasks are characterised by a “structured attention that restricts it” (p. 679). In line with this notion, research has found that boring tasks are associated with more frustration under situations of low versus high task autonomy (van Hooft & van Hooff, 2018). Indeed, underload in many work environments takes the form of monitoring/supervisory control tasks (e.g., sustained attention to detect infrequent signals), which are argued to have low levels of task autonomy (Karasek, 1979; Parker & Grote, 2020). Therefore, we can understand underload in terms of a continuous investment of effort in the face of low motivational value. In line with these arguments, we propose that:

H2a. Underload positively predicts chronic fatigue

H2b. Underload negatively predicts psychological wellbeing

Finally, we examine the combination of overload and underload. Previous research has found that high levels of multiple demands amplifies negative worker reactions (Jimmieson et al., 2017; van Woerkom et al., 2016). These findings are usually explained by Conservation of Resources Theory (CoR) (Hobfoll, 1989), which suggests that as workers expend energetic resources to deal with high levels of one demand, this lessens their ability to cope with high levels of other demands, thereby intensifying strain and fatigue. Under this resource-based assumption, we may not expect concurrently high levels of overload and underload to exacerbate fatigue, as underload involves the experience of few demands. However, under a motivational control approach where fatigue is not caused by the amount of demand in and of itself, but rather by sustained effort to maintain goals under threat from competing motivational tendencies, we might expect a different pattern of results. That is, because overload and underload both involve high effort investment in the face of competing goals, we expect concurrently high levels of overload and underload to be most detrimental for chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing.

H3a: A two-way interaction between overload and underload will be related to chronic fatigue. The interaction will show an accentuating effect, with higher

levels of overload and underload strengthening the positive relationship with chronic fatigue.

H3b: A two-way interaction between overload and underload will be related to psychological wellbeing. The interaction will show an accentuating effect, with higher levels of overload and underload strengthening the negative relationship with psychological wellbeing.

3.4 Method

3.4.1 Sample and Procedure

This study was conducted in a maritime context with seafarers operating on international commercial ships. Data was collected using a self-report survey that was distributed physically (90.3%) or electronically (9.7%). Paper and pen surveys were handed out by research assistants during regulator port inspections on ships, training sessions ashore, and at seafarer welfare centres. Third-party organisations (i.e., pilotage) also assisted data collection by distributing surveys to ships. In total, 1026 seafarers completed a questionnaire. The average seafarer age was 34.5 years ($SD = 10.64$). The sample was made up of 924 (90.1%) males, 20 females (1.9%), and 82 (8.0%) did not report their gender. Seafarers had an average tenure in the seafaring industry of 9.76 years ($SD = 8.77$).

3.4.2 Measures

All constructs investigated in this study were assessed via self-reports from participants. Alpha-Cronbach reliability for each measure is illustrated in Table 3.1. Unless otherwise specified, items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). Full measures are provided in Appendix 3b.

Overload was measured with three items from the 11-item “Pace and Amount of Work” subscale of the Questionnaire on the Experience and Evaluation of Work (Veldhoven & Meijman, 1994). These items assessed how frequently participants perceived they had too much work to do or had to work very quickly. Example item: I have to work very fast.

Underload was measured using a three-item adapted version of a measure for vigilance demands developed by Andrei et al., (2020). We adapted the scale to focus

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

more broadly on situations in which workers have fewer demands, as opposed to work involving vigilance tasks specifically. Example item: I do not have enough work to do.

Chronic fatigue was measured using the four-item chronic fatigue subscale of the Occupational Fatigue Exhaustion Recovery (OFER) measure (Winwood et al., 2005). The subscale measures the mental, physical, and emotional components of persistent fatigue (e.g., When working at sea, my job at sea takes all my energy from me). The wording of items was adapted to be suitable for shipboard work (e.g., we added an anchor to all items, “When working at sea...”). Responses were rated on a five-point rating scale (1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree).

Psychological wellbeing was measured using a six-item subset of the 14-item Mental Health Continuum Short Form (Lamers et al., 2011). Participants were asked to rate how often over the past month they felt/perceived a range of emotions and thoughts (e.g., that you felt good about yourself).

3.4.3 Statistical Analyses

To test our hypotheses, we conducted structural equation modelling using Mplus version 8.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). We used a two-step procedure for estimating latent moderated structural equations (LMS) which accounts for issues of construct validity and measurement reliability, thereby improving the accuracy of detecting interaction effects, compared to traditional approaches (Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000). Models were estimated with the XWITH command, using full information maximum likelihood with robust standard errors. As per Mplus defaults, latent variables were scaled by fixing the loading of the first item to 1.0. For each hypothesised interaction effect, we first assessed the fit of the measurement model and then conducted a log-likelihood ratio test comparing the loglikelihood values of a main-effects model (no interaction term) with Model 1 (the model with the interaction term).

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3.1 presents the means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and Alpha-Cronbach scale reliabilities for all the variables included in the study.

Table 3.1. Means, standard deviations, Alpha-Cronbach reliabilities, and bivariate correlations among study variables (after listwise deletion, N = 887)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Overload	3.00	0.86	(.80)			
2. Underload	2.34	0.81	.27**	(.65)		
3. Chronic Fatigue	2.36	1.02	.30**	.44**	(.88)	
4. Psychological Wellbeing	4.26	0.62	-.09*	-.24**	-.28**	(.91)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

3.5.2 Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the construct validity of our study variables. In the CFA we included the four study variables: overload (3 items), underload (3 items), chronic fatigue (4 items), and psychological wellbeing (6 items). This four-factor model showed adequate fit to the data: $\chi^2(98) = 354.25$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .05, (95% CI = .05 - .06), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .96, Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .03. All indicators loaded significantly onto their intended latent factor (all factor loadings $>.25$; $p < .001$).

3.5.3 Latent Interaction Effects Between Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue

The main effects model fit the data well: $\chi^2(32) = 127.21$, RMSEA = .06 (95% CI = .05 - .07), CFI = .96, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = .95. Both overload and underload positively predicted chronic fatigue ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < .001$, and $\beta = 0.51$, $p < .001$, respectively) (*Hypothesis 1a* and *2a* supported). The model explained 34.7% of variance in chronic fatigue. Testing for improvement of model fit, log-likelihood ratio tests yielded a loglikelihood difference value of $D = 0.08$ ($p > .05$), indicating that Model 1 was not a better data approximation, relative to the main effects model. As shown in Table 3.2, the underload \times overload interaction effect was not significant ($\beta = -0.01$, $SE = .03$, $p > .05$) (*Hypothesis 3a* not supported).

3.5.4 Latent Interaction Effects Between Overload and Underload

on Psychological Wellbeing

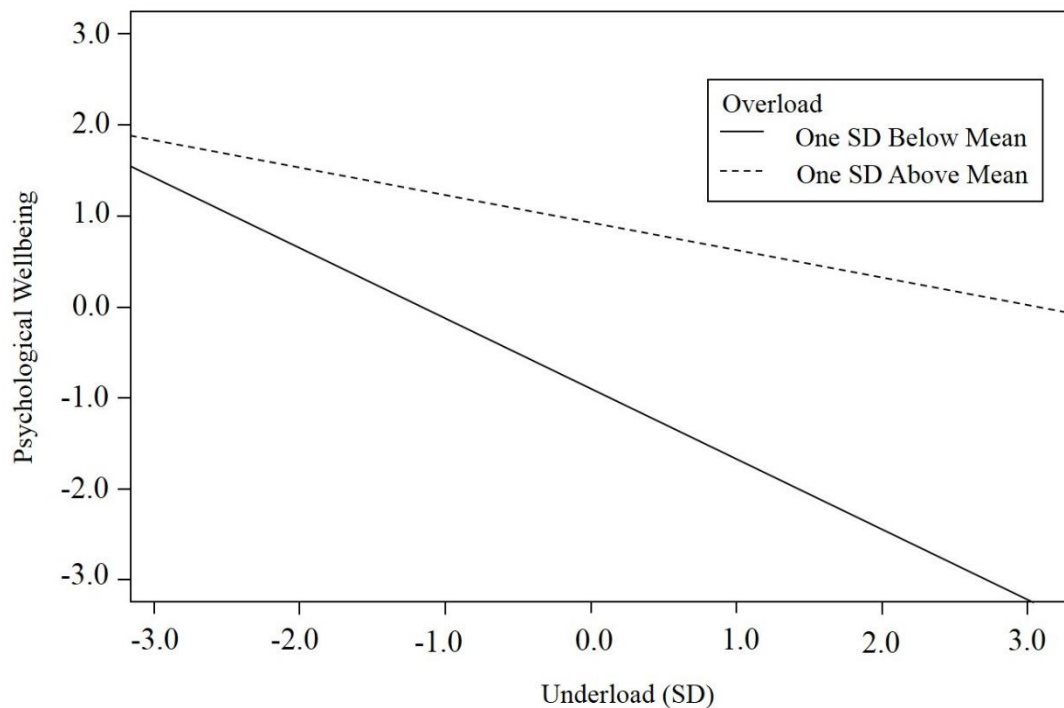
The main effects model fit the data well: $\chi^2 (51) = 176.49$, RMSEA = .05 (95% CI= .04-.06), CFI = .97, TLI = .96. Results showed that overload did not significantly predict psychological wellbeing ($\beta = 0.02$, $p > .05$) (*Hypothesis 1b* not supported), while underload negatively predicted psychological wellbeing ($\beta = -0.35$, $p < .001$) (*Hypothesis 2b* supported). The model explained 12.00% of variance in psychological wellbeing. Testing for improvement of model fit, log-likelihood ratio tests yielded a loglikelihood difference value of $D = 14.99$ ($p < .001$), confirming a significantly better data approximation for Model 1 relative to the main effects model. As shown in Table 3.2, the underload \times overload interaction effect was significant ($\beta = 0.13$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$). The interaction effect explained an additional 3.60% of variance in psychological wellbeing. To further analyse the specific form, we plotted the interaction by inserting high (1 *SD* above the mean) and low (1 *SD* below the mean) values for overload (see Figure 3.1). The interaction while significant, was in an unexpected direction in that the negative relation between underload and psychological wellbeing became weaker as overload increased (*Hypothesis 3b* not supported).

Table 3.2. Results of Latent Moderated Structural Equation Modelling

Predictor	DV = Chronic Fatigue		DV = Psychological Wellbeing	
	β	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>SE</i>
Overload	0.16***	0.05	0.05	0.05
Underload	0.51***	0.05	-0.38***	0.04
Underload x Overload	-0.01	0.03	0.13***	0.03
Main effects model: R^2		.35***		.12***
Model 1: R^2		.35***		.15***
ΔR^2		0.00%		3.60%

N = 943, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Figure 3.1. Plot of the two-way interaction of underload and overload on psychological wellbeing.



3.6 Discussion

Our research adds to the job demands literature by investigating how overload and underload relate to chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing, separately as well as in combination. This is an important contribution to job demands research which has been criticised for not exploring the effects of combinations of job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Overload and underload are seldom explored concurrently in the same context, despite both being suggested as risks factors for worker fatigue (Andrei et al., 2020). By revealing some of the complex interactions between demands, we answer the call for improving the understanding of how constellations of working conditions affect worker outcomes.

Overall, our findings illustrate that overload and underload play important roles in affecting chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing. In terms of main effects, higher frequencies of underload in a seafarer's job predicted higher levels of chronic fatigue, as well as lower psychological wellbeing. Overload however, only predicted chronic fatigue and not psychological wellbeing in our models. Our results are not only in line with previous research suggesting that both demands present risks for worker fatigue (e.g., Grech et al., 2009), but also extend by demonstrating

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

different relationships with outcomes. Although not hypothesised, we found that underload showed a stronger association to chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing, compared to overload. Similar effects were also observed in a recent study looking at another group of seafarers (Andrei et al., 2020). This is notable for two reasons.

First, our findings partially contradict typical JD-R assumptions that high job demands lead to fatigue. However, according to motivational control theory (Hockey, 2011), these findings may be explained by the notion that boredom and monotony associated with underload produces a greater shift in attention and motivation (i.e., unwillingness to exert further effort), compared to the pressure and stress of overload. Indeed, some researchers have posited that exertion of effort in response to demands may generate opportunities for internal rewards such as the subjective experience of self-efficacy and competence or inherent interest/enjoyment in a task itself (Charney, 2013). This finding also supports early research that has found ‘passive work’ with lower demands is associated with greater dissatisfaction than work with higher demands (Karasek, 1979). This may also explain why we did not find a significant association between overload and psychological wellbeing, suggesting overload is not a straightforward construct and has a more ambivalent nature compared to underload. However, as we did not directly assess any motivational mechanisms (e.g., attention, intrinsic motivation) we can only infer that a motivational process accounts for the effects of overload and underload. More research is needed to better understand and test these assumptions.

Second, our results support arguments that the consequences of underload are at least as serious as those of overload (Hancock & Parasuraman, 1992). As underload has been overlooked by the job demands research and is projected to increase across various industries due to automation (Cummings et al., 2016), a better understanding of the consequences and mechanisms associated with it is needed.

In terms of interaction effects, although we found a significant interaction on psychological wellbeing, it was in an unexpected direction. We hypothesised that high levels of overload and underload should accentuate negative outcomes, however our results show that higher overload had a compensating effect on the negative relationship between underload and psychological wellbeing. In other words, we

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

found that work characterised by frequent periods of low demands and boredom, with few periods of high demands and time pressure, was most harmful to wellbeing. This is an intriguing finding because it suggests that while certain demands might be experienced as fatiguing and stressful in isolation, when experienced in combination with another demand it may instead have a buffering effect. The direction of the interaction is not counterintuitive when considering that our results revealed overload had a weaker and more inconsistent relationship with negative outcomes compared to underload. One possibility is that underload may be such a universally aversive experience that having moments of high intensity (i.e., overload) interspersed throughout work to increase engagement and stimulation is preferable to sustained underload. This explanation fits with motivational control theory (Hockey, 2011), and recent experimental research that has found participants in conditions of active effort tend to rate their tasks as less fatiguing, more rewarding, and more interesting when compared to participants in a boredom condition (Milyavskaya et al., 2019).

However, it is important to consider the role of the occupational context for this significant interaction. Seafarers are exposed to unique psychosocial stressors for extended periods of time (e.g., up to several months), for instance, separation from family, limited options for recreational activities, and environmental stress (e.g., noise and vibration) (Andrei et al., 2020; Grech et al., 2009). As such, we can expect seafarers to prefer high demands interjected into conditions of boredom and monotony to ‘make time go faster’ at sea, as indicated by evidence that long ship tours result in feelings of restlessness and irritation (Turgo, 2020). Future research should examine if this effect generalises to other occupational contexts.

We note that no significant interaction was observed for the outcome of chronic fatigue. This may be because we did not exhaustively consider other characteristics of the working environment such as resources and environmental constraints. For example, although we focus solely on interactions between demands in this study, it is still important to recognise the role of resources such as social support which have been found to buffer the negative effect of demands on fatigue and other outcomes (Andrei et al., 2020). Furthermore, the nature of seafarers’ working environment means there are several other factors that can affect fatigue, such as the watchkeeping schedules, sleep quality, or available leisure activities.

Future research should attempt to capture a more complex picture of the nature of work, accounting for how particular resources and/or environmental constraints may affect interactions between job demands.

3.6.1 Limitations and Future Research

We highlight several potential limitations. First, this study's cross-sectional design limits insights regarding the direction of causation. This is important because some theory suggests the relationship between demands and fatigue is reciprocal, with changes in fatigue producing changes in perceived demands (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Despite this limitation, this study provides important initial evidence for underload as a demand that is deserving of more attention. Future research should disentangle issues of causality by measuring specific demands and worker reactions on multiple occasions across a workday (i.e., experience sampling).

Second, our use of self-report measures might pose issues for common method variance (CMV). To address this, we conducted tests recommended by Podsakoff et al., (2003), and the results suggest CMV is not likely to be a serious problem in this study. It is also unlikely that our results are an artefact of CMV, as CMV cannot create an artificial interaction effect, but rather deflates the magnitude of true interaction effects (Siemsen et al., 2010).

Third, our measure of underload could have been improved as the coefficient alpha (.65) was barely acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). The low reliability suggests underload is more difficult to measure than other demands (i.e., overload), and this is corroborated by previous research that argues underload is more difficult to detect than overload because the underlying mechanisms are not as well understood (Young et al., 2015). We encourage future research to address this issue through further development in the theory and measurement of underload.

Lastly, seafarers in our study reported relatively high levels of psychological wellbeing ($M = 4.26$). However, psychological wellbeing showed expected relationships with other variables in the study, e.g., higher levels of overload, underload, and chronic fatigue were associated with lower psychological wellbeing. As such, range restriction would likely have resulted in an underestimation, rather than overestimation of the true associations between job demands and psychological wellbeing.

3.6.2 Practical Implications and Conclusion

The current study provides a systematic evaluation of the independent and interactive relationships between overload and underload, and chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing. Although overload and underload had deleterious effects individually, this pattern changed when the joint effects were considered. With the nature of work becoming increasingly complex and dynamic, the results of the present study might present two important practical implications for reducing risks associated with chronic fatigue.

First, our study indicates that reducing demands (e.g., automating tasks and processes) to increase efficiency may present risks to performance, safety, and wellbeing if it leads to increased underload. Therefore, organisations will have to either manage the negative implications of underload, (e.g., implementing shorter shift periods, more breaks or task rotation) or prevent them by paying attention to the early design stage of new technologies and work systems so that technology is designed for optimal human and machine performance. Second, since we show that a combination of multiple demands has unique consequences for workers, any possible intervention should consider the joint effects of these demands (Jimmieson et al., 2017), as an attempt to reduce only one of the demands may be ineffective or even detrimental.

Chapter 3: Investigating the Joint Effects of Overload and Underload on Chronic Fatigue and Wellbeing

3.7 Appendix 3A



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GOVERNING LAW

6. This agreement (and any dispute, proceeding, claim or controversy in relation to it) is subject to English law and the parties hereby submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of England and Wales.

3.8 Appendix 3B

Overload

Thinking about your own job, how often do the following situations occur?

(1 = Never, 5 = Always)

1. I have to work very fast
2. I have too much work to do
3. I have to hurry to get things done

Underload

Thinking about your own job, how often do the following situations occur?

(1 = Never, 5 = Always)

1. I do not have enough work to do
2. I find the work boring and monotonous
3. Time passes slowly

Chronic fatigue

When working at sea...

(1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree).

1. I often fear waking up to another day onboard
2. I often wonder how long I can keep working at sea
3. I feel I don't get to do anything else in my life besides work
4. My job at sea takes all my energy from me

Psychological wellbeing

Over the past MONTH, how often have you felt the following:

(1 = Never, 5 = Always)

1. That you felt good about yourself
2. That you were dealing with your responsibilities or problems well
3. That you had good relationships with other people
4. That you were interested in learning new things and improving yourself
5. Confident to think or communicate your own ideas and opinions
6. That you live a good and meaningful life

4 INVESTIGATING THE DYNAMICS OF OVERLOAD AND UNDERLOAD IN SUBMARINE OPERATIONS

1 **4.1 Foreword**

2 In Chapter 3, I progressed an understanding of how work demands impact
3 endurance by conducting an initial investigation looking at the impacts of overload
4 and underload on chronic fatigue on seafarers in the long-haul shipping industry. A
5 key finding was that underload and overload both have implications for longer-term
6 endurance outcomes (i.e., chronic fatigue and psychological wellbeing), with
7 underload having more a detrimental impact than overload. However, a limitation of
8 the study reported in Chapter 3 was the cross-sectional design which only allowed
9 for an understanding of average levels of overload and underload (i.e., between
10 subjects). As proposed by the endurance framework in Chapter 2, a better
11 understanding of endurance can be achieved by taking a within-persons approach
12 that accounts for time variation and captures how psychological states, behaviours,
13 and the environment change over short- and long-term timeframes (McCormick et
14 al., 2020).

15 Therefore, Chapter 4 will adopt a within-persons approach to investigate the
16 dynamic relationships between overload, underload, and worker fatigue. Using
17 longitudinal data collected in a submarine environment, I examine how overload and
18 underload relate to short-term fluctuations in acute fatigue, as well as longer-term
19 changes in chronic fatigue. Submarine operations provide an ideal context to
20 investigate these short- and long-term dynamics because submariners are not only
21 required to perform to high standards during daily shifts, but they must endure
22 chronic exposure to work demands with limited respite across the extended duration
23 of a mission (i.e., up to several weeks at a time) (Brasher et al., 2010; Moffitt, 2008).

24 This chapter is presented as a journal article manuscript. A version of this
25 manuscript is being prepared for the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. Note that I
26 use the term ‘we’ throughout this chapter to refer to the collective contributions of the
27 manuscript co-authors.

28

29 **4.2 Introduction**

30 Fatigue is a ubiquitous issue across many occupational contexts. However, it
31 is a particularly critical issue in extreme and high-risk work environments that
32 feature long working hours, 24-hour operations and/or shift work, such as defence,
33 maritime, health and transportation (Banks et al., 2019). While workers in these
34 environments must endure and maintain optimal performance over long periods for
35 safety reasons, fatigue can be caused by a number of factors such as excessive work
36 demands (e.g., Grech et al., 2009), a lack of inter-shift recovery (e.g., Andrei et al.,
37 2020), and inadequate sleep (e.g., Shattuck et al., 2011). The consequences of fatigue
38 include impaired task performance (Gillberg et al., 1996), increased errors and
39 accidents (Dinges, 1995; Folkard & Lombardi, 2006), and impaired worker health
40 and well-being (Cappuccio et al., 2011). As indicated in Chapter 2, fatigue is a key
41 indicator of endurance, therefore an understanding of the predictors of fatigue in
42 these work contexts is an important area of research.

43 In this study, we focus on work-related predictors of fatigue in high-risk and
44 extreme work contexts. Specifically, we examine how overload (i.e., work with too
45 many demands) and underload (i.e., work with too few demands) contribute to
46 different forms of fatigue in submarine operations. The forms of fatigue we examine
47 are acute fatigue, which can be defined as short-lived feelings of fatigue (i.e., state
48 fatigue) and emotional reactions (i.e., state affect) after a day of hard work (Zohar,
49 2003), and chronic fatigue, which is an enduring form of exhaustion (i.e., burnout)
50 (Bakker et al., 2014). The submarine context is well suited for the purpose of this
51 study because submariners are subject to variable and unpredictable levels of
52 overload and underload. For example, it is not uncommon for submariners to
53 experience long periods of monotonous or boring work, interspersed with all-out
54 response efforts that involve high time pressure (Gupta et al., 2019). Moreover, the
55 nature of submarine operations allows for investigation of both acute and chronic
56 fatigue because workers are not only required to perform to high standards during
57 daily shifts, but they must endure chronic exposure to work demands with limited
58 respite across the extended duration of a mission (i.e., up to several weeks at a time)
59 (Moffitt, 2008). Based on earlier arguments established in Chapter 2, efforts to
60 optimise daily performance and long-term endurance in demanding contexts such as
61 submarine operations will benefit from an understanding of how fatigue is shaped by

62 demands experienced during a single work shift, as well as sustained exposure to
63 demands across an extended period such as a mission.

64 This study makes several contributions to the literature. First, we build on the
65 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) literature by
66 concentrating on both overload and underload as causes of fatigue. The extant
67 literature has tended to focus on overload and much less attention has been paid to
68 how having too few demands might shape outcomes (Andrei et al., 2020; Bowling et
69 al., 2015). Understanding how both demands contribute to fatigue is important
70 because changing aspects of modern work will likely see increased levels of overload
71 and underload for many jobs. For example, where automated technologies are being
72 adopted (e.g., remote control operations), human work will involve long periods of
73 monotony due to passive monitoring, as well as sudden periods of high intensity
74 when emergencies occur and human intervention is required (Wickens & Huey,
75 1993; Young & Stanton, 2002).

76 Second, by examining how overload and underload relate to both chronic and
77 acute forms of fatigue, this study addresses recent calls to examine the
78 multidimensional nature of fatigue (Andrei et al., 2020; Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006).
79 Previous research has proposed that workers can have acute fatigue, chronic fatigue,
80 or both (Sagherian & Geiger Brown, 2016). While acute fatigue arising from daily
81 work activities is short-lived and can be ameliorated relatively quickly, if workers are
82 continually exposed to demands and do not recovery sufficiently between work
83 shifts, this can develop into an enduring syndrome of chronic fatigue which is not
84 easily reversible and renders workers vulnerable to future demands and stressors
85 (Craig & Cooper, 1992; Geurts & Sonnentag, 2006; Leone et al., 2008).

86 Third, we answer calls to take a longitudinal approach to investigating the
87 link between job demands and employee strain (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).
88 Specifically, we utilise two longitudinal approaches (a panel design and an
89 experience sampling design) to examine the links between demands and chronic and
90 acute forms fatigue, respectively. The experience sampling portion of this study in
91 particular addresses recent calls to unpack microprocesses within the JD-R
92 framework (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener et al., 2019), by examining causal

93 and reciprocal mechanisms between overload, underload, and acute fatigue on a day-
94 to-day basis.

95 In the next sections, we provide a brief overview of past research on work
96 demands and fatigue. We then highlight the need to consider the impacts of overload
97 and underload on fatigue in extreme operational work environments such as
98 submarine operations. Following this, we outline the two analytical components of
99 this study that explore (1) changes in chronic fatigue over a submarine operation, and
100 (2) dynamics in acute fatigue on a day-to-day basis.

101 **4.2.1 Theoretical Development**

102 One of the main theoretical approaches on work-related predictors of strain
103 and fatigue is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti,
104 2014). The JD-R model proposes that job characteristics can be classified in terms of
105 being *demands* or *resources*. Demands are the job characteristics that require
106 sustained physical or mental effort (e.g., time pressure, emotional demands) and are
107 therefore associated with physiological and psychological costs. By contrast, job
108 resources (e.g., autonomy, skill variety) are the job characteristics that support work
109 goal achievement, reduce costs associated with demands, or stimulate personal
110 growth, learning, and development. The JD-R model proposes that demands and
111 resources operate on human functioning via two independent processes: a health
112 impairment process and a motivational process, respectively. The present study is
113 interested in the relationship between demands and fatigue, and therefore focuses on
114 the health impairment process, and not the motivational process.

115 The health impairment process specifies that high work demands exhaust
116 employees' mental and physical resources, leading to energy depletion (Demerouti,
117 Bakker, Nachreiner, et al., 2001). When demands are high, compensatory effort must
118 be recruited to accomplish work goals and prevent decreasing performance (Hockey,
119 1997). However, greater compensatory effort necessitates an increase in
120 physiological and psychological costs for the individual (e.g., fatigue and irritability
121 after a working period). If workers are unable to recover their energy sufficiently
122 before the next working period, they will be in a suboptimal condition to perform and
123 will again need to invest compensatory effort to perform adequately. In the long-
124 term, this strategy of compensatory effort is not sustainable, as repeated

125 compensatory efforts without adequate recovery result in burnout, a form of chronic
126 fatigue experienced as persistent feelings of exhaustion and disengagement (Bakker
127 et al., 2014). Burnout is one of the endpoints of the health impairment process, being
128 negatively related with performance and associated with strain outcomes (e.g.,
129 anxiety and depression) (Alarcon, 2011; Taris, 2006).

130 However, it remains unclear how specific demands impact the health
131 impairment process (and subsequent energy depletion). While the JD-R model
132 acknowledges that many demands exist across different occupations (Schaufeli &
133 Taris, 2014), there is limited research that examines how different demands
134 contribute to the health impairment process (for exceptions see Andrei et al., 2020;
135 Jimmieson et al., 2017). Past research has tended to only investigate the effects of a
136 single demand in an occupational context (e.g., Baethge et al., 2019; Widmer et al.,
137 2012), or has combined several demands together so that their independent effects
138 cannot be explored (e.g., Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Sonnentag et al., 2011).
139 Furthermore, there is limited research to date that illuminates the causal mechanisms
140 between specific demands and fatigue (Lesener et al., 2019); a particular gap in the
141 literature exists in understanding the dynamic microprocesses that link specific
142 demands with strain and fatigue on a day-to-day basis (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).
143 To develop a refined picture of how demands and fatigue are related in the
144 workplace, it is important to distinguish between the effects of specific demands
145 (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992). In terms of fatigue, this refinement is important from a
146 practical standpoint, because an understanding of which demands contribute the most
147 (or least) to worker fatigue would allow managers and organisations to prioritise the
148 mitigation or reduction of specific demands in work design scenarios. To build a
149 better understanding of how multiple demands contribute to worker fatigue, this
150 study focuses two demands that have been identified as risks to performance and
151 wellbeing in extreme operational work contexts: overload and underload.

152 **4.2.2 Overload and Underload**

153 Overload and underload are two demands that have been raised by scholars as
154 increasingly important to understand for their impact on performance and wellbeing
155 in operational environments (Andrei et al., 2020; Parker & Grote, 2020; Wilson et
156 al., 2021). Overload is a function of high workload and/or high time pressure, and

157 describes a situation in which employees have too many demands (Perrewe &
158 Ganster, 1989). Overload is a typical demand investigated within the JD-R
159 framework, with meta-analyses demonstrating the relationship between overload and
160 negative outcomes such as fatigue, strain, and impaired psychological and physical
161 health (Bowling et al., 2015; Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991). The effects of overload
162 are usually explained in terms of the same compensatory control mechanisms that
163 underlie the health impairment process. High task demands that exceed a worker's
164 capacity require the worker to engage in compensatory processes and invest
165 additional effort to sustain task performance; continuously engaging these
166 compensatory processes leads to fatigue and strain (Hockey, 1997).

167 Although not as widely studied, underload has been raised as issue for many
168 jobs in high-risk and 24-hour operation industries where technology and automation
169 reduce task demands, such as long-distance driving (Dorrian et al., 2007), airport
170 baggage inspection (Hancock & Hart, 2002), and medical monitoring (Weinger,
171 1990). Underload involves work that requires attention and focus, but provides little
172 stimulation in return (Young et al., 2015). Early research on 'passive work' argued
173 that underload combined the experience of low demands with low decision latitude
174 (Karasek, 1979). Indeed, underload in many work contexts involves
175 monitoring/supervisory control tasks (e.g., sustained attention to detect infrequent
176 signals), which are argued to have low levels of task autonomy (Parker & Grote,
177 2020). Several scholars have proposed that underload is stressful and aversive,
178 because it generates feelings of boredom, dissatisfaction, and frustration (Ainslie,
179 2013; Karasek, 1979). Evidence supports this perspective, with underload being
180 associated with many negative outcomes including greater chronic fatigue (Andrei et
181 al., 2020), impaired task performance (Desmond et al., 1998), and impaired physical
182 health (Melamed et al., 1995).

183 Despite the risks it presents to fatigue and performance, underload is not
184 extensively studied within the JD-R framework. One reason for this is because
185 underload is not well accounted for under the theory of compensatory control that
186 explains the effects of other demands such as overload. According to theories of
187 compensatory control, a situation that involves fewer demands such as underload,
188 should not exceed a worker's capacity and require engagement of compensatory
189 processes. Given the increasing importance of underload in future work, it is

190 pertinent to develop a better understanding of underload and its relationship with
191 fatigue.

192 **4.2.3 The Present Research**

193 The aim of the current study is to examine how overload and underload
194 contribute to chronic and acute forms of fatigue in submarine operations. We
195 distinguish between chronic and acute forms of fatigue because both forms of fatigue
196 are implicated in the health impairment process (Andrei et al., 2020; Dawson et al.,
197 2011; Winwood et al., 2007). Additionally, a more specific understanding of the
198 predictors of acute and chronic fatigue will help to distinguish the interventions that
199 target each type of fatigue. As part of this study, three field studies were conducted in
200 which submarine crews completed three different experience sampling studies (i.e.,
201 intensive longitudinal design), during at-sea operational activities (i.e., in-situ). To
202 explore how overload and underload relate to both chronic and acute fatigue, the
203 current involves two analytical phases that each model different subsets of the data.
204 Specifically, to examine changes in chronic fatigue (operationalised as burnout), we
205 used a longitudinal panel approach in which key measures were sampled at study
206 outset and completion. To examine dynamic variability in acute fatigue
207 (operationalised as state fatigue and state affect), we utilised an experience sampling
208 approach in which key measures were sampled twice a day (e.g., after each work
209 shift). More details pertaining to the two analyses are presented next.

210 **4.2.3.1 Analysis 1: Change in burnout over the course of submarine operations**

211 In Analysis 1, we examine the extent to which submariners' burnout changes
212 over the course of operational activities that take place over 12 to 15 days. While the
213 literature acknowledges that burnout is dynamic (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007), it is not
214 clear the extent to which burnout may increase in the context of submarine
215 operations. It is possible that submariners will show no change in burnout because
216 they are an expert workforce that have been trained to manage stress and adversity
217 (Brasher et al., 2010). Indeed, research has found that where high stress tolerance is
218 part of the occupational self-image, such as primary care physicians, even a one-year
219 time-lag may not be sufficient to account for the long-term accumulating effect of
220 job stressors (Hornung et al., 2013; Zapf et al., 1996). On the other hand, the
221 particularly demanding nature of submarine operations may intensify the health-

222 impairment process, in which case we may see an increase in burnout after an
223 operational activity. It is documented that submarine operations are highly stressful
224 events because of the intense working schedule and limited respite opportunities
225 offered to crewmembers (McDougall & Drummond, 2010). Thus, we present the
226 following research question.

227 *Research Question 1: To what extent do submariners show changes in*
228 *burnout over operational activities?*

229 In addition, we examine how changes in burnout might differ across the three
230 operational activities which varied in operational tempo and intensity. Burnout is
231 proposed to fluctuate in response to changes in work demands (Bakker et al., 2007;
232 Demerouti, Bakker, & Janssen, 2001), therefore, we might expect changes in burnout
233 to differ across operational activities that feature different levels of overload and
234 underload. There are practical reasons to believe this may have been the case, as each
235 operational activity varied in operational tempo and featured different types of
236 activities and tasks. The first operational activity, considered low operational
237 intensity, was conducted during a local patrol activity and involved standard
238 watchkeeping activities, which meant submariners were faced with long periods of
239 time with little activity, however, sustained vigilance was required while on watch.
240 The second operational activity, considered normal operational intensity, was
241 conducted during a routine transit activity, and involved a combination of standard
242 watchkeeping activities and unpredictable training drills (i.e., responding to
243 emergency situations). The third operational activity, considered high operational
244 intensity, involved competitive training exercises and several simulated scenarios
245 based on events that crewmembers may be exposed to during adversarial conditions.
246 Given the potential differences in overload and underload across the three
247 operational activities, we pose the following research question:

248 *Research Question 2: To what extent are changes in burnout moderated*
249 *by the intensity of operational activities?*

250 **4.2.3.2 Analysis 2: Dynamic Relationships Between Overload and Underload,** 251 **and State Fatigue and Affect on a Day-to-day Basis**

252 In Analysis 2, we examine the dynamic relationships between overload and
253 underload, and acute fatigue. This extends on Analysis 1 by taking a temporal

254 approach and examining the within-person relationships between acute fatigue, and
255 overload and underload as they unfold over multiple work shifts. Specifically, we
256 concentrate on uncovering the causal and reciprocal mechanisms between demands
257 and acute fatigue on a short-term time frame. For this analysis we operationalise
258 acute fatigue in terms of an energetic component (state fatigue) and an emotional
259 component (state affect). This is consistent with research that has found depletion of
260 energetic resources after a working period has immediate consequences for energy
261 levels and emotional reactions (Zohar et al., 2003).

262 Although the original JD-R model focuses on straightforward causal relations
263 between demands and strain, there is increasing evidence that reciprocal effects in
264 the form of negative spirals are important; not only do job demands cause job strain,
265 but job strain is also a causal predictor of job demands (Lesener et al., 2019). For
266 example Demerouti et al., (2009) found that hospital nurses who were confronted
267 with high levels of demands not only reported higher levels of burnout 1.5 years
268 later, but nurses who experienced higher levels of burnout were also confronted with
269 more job demands over time.

270 Although the literature is beginning to highlight reciprocal relationships
271 within the JD-R framework as an important topic, research to date is limited in that it
272 tends to investigate reciprocal effects over long durations (Guthier et al., 2020;
273 Lesener et al., 2019). These long-term negative spirals are typically explained in
274 terms of the loss cycles proposed by Conservation of Resources (CoR) (Hobfoll,
275 1989). According to CoR, chronic exposure to demands leads to a cumulative loss of
276 resources that gradually decreases a worker's ability to cope effectively with the
277 demands of future work, increasing the straining effects of future stressors and
278 further depleting their resources (Demerouti et al., 2004; Hobfoll, 2002).

279 In contrast, there little research that informs how reciprocal effects between
280 demands and outcomes may manifest on a shorter (i.e., within-day) basis (Bakker &
281 Demerouti, 2017). Understanding the within-day reciprocal effects between
282 overload, underload and acute fatigue is important because it informs how fatigue
283 accumulates on a short-term basis. This has important implications for operational
284 environments such as submarines where ongoing high performance for safety and
285 wellbeing is required (Banks et al., 2019; Stanton & Roberts, 2018). Indeed, some

286 theory suggests that in demanding performance environments (e.g., air traffic
287 control, submarines) where there is little opportunity for recovery from the fatigue
288 and strain, workers may experience carry-over of fatigue from one shift to the next,
289 meaning workers have a reduced capacity to deal with demands, which in turn leads
290 to increased fatigue (Hockey, 1997). To shed light on the within-day reciprocal
291 effects between overload and underload, and state fatigue and affect, we pose the
292 following research question..

293 *Research Question 3: To what extent are overload and underload*
294 *reciprocally related with state fatigue on a day-to-day basis across a*
295 *submarine operational activity?*

296 *Research Question 4: To what extent are overload and underload*
297 *reciprocally related with state affect on a day-to-day basis across a*
298 *submarine operational activity?*

299 **4.3 Method**

300 **4.3.1 Participants**

301 The data were collected as part of a broader research project (for further
302 details, consult Wilson et al., 2021) involving a field study of three submarine
303 operational activities (low, normal, and high operational intensity) that took place
304 during 2017 and 2018. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, informed
305 consent was gained from all participants, and participants were free to withdraw from
306 the study at any time. A total of 76 operational submariners from the Royal
307 Australian Navy participated. Participating submariners were representative of the
308 different functional job groups (e.g., platforms, command, and sensors) and ranks
309 (e.g., Able seaman to Commander) relevant to the submarine platform. For the
310 duration of the operational activities, participants followed either a 6-hours on, 6-
311 hours off schedule ($n = 55$), or a 12-hours on, 12-hours off schedule ($n = 13$) (8
312 participants did not report their watch schedule).

313 An overview of operational activity duration and participant demographics (including
314 participants who attended briefings but provided no data) is provided in Table 4.1.

315

316 Table 4.1. Overview of the three operational activities and participant demographics,
 317 including years of experience in their current role and in the Navy overall.

Operational activity	Duration	<i>N</i>	\bar{x} years of experience (Role)	\bar{x} years of experience (Navy)
Low intensity	12 days	<i>N</i> = 22	3.62 (SD = 3.06)	8.51 (SD = 7.95)
Normal intensity	12 days	<i>N</i> = 39	3.69 (SD = 3.98)	6.11 (SD = 6.21)
High intensity	15 days	<i>N</i> = 15	2.08 (SD = 1.10)	5.93 (SD = 3.80)

318 **4.3.2 Field Study Design and Measurement Protocol Procedure**

319 The overall field study involved two different research designs: a longitudinal
 320 panel design and an experience sampling design. The longitudinal panel design
 321 involved participants completing two surveys, one *before* the commencement of an
 322 operational activity, and one *after* the end of an operational activity. These pre/post
 323 operation surveys were used to measure burnout, a form of chronic fatigue (Bakker
 324 et al., 2014). The experience sampling design was undertaken *during* the operational
 325 activity and involved participants filling out a series of daily surveys before and after
 326 each work shift, for the duration of the operational activity. These daily diaries were
 327 used to assess dynamic fluctuations in short-term fatigue, which we operationalised
 328 in terms of an energetic component (i.e., state fatigue) and an emotional component
 329 (i.e., state affect) (Zohar, 2003).

330 Approximately one week prior to the commencement of each operational
 331 activity, researchers conducted a compulsory briefing session with all participants.
 332 During this briefing, informed participant consent was obtained, and participants
 333 were provided with instructions and materials for undertaking the study. All surveys
 334 were completed using paper and pen. Due to operational and space restrictions, the
 335 data collection was participant led – that is, researchers provided all instructions to
 336 participants during pre-operation briefings but were not present during data
 337 collection. At the conclusion of each operational activity (when the submarine
 338 reached the destination port), researchers met the participants to collect all surveys.
 339 Participants were offered personalised feedback reports for their participation. All

340 survey responses were then digitised. For brevity, we have only reported the details
341 relevant to this study (see Appendix 4A for the list of measures used).

342 **4.3.3 Measures**

343 **4.3.3.1 Burnout (measured pre/post operation as part of longitudinal panel 344 design)**

345 Burnout was measured twice for each operational activity, once as a baseline
346 before participants were deployed ($\alpha = .85$) and once after completion of the
347 operational activity ($\alpha = .86$) using the 16-item Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI)
348 (Demerouti et al., 2003). The OLBI includes eight items to measure exhaustion (e.g.,
349 “After work, I usually feel worn out and weary”) and eight items to measure
350 disengagement (e.g., “I increasingly speak negatively about my work”). The items
351 were scored on a five-point likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly disagree).
352 High scores indicate higher levels of burnout.

353 **4.3.3.2 State Fatigue (measured daily as part of experience sampling design)**

354 Subjective fatigue was measured using the Karolinska Sleepiness Scale
355 (KSS) (Akerstedt et al., 2002; Kaida et al., 2006). The single item asks, “What is
356 your current level of sleepiness?” and is anchored from 1 (very alert) to 9 (very
357 sleepy). The KSS was completed after each work period (e.g., participants on a 6-
358 hour on, 6-hour off schedule rated the KSS twice per 24-hour period, approximately
359 12-hours apart).

360 **4.3.3.3 State Affect (measured daily as part of experience sampling design)**

361 Affect was measured using one item created for the study. Many existing
362 measures of affect were unsuitable for intensive experience sampling due to the
363 length and complexity of measures. Therefore, we constructed a simple one-item
364 measure of affect based on the circumplex model of affect (Posner et al., 2005). The
365 item asks participants to rate mood valence and is anchored from one (awful) to ten
366 (great). Ratings were completed after each work period. (e.g., participants on a 6-
367 hour on, 6-hour off schedule rated state affect twice per 24-hour period,
368 approximately 12-hours apart).

369 **4.3.3.4 Overload (measured daily as part of experience sampling design)**

370 Overload was measured using a subset of three items (between-persons α
371 = .80) from the NASA task load index (TLX) (Hart, 2006). The three items ask
372 participants to rate subjective levels of workload along three dimensions (mental
373 demand, physical demand, and temporal demand) on a scale of 0 (very low) to 100
374 (very high). High scores indicate higher levels of overload. The NASA-TLX was
375 completed after each work period, (e.g., participants on a 6-hour on, 6-hour off
376 schedule rated the NASA-TLX twice per 24-hour period, approximately 12-hours
377 apart).

378 **4.3.3.5 Underload (measured daily as part of experience sampling design)**

379 Underload was measured using four items (between-persons $\alpha = .85$)
380 developed by Andrei et al., 2020. Two items targeted monotonous and boring aspects
381 of work (e.g., I found the work boring and monotonous) and two items targeted
382 attentional demands (e.g., I struggled to remain alert and vigilant). The original scale
383 was designed to measure an overall level of underload in a job; therefore, we adapted
384 the wording to be suitable for individual work period perceptions (i.e., assessments
385 of underload corresponding to a particular work period). We also adapted the original
386 frequency-based rating scale into a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 =
387 strongly disagree). High scores indicate higher levels of underload. The underload
388 scale was completed after each work period (e.g., participants on a 6-hour on, 6-hour
389 off schedule rated underload twice per 24-hour period, approximately 12-hours
390 apart).

391 **4.4 Analytical Phase 1: Change in Burnout Over an** 392 **Operational Activity**

393 Previous research suggests burnout changes in response to demands over
394 relatively long periods of time (i.e. several years) (e.g., Dunford et al., 2012;
395 Xanthopoulou et al., 2007), however, it is not clear if burnout follows similar longer-
396 term trajectories of change in extreme work environments such as submarine
397 operations. Therefore, Analysis 1 examines how submariners' burnout changes over
398 operational activities using a longitudinal panel approach. Specifically, the analysis
399 seeks to uncover the extent to submariner burnout changes over the course of
400 operational activities that take place over 12 to 15 days, and additionally, whether
401 changes in burnout are moderated by the intensity of operational activities.

402 **4.4.1 Sample & Measures**

403 For this analysis we only included data from submariners who completed the
404 pre-operation and post-operation surveys. The measures used in this analysis are
405 pre/post burnout, overload, and underload. The respective sample sizes for each
406 operation type are displayed in Table 4.2.

407 **4.4.2 Results**

408 **4.4.2.1 Data Analysis Overview**

409 All analyses were conducted using the statistical software JASP (version
410 0.14.1) (JASP Team, 2020) and all figures were produced using the R programming
411 language (R Core Team, 2021). All analyses are reported with associated Bayes
412 Factors (BFs). Bayesian analysis has several advantages including a greater
413 robustness in small sample sizes when compared to frequentist analysis (Van de
414 Schoot et al., 2014) and the ability to quantify the relative evidence favouring the
415 null versus the alternative hypothesis (Kass & Raftery, 1995). We interpreted BFs
416 using Jeffrey's (1998) guidelines where BFs between 1 and 3 indicate weak
417 evidence, Bayes factors > 3 indicate moderate evidence, Bayes factors > 10 are
418 strong evidence, and Bayes factors > 30 are very strong evidence for a given
419 hypothesis relative to an alternative. Bayes factors are represented as BF, and the
420 subscript indicates whether the model comparison is expressed as favouring the
421 alternative hypothesis (BF_{10}) or the null (BF_{01}).

422 **4.4.2.2 Descriptive and Correlational Statistics**

423 Table 4.2 shows the basic descriptive statistics for the study variables. Table
424 4.3 presents the correlations among the study variables. We note that burnout scores
425 decrease for the low intensity operation but increase for normal and high intensity
426 operations. Contrary to expectation, average overload was highest in the low
427 intensity operation and second highest in the high intensity operation. Consistent
428 with expectations, underload was highest for the low intensity operation, and lowest
429 in the high intensity operation. Additionally, all variables correlate in the expected
430 directions, with overload and underload showing significant positive associations
431 with post-operation burnout.

432

433 Table 4.2. Descriptive statistics for all three operational activities.

Variables	N	M	SD
Low intensity			
Burnout (pre/post)	9	2.83 / 2.65	.30 / .30
Overload	13	3.98	1.35
Underload	13	2.42	.56
Normal intensity			
Burnout (pre/post)	10	2.61 / 2.66	.55 / .54
Overload	34	3.48	1.38
Underload	34	2.31	.61
High intensity			
Burnout (pre/post)	8	2.87 / 3.06	.55 / .55
Overload	15	3.89	1.09
Underload	15	2.29	.57

434 Table 4.3. Correlations between variables

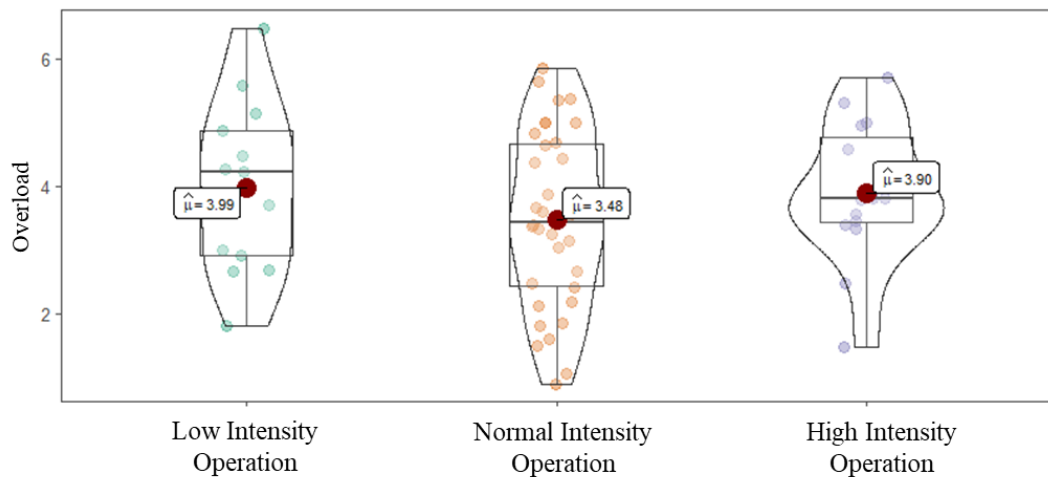
	1	2	3	4
1. Pre-operation Burnout	-			
2. Post- operation Burnout	.83**	-		
3. Overload	.51*	.43*	-	
4. Underload	.64**	.57**	.11	-

435 Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed)436 **4.4.2.3 Assumption Checking**

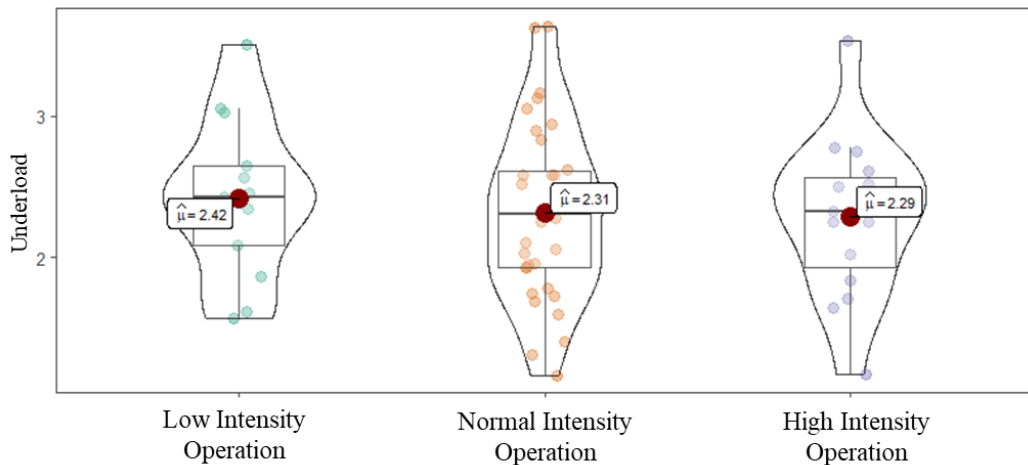
437 A key assumption relevant to this analysis was that the three operational
438 activities featured different levels of overload and underload. Therefore, prior to
439 conducting the main analysis, we ran two one-way ANOVA to examine how average
440 levels of overload and underload differed across the three operational activities.
441 There was moderate evidence that average levels of overload did not differ between
442 the three operational activities, $F(2,59) = 1.09$, $p = .34$, $\eta^2_p = .04$, $BF_{01} = 3.03$. There
443 was also moderate evidence that average levels of underload did not differ across the
444 three operational activities, $F(2,59) = .21$, $p = .81$, $\eta^2_p = .01$, $BF_{01} = 5.88$. Figures 4.1
445 and 4.2 show the average levels of overload and underload respectively across the

446 three operational activities. Despite all three operational activities showing similar
447 levels of overload and underload, we proceeded with the main analysis to examine
448 how burnout changed across these operational activities.

449 Figure 4.1. Mean ratings of overload for low, normal, and high intensity operational
450 activities



451 Figure 4.2. Mean ratings of underload for low, normal, and high intensity operational
452 activities

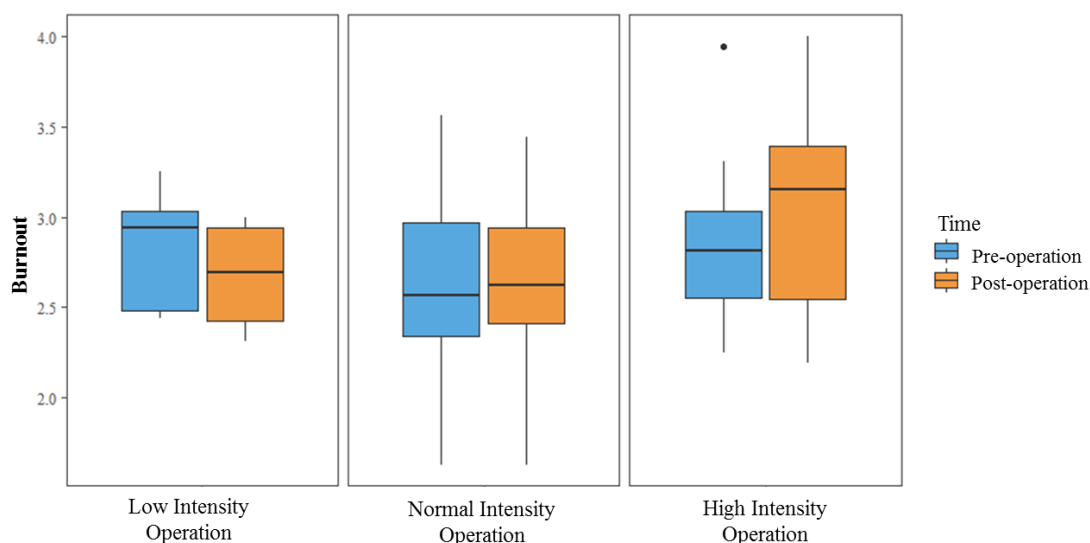


453 **4.4.2.4 Change in Burnout Over Operational Activities**

454 As part of Analytical Phase 1, we posed two research questions relating to
455 submariners' burnout. The first research question asked to what extent do submariners'
456 show changes in burnout over operational activities. The second research question
457 asked whether and how changes in burnout may be moderated by the intensity of
458 operational activities.

459 To address these research questions, we examined the difference (within-person
 460 change) in submariner’s pre-operation and post-operation burnout scores for the three
 461 operational activities (between-person grouping). To do this, we ran a 2 (time: within-
 462 subjects) \times 3 (operational activity: between-subjects) mixed-measures ANOVA. Sums
 463 of squares Type 3 was used in all the analyses to evenly weight cells (Tabachnick &
 464 Fidell, 2007). Levene’s test suggested that the assumption of homogeneity was not
 465 violated for all analyses (all values were $>.05$). Figure 4.3 demonstrates the pre- and
 466 post-operation scores of submariners’ burnout over the operational activities. There
 467 was moderate evidence that submariners’ burnout did not change after undertaking an
 468 operational activity ($F(1,23) = 0.30, p = .59, \eta^2_p = .01, BF_{01} = 3.29$). There was also
 469 moderate evidence that the type of operational activity did not moderate submariners’
 470 change in burnout from pre to post operation ($F(1,23) = 3.25, p = .06, \eta^2_p = .22, BF_{01}$
 471 $= 3.40$).

472 Figure 4.3. Average levels of burnout measured pre-operation and post-operation
 473 across the three operational activities.



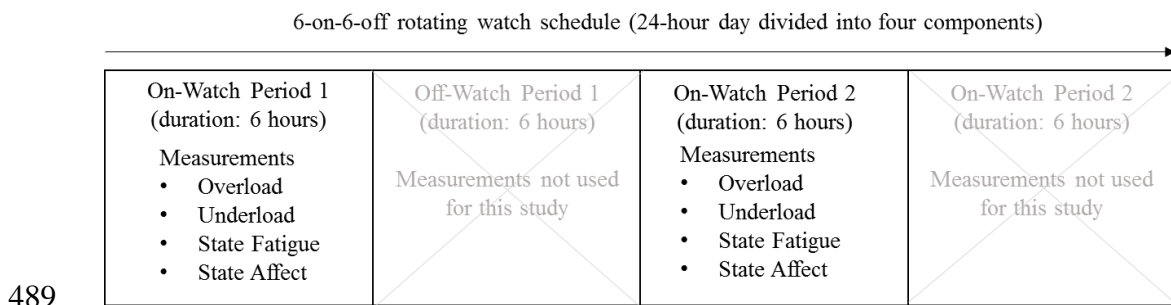
474

475 **4.5 Analytical Phase 2: Reciprocal Relationships Between** 476 **Overload and Underload, and State Fatigue and Affect**

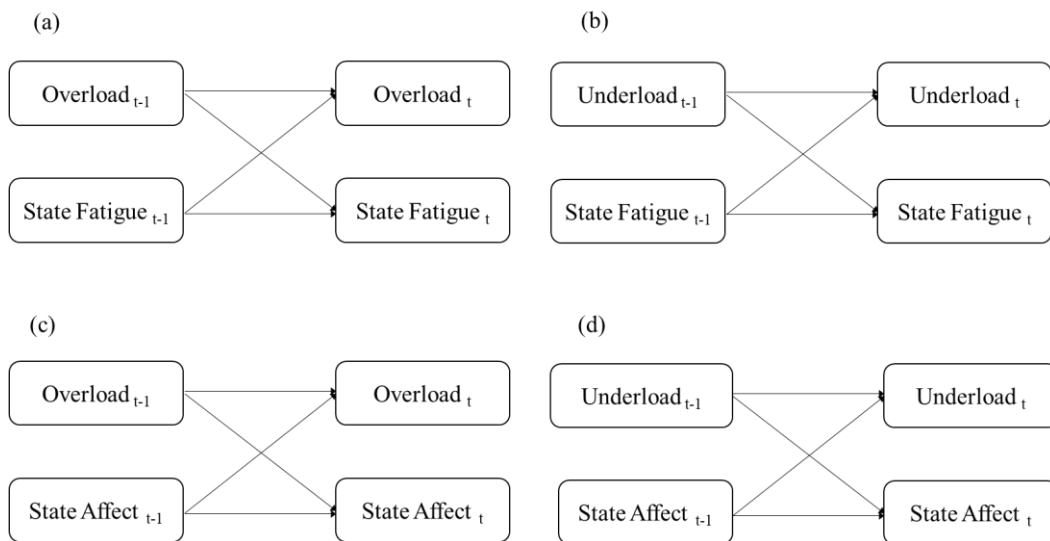
477 Following calls to establish a better understanding of the causal mechanisms
 478 and microprocesses between specific demands and fatigue (Bakker & Demerouti,
 479 2017; Lesener et al., 2019), Analysis 2 aims to examine the dynamic relationships
 480 between overload and underload, and acute fatigue on a day-to-day basis.

481 Specifically, we investigate how overload and underload might be reciprocally
 482 related to state fatigue and state affect on a day-to-day basis across a submarine
 483 operational activity. As can be seen in Figure 4.4, the design of the experience
 484 sampling portion of this study was such that we obtained measurements
 485 approximately every 12-hours. Figure 4.5 provides an overview of the models tested.

486 Figure 4.4. Experience sampling design on the 6-on-6-off watch schedule. Overload,
 487 underload, state fatigue and state affect were measured twice a day after each work
 488 period.



490 Figure 4.5. Overview of models tested. The time lag was approximately 12-hours.



491 **4.5.1 Sample & Measures**

492 For this study, only the daily diary data from submariners on the 6-on-6-off
 493 rotating watch schedule was used. This was important for ensuring the same time
 494 interval between surveys (approximately 12-hours). The measures included overload,
 495 underload, state fatigue, and state affect. As the operational activities were

496 participant led, this necessitated rigorous data integrity checks with several exclusion
497 criteria. From the total of 76 participants, 36 participants were excluded for not
498 completing any surveys and/or not timestamping survey responses. A further five
499 day-duties participants were removed because their survey responses were recorded
500 once a day (i.e., 24-hour interval instead of a 12-hour interval). Lastly, eight
501 participants were removed because their survey responses deviated substantially
502 from the 12-hour interval (i.e., more than 6 hours outside of the 12-hour interval). A
503 final sample size of 27 participants and a total of 476 observations were included.

504 **4.5.2 Results**

505 **4.5.2.1 Data Modelling Approach**

506 We conducted Dynamic Structural Equation Modelling (DSEM) in Mplus
507 Version 8.5 (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). The DSEM framework integrates structural
508 equation and time series modelling and allows for the parametrisation of time-
509 varying effects such as autoregression. In this analysis we use a Vector
510 Autoregressive Lag 1 model, denoted as a VAR(1) model, to estimate cross-lagged
511 parameters at multiple levels (McNeish & Hamaker, 2019). The cross-lagged
512 parameters reflect predictive relationships and potentially represent causal
513 mechanisms, and are sometimes referred to as *spill-over*, as they represent the
514 cascade effect of functioning or behaviour in one domain into another domain
515 (Masten & Cicchetti, 2010). The within-subjects level includes two-autoregressive
516 slopes and two cross-lagged paths. Variables were person-mean centered (the default
517 in Mplus).

518 The DSEM model uses Bayesian estimation which is based on combining the
519 likelihood of the data with prior distributions for the unknown model parameters to
520 obtain posterior distributions for these unknown parameters (for details see
521 Asparouhov et al., 2018). Estimation involves an iterative process in which
522 parameters are sampled from condition distributions according to a Markov chain
523 Monte Carlo (MCMC) procedure (Gelman et al., 2014). Based on Hamaker et al.,
524 (2018) we used 50,000 MCMC iterations, with a thinning of 10 iterations (i.e., only 1
525 of 10 iterations was used) and thus, our results are based on a total of 5000 iterations.
526 We present parameter estimates along with 95% credible intervals (CI) which can be
527 interpreted as analogous to 95% confidence intervals. Model convergence was

528 checked using the proportional scale reduction (PSR) and the Bayesian trace plots
 529 (Hamaker et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2019). PSR values close to one suggested that the
 530 number of iterations was sufficient, and trace plots showed an absence of trends,
 531 spikes, or other irregularities. Therefore, we can assume that the models converged
 532 properly.

533 **4.5.2.2 Descriptive and Correlational Statistics**

534 Table 4.4 shows the basic descriptive statistics for all variables. All variables
 535 were significantly correlated in the expected directions, i.e., overload and underload
 536 show significant positive correlations with fatigue, and significant negative
 537 correlations with affect. Notably, underload showed stronger relationships with affect
 538 and fatigue than overload.

539 Table 4.4. Means, standard deviations and correlations between analysis variables

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4
1. Fatigue	5.37 (1.81)	-			
2. Affect	5.71 (1.64)	-.63**	-		
3. Overload	3.27 (1.64)	.18**	-.22**	-	
4. Underload	2.33 (.83)	.49**	-.57**	-.03	-

540 **4.5.2.3 Dynamic Structural Equation Modelling**

541 As part of Analytical Phase Two, we posed two research questions relating to dynamic
 542 changes in submariners’ fatigue. The first research question concerned the extent to
 543 which overload and underload were reciprocally related with state fatigue on a day-to-
 544 day basis. The second question was concerned with the extent to which overload and
 545 underload were reciprocally related with state affect on a day-to-day basis. To address
 546 these research questions, the following sections examine the dynamic relationships
 547 between fatigue, overload, and underload, and between state affect, overload, and
 548 underload.

549 **4.5.2.3.1 Fatigue and Overload**

550 From Table 4.5, the posterior distributions show that given the observed data, there is
 551 evidence for a negative autoregressive effect for fatigue ($\gamma_{20} = -.19$, 95% CV = [-.29 -
 552 -.09]) which suggests fatigue exhibits a small degree of temporal dependence, or
 553 carryover (i.e., the ability of the intensity of a state in one moment to predict the

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

554 intensity measured at a subsequent moment). This carryover effect also hardly varies
555 between people ($\tau_{22} = .03$, 95% CV = [.00 - .11]). There is also evidence for a positive
556 autoregression effect for overload ($\gamma_{30} = .23$, 95% CV = [.11 - .34]) that hardly varies
557 between people ($\tau_{33} = .05$, 95% CV = [.00 - .17]). This suggests overload also exhibits
558 a small carryover effect. In terms of cross-lagged relationships, there is evidence for
559 positive cross-lagged relationships between fatigue and overload such that $Overload_{t-1}$
560 predicted $Fatigue_t$ ($\gamma_{50} = .14$, 95% CV = [.04 - .23]) and $Fatigue_{t-1}$ predicted
561 $Overload_t$ ($\gamma_{40} = .11$, 95% CV = [.02 - .20]). These parameters suggest a reciprocal
562 relationship exists between overload and fatigue, such that overload and fatigue
563 positively reinforce each other over time. Both cross-lagged relationships barely vary
564 between people ($\tau_{44} = .02$, 95% CV = [.00 - .07]; $\tau_{55} = .05$, 95% CV = [.00 - .20],
565 respectively).

566

567 Table 4.5. Parameter estimates for multi-level VAR(1) model looking at Fatigue and
568 Overload

Parameter		Posterior Median	Posterior SD	95% credibility interval
Within-level (standardised)				
Intercept (Fatigue t_{-1} → Fatigue t)	γ_{20}	-.19**	.05	-.29 - -.09
Intercept (Overload t_{-1} → Overload t)	γ_{30}	.23**	.06	.11 - .34
Intercept (Fatigue t_{-1} → Overload t)	γ_{40}	.11**	.05	.02 - .20
Intercept (Overload t_{-1} → Fatigue t)	γ_{50}	.14**	.05	.04 - .23
Intercept (residual variance of Fatigue)	ω_0	.88**	.03	.80 - .94
Intercept (residual variance of Overload)	ω_1	.84**	.04	.74 - .92
Between-level (unstandardised)				
Intercept (Mean of Fatigue)	γ_{00}	5.38**	.22	4.95 – 5.81
Intercept (Mean of Overload)	γ_{10}	3.28**	.29	2.71 – 3.84
Variance (Mean of Fatigue)	τ_{00}	1.09**	.41	.58 – 2.14
Variance (Mean of Overload)	τ_{11}	1.86**	.68	1.03 – 3.68
Variance (Fatigue t_{-1} → Fatigue t)	τ_{22}	.03**	.03	.00 - .11
Variance (Overload t_{-1} → Overload t)	τ_{33}	.05**	.04	.00 - .17
Variance (Fatigue t_{-1} → Overload t)	τ_{44}	.02**	.12	.00 - .07
Variance (Overload t_{-1} → Fatigue t)	τ_{55}	.05**	.05	.00 - .20
Variance (residual variance of Fatigue)	τ_{66}	.10**	.08	.01 - .33
Variance (residual variance of Overload)	τ_{77}	2.37**	.84	1.38 – 4.58

569 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Note: time lag was approximately 12-hours

570

571 **4.5.2.3.2 Fatigue and Underload**

572 From Table 4.6, the posterior distributions show that given the observed data,
573 there is evidence for a negative autoregressive effect for fatigue ($\gamma_{20} = -.18$, 95% CV
574 = $[-.30 - -.05]$), suggesting fatigue has a small carryover effect that barely varies
575 between people ($\tau_{22} = .03$, 95% CV = $[.00 - .12]$). There was no evidence for
576 autoregression for underload ($\gamma_{30} = .08$, 95% CV = $[-.04 - .21]$), suggesting underload
577 does not exhibit any carryover effect. No cross-lagged effects were observed in this
578 model as *Fatigue*_{t-1} showed no relationship with *Underload*_t ($\gamma_{40} = -.08$, 95% CV =
579 $[-.19 - .02]$) and *Underload*_{t-1} showed no relationship with *Fatigue*_t ($\gamma_{50} = -.02$, 95%
580 CV = $[-.13 - .09]$). These parameters suggest underload did not predict, nor was
581 predicted by fatigue over a 12-hour time lag.

582

583

584 Table 4.6. Parameter estimates for multi-level VAR(1) model looking at Fatigue and
 585 Underload

Parameter		Posterior Median	Posterior SD	95% credibility interval
Within-level (standardised)				
Intercept (Fatigue $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Fatigue t)	γ_{20}	-.18**	.06	-.30 - -.05
Intercept (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	γ_{30}	.08	.06	-.04 - .21
Intercept (Fatigue $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	γ_{40}	-.08	.05	-.19 - .02
Intercept (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Fatigue t)	γ_{50}	-.02	.06	-.13 - .09
Intercept (residual variance of Fatigue)	ω_0	.91**	.03	.84 - .96
Intercept (residual variance of Underload)	ω_1	.84**	.04	.75 - .92
Between-level (unstandardised)				
Intercept (Mean of Fatigue)	γ_{00}	5.38**	.22	4.94 – 5.81
Intercept (Mean of Underload)	γ_{10}	2.36**	.12	2.12 – 2.60
Variance (Mean of Fatigue)	τ_{00}	1.14**	.42	.63 – 2.25
Variance (Mean of Underload)	τ_{11}	.30**	.03	.16 - .61
Variance (Fatigue $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Fatigue t)	τ_{22}	.03**	.03	.00 - .12
Variance (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	τ_{33}	.14**	.07	.05 - .32
Variance (Fatigue $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	τ_{44}	.00**	.00	.00 - .01
Variance (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Fatigue t)	τ_{55}	.11**	.13	.01 - .48
Variance (residual variance of Fatigue)	τ_{66}	.10**	.08	.01 - .33
Variance (residual variance of Underload)	τ_{77}	1.50**	.51	.86 – 2.83

586 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Note: time lag was approximately 12-hours

587

588 **4.5.2.3.3 Affect and Overload**

589 The estimates are presented in Table 4.7. The posterior distributions show
590 that given the observed data, there is evidence for positive autoregressive effects for
591 affect ($\gamma_{20} = .16$ (95% CV = [.06 - .27]), and overload ($\gamma_{30} = .22$ (95% CV = [.10
592 - .33]). This suggest both affect and overload exhibit small carryover effects. These
593 carry over effects vary from person to person for both affect ($\tau_{22} = .08$ (95% CV =
594 [.02 - .20]) and overload ($\tau_{33} = .07$ (95% CV = [.01 - .19]). In terms of cross-lagged
595 relationships, there is evidence for a negative cross-lagged relationship between
596 *Overload*_{t-1} and *Affect*_t ($\gamma_{50} = -.12$ (95% CV = [-.22 - -.02]) but no evidence for a
597 relationship between *Affect*_{t-1} and *Overload*_t ($\gamma_{40} = -.04$ (95% CV = [-.13 - .05]). This
598 suggests a one-way causal relationship, with higher perceived overload during the
599 previous work period predicting a more negative current affective state, but not the
600 other way around. Furthermore, the cross-lagged relationship between *Overload*_{t-1}
601 and *Affect*_t barely varied from person to person ($\tau_{55} = -.03$ (95% CV = [.00 - .13]).

602

603 Table 4.7. Parameter estimates for multi-level VAR(1) model looking at Affect and
604 Overload

Parameter		Posterior Median	Posterior SD	95% Credible Interval
Within-level (standardised)				
Intercept (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	γ_{20}	.16**	.05	.06 - .27
Intercept (Overload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Overload t)	γ_{30}	.22**	.06	.10 - .33
Intercept (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Overload t)	γ_{40}	-.04	.04	-.13 - .05
Intercept (Overload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	γ_{50}	-.12**	.05	-.22 - -.02
Intercept (residual variance of Affect)	ω_0	.85**	.04	.77 - .92
Intercept (residual variance of Overload)	ω_1	.86**	.04	.77 - .93
Between-level (unstandardised)				
Intercept (Mean of Affect)	γ_{00}	5.98**	.24	5.51 – 6.45
Intercept (Mean of Overload)	γ_{10}	3.28**	.29	2.71 – 3.85
Variance (Mean of Affect)	τ_{00}	1.20**	.47	.62 – 2.42
Variance (Mean of Overload)	τ_{11}	1.87**	.68	1.04 – 2.42
Variance (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	τ_{22}	.08**	.05	.02 - .20
Variance (Overload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Overload t)	τ_{33}	.07**	.05	.01 - .19
Variance (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Overload t)	τ_{44}	.01**	.01	.00 - .06
Variance (Overload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	τ_{55}	.03**	.03	.00 - .13
Variance (residual variance of Affect)	τ_{66}	.38**	.17	.17 - .84
Variance (residual variance of Overload)	τ_{77}	2.38**	.84	1.38 – 4.58

605 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Note: time lag was approximately 12-hours

606

607

608 **4.5.2.3.4 Affect and Underload**

609 From Table 4.8, the posterior distributions show that given the observed data,
610 there is again evidence for positive autoregressive effects for affect ($\gamma_{20} = .23$ (95%
611 CV = [.11 - .35]), and this carry over effect varies from person to person ($\tau_{22} = .07$
612 (95% CV = [.02 - .19])). There is no evidence for autoregression for underload ($\gamma_{30} =$
613 $-.02$ (95% CV = [-.13 - .11])). In terms of cross-lagged relationships, there is evidence
614 for a positive cross-lagged relationship between $Underload_{t-1}$ and $Affect_t$ ($\gamma_{50} = .12$
615 (95% CV = [.01 - .22])) but no evidence for a relationship between $Affect_{t-1}$ and
616 $Underload_t$ ($\gamma_{40} = -.05$ (95% CV = [-.16 - .06])). Furthermore, the cross-lagged
617 relationship between $Underload_{t-1}$ and $Affect_t$ showed slight variation from person to
618 person ($\tau_{55} = -.16$ (95% CV = [.01 - .55])). Overall, these results suggest affect exhibits
619 some temporal dependence, but not underload. Similar to the effects observed with
620 overload, there is evidence for a potential one-way causal relationship, with
621 underload predicting affect, but not the other way around. We note however that this
622 relationship is positive (whereas it is negative with overload), suggesting higher
623 perceived levels of underload during the previous work period predicts a more
624 positive current affective state.

625

626 Table 4.8. Parameter estimates for multi-level VAR(1) model looking at Affect and
627 Underload

Parameter		Posterior Median	Posterior SD	95% credibility interval
Within-level (standardised)				
Intercept (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	γ_{20}	.23**	.06	.11 - .35
Intercept (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	γ_{30}	-.02	.06	-.13 - .11
Intercept (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	γ_{40}	-.05	.06	-.16 - .06
Intercept (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	γ_{50}	.12*	.05	.01 - .22
Intercept (residual variance of Affect)	ω_0	.83**	.05	.73 - .91
Intercept (residual variance of Underload)	ω_1	.85**	.04	.76 - .91
Between-level (unstandardised)				
Intercept (Mean of Affect)	γ_{00}	5.98**	.24	5.50 – 6.45
Intercept (Mean of Underload)	γ_{10}	2.36**	.12	2.12 – 2.59
Variance (Mean of Affect)	τ_{00}	1.26**	.49	.66 – 2.55
Variance (Mean of Underload)	τ_{11}	.31**	.12	.17 - .62
Variance (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	τ_{22}	.07**	.05	.02 - .19
Variance (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	τ_{33}	.13**	.07	.05 - .31
Variance (Affect $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Underload t)	τ_{44}	.01**	.01	.00 - .03
Variance (Underload $t_{-1} \rightarrow$ Affect t)	τ_{55}	.16**	.14	.01 - .55
Variance (residual variance of Affect)	τ_{66}	.89**	.18	.17 - .86
Variance (residual variance of Underload)	τ_{77}	1.53**	.52	.88 – 2.86

628 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Note: time lag was approximately 12-hours

629

630 **4.6 Discussion**

631 The aim of this study was to explore how overload and underload contribute
632 to chronic and acute forms of fatigue in submarine operations. In terms of chronic
633 fatigue, Analysis 1 examined the extent to which burnout changed over three
634 operational activities that took place over 12-15 days. Findings suggest that
635 submariners did not show any consistent change in burnout over the course of these
636 operational activities, and the intensity of operational activity was not a significant
637 predictor of changes in burnout. In terms of acute fatigue, Analysis 2 examined the
638 extent to which perceived overload and underload from a preceding work period
639 predicts state fatigue and affect after a subsequent work period, and vice versa (i.e.,
640 within-day reciprocal effects). Findings suggest that reciprocal effects exist on a
641 within-day work-period level (e.g., approximately a 12-hour time lag) between
642 overload and state fatigue, but not between underload and state fatigue. Further to
643 this, neither overload nor underload showed reciprocal relationships with state affect
644 on this timeframe. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of the study
645 below, beginning with the findings from Analysis One.

646 **4.6.1 Analysis One Findings: No Evidence for Change in** 647 **Submariners' Burnout**

648 Analysis One found that despite the harsh conditions that submariners must
649 endure, burnout did not consistently increase or decrease over an operational activity.
650 This finding has several implications for our understanding of how burnout develops
651 and changes over time. First, these findings suggest that burnout does not change
652 rapidly, even in demanding environments such as submarine operations. It is likely
653 that the time frame investigated (i.e., 12-15 days) was too short for a build-up of
654 cumulative strain to result in any substantial changes in burnout. This is in line with
655 previous research that has found burnout scores to be relatively stable, which
656 emphasises burnout as a chronic, rather than transient condition (Guthier et al.,
657 2020). Further to this, it is important to consider that submariners are professionals
658 trained to maintain performance under high stress and demanding conditions
659 (Brasher et al., 2010; Moffitt, 2008). Previous research looking at other professions
660 where high stress tolerance is part of the occupational self-image, such as primary
661 care physicians, has found that burnout remains stable even over relatively long

662 periods such as a year (Hornung et al., 2013; Zapf et al., 1996). We also highlight
663 that the analysis may have had insufficient power to detect stronger effects due to the
664 small sample size. We note that the trend observed in the data was in the direction
665 expected, with the low intensity operation showing a decrease in burnout, and the
666 high intensity operation showing the largest increase in burnout, followed by the
667 normal intensity operation. To extend on these findings, future research should
668 consider measuring burnout over longer periods by using a multi-wave design that
669 spans multiple operational activities.

670 **4.6.2 Analysis Two Findings: Overload and Underload are** 671 **Associated with Different Patterns of State Fatigue and Affect**

672 The results of Analysis Two suggest that overload and underload have
673 different relationships with state fatigue and affect over a workday of multiple work
674 periods. For instance, a key finding was that while reciprocal effects were observed
675 between overload and state fatigue such that fatigue and overload reinforced each
676 other over multiple work periods, underload, showed no causal or reciprocal effects
677 with state fatigue at this within-day timeframe. This is notable for two reasons.

678 First, the reciprocal relationship between overload and state fatigue provides
679 evidence that reciprocal effects are an important element of the health impairment
680 process, with employees facing high demands at risk of experiencing a loss spiral of
681 demands and exhaustion (Lesener et al., 2019; Zapf et al., 1996). Furthermore, these
682 findings provide a novel short-term perspective on reciprocal effects between
683 demands and strain, which have usually been studied over longer timeframes (e.g., 1
684 to 3 years) (Lesener, et al., 2019). The data suggest that in an extreme work
685 environment such as a submarine, excessive work demands may lead to a carry-over
686 of fatigue on a shift-to-shift basis. This supports arguments made in Chapter 2 that a
687 build-up of fatigue and strain may occur more easily (and be more difficult to
688 reverse) in constrained and demanding extreme environments and reveals overload
689 as a risk to ongoing performance.

690 Second, these results suggest that underload may contribute to fatigue
691 differently to overload. Although the lack of within-day association between
692 underload and state fatigue in the current study runs counter to previous research that
693 has found associations between underload and fatigue related outcomes (Andrei et

694 al., 2020; Shultz et al., 2010), it is important to note that previous research has almost
695 exclusively examined this link cross-sectionally. Therefore, rather than suggesting
696 that there is no association between underload and fatigue, it is likely that underload
697 exhibits a different relationship with fatigue at this within-day timeframe, compared
698 to overload. Indeed, cross-sectional correlations in our data show that underload has
699 a stronger positive association with fatigue and a stronger negative association with
700 affect, compared to overload.

701 Moreover, a similar pattern was observed for state affect, with overload and
702 underload exhibiting different within-day relationships with this outcome. Consistent
703 with previous research that has found links between overload and distress (Bowling
704 et al., 2015), there was a negative relationship between overload and affect such that
705 higher perceived overload in a prior work period led to more negative affect after a
706 subsequent work period. For underload however, there was a positive relationship
707 with state affect, such that higher perceived underload in a prior work period led to
708 more positive affect after a subsequent work period. Although this also seems to
709 contradict previous research that suggests underload is associated with negative
710 mood (Karasek, 1979; van Hooft & van Hooff, 2018), as noted above, it is important
711 to interpret these effects with regards to the 12-hour timeframe examined.

712 Looking at the autocorrelation (i.e. temporal dependence) of overload and
713 underload in the data helps to shed some light on why overload and underload may
714 trigger different patterns of responses. Overload showed low to moderate levels of
715 temporal dependence, with high perceived overload on average predicting higher
716 perceptions of overload during a subsequent work period. On the other hand,
717 underload showed effectively no temporal dependence. One potential reason may
718 have to do with the nature of tasks that elicit underload versus overload. Overload
719 may involve more spill-over of tasks into after-work time and rumination about
720 unfinished work (Syrek & Antoni, 2014), whereas with underload, feelings of
721 boredom may end as soon as focus is no longer required (e.g., end of the work
722 period/shift), and attention can be directed towards more rewarding or engaging
723 activities (Wolff & Martarelli, 2020). Taken together, these findings add to existing
724 debates in the job demands literature that not all demands are created equal and may
725 be linked to outcomes via different processes/mechanisms (e.g., Crawford et al.,

2010; van den Broeck et al., 2010). However, given we only focused on a 12-hour timeframe and have speculated that underload may involve processes that unfold over a shorter time window, more research is needed to investigate the specific mechanisms and dynamics underlying these relationships. We note that a more detailed disentanglement of the relationships between overload, underload and employee reactions over time is a complex endeavor and may be a research question better suited for a controlled experimental approach, rather than field research.

4.6.3 Practical Implications

Given that the results herein suggest overload and underload may cause fatigue over time in different ways (i.e., over different timeframes), a key practical implication arising from this study is that the reduction or mitigation of fatigue from overload and underload may require different types of interventions.

Since overload and fatigue appear to reinforce each other over multiple shifts, interventions for overload should concentrate on workday design. While the concept of work design has typically focused on how specific tasks within a job can be altered to improve motivation and productivity (Parker, 2014), workday design expands the focus to consider how work (e.g., tasks during a work shift) and non-work experiences (e.g., breaks within and between work shifts) combine in order to form the overall workday experience (Brodsky & Amabile, 2018).

For instance, since our results showed that overload experienced on one shift has consequences for fatigue during the next shift, any interventions designed to reduce overload should target overload on each shift, rather than average levels of overload over a long duration operation. In terms of non-work experiences, the importance inter-shift recovery has been stressed in operational environments (Andrei et al., 2020) as high quality respite between shifts allows employees to replenish as much energy as possible before their next shift and reducing the carry-over of fatigue from previous shifts (Demerouti, Bakker, et al., 2009) Additionally, there is a burgeoning literature on the positive effect of microbreak activities, which are defined as short, informal respite activities taken voluntarily between tasks (e.g., social activities, having a snack, doing some form of physical activity). Microbreak activities have been found to reduce fatigue and have positive effects on occupational wellbeing on an hourly basis throughout a workday (Zacher et al., 2014). However,

758 we note that microbreak activities may not always be feasible to undertake in a
759 safety-critical operational environment such as a submarine, where individuals may
760 be required to maintain vigilance for long periods with little to no breaks.

761 By contrast, if fatigue from underload is indeed more task bound as we have
762 speculated, interventions for underload should aim to reduce fatigue by targeting the
763 design of specific tasks and activities during a work shift. Relevant interventions
764 include microbreaks (where operationally feasible) (Zacher et al., 2014), more formal
765 scheduling of work tasks so that workers receive enough breaks and rests to reduce
766 fatigue arising from monotony and boredom (Azizi et al., 2010), and/or introducing
767 task rotation within a shift so that workers can switch to more engaging and
768 stimulating tasks to reduce fatigue and protect performance (Gander et al., 2011)

769 **4.6.4 Limitations and Future Directions**

770 There are several limitations in the current study that highlight potential areas
771 for future research. First, all measures in the current study were assessed via self-
772 report, which may have caused common-method variance (CMV). However, many
773 of the variables (e.g., burnout, fatigue, affect) are internal psychological states, and
774 thus self-report is the most suitable method of measuring these constructs.
775 Furthermore, the use of person-mean centering in analysis two removes several
776 causes of CMV, such as differences in response tendencies and dispositional
777 differences (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Nevertheless, obtaining more objective measures
778 of overload and underload (e.g., physiological measurements) would have further
779 strengthened the study.

780 Second, the small sample size of both analyses may have affected statistical
781 power by increasing the risk of type-II errors, therefore reducing the ability to detect
782 significant effects. For this reason, nonsignificant results in the current study should
783 be treated with caution.

784 Third, the current study was conducted in a non-conventional context (i.e.,
785 submarine operations), therefore it is not clear how generalisable the findings are to
786 other occupations. In analysis two, the watchkeeping routine of submariners (6 hours
787 on-watch followed by 6 hours off-watch) allowed for an opportunity to investigate
788 the mutual intensification of overload and fatigue over multiple work periods in a

789 single day. More research is needed to examine if and how these reciprocal effects
790 manifest in more conventional work structures that involve a single working period
791 per day (i.e., 9 to 5 workday).

792 Lastly, the current study focused on the relationship between two work
793 demands (overload and underload) and fatigue, and did not consider the potential
794 moderating effect of other factors such as job resources (e.g., social support), stable
795 individual differences (e.g., boredom proneness) and other environmental demands
796 (e.g., sleep quality/quantity). Interestingly, in terms of individual differences, our
797 data showed that the cross-lagged relationship between underload and state affect
798 showed more between-person variability ($\tau_{55} = -.16$ (95% CV = [.01 - .55]) than the
799 relationship between overload and state affect ($\tau_{55} = -.03$ (95% CV = [.00 - .13]).
800 Previous research has found that the tendency to be bored easily differs from
801 individual to individual, with those scoring higher in boredom proneness also tending
802 to experience higher negative affect (Harris, 2000; Vodanovich & Verner, 1991).
803 Future research could pay more attention to such characteristics and incorporate
804 moderators relevant to the occupational context in question.

805 **4.6.5 Conclusion**

806 Despite the mentioned limitations, this study makes significant contribution
807 to the understanding of work-related predictors of chronic and acute fatigue in
808 submarine operations. In terms of chronic fatigue, this study reveals that submariners
809 do not show significant changes in burnout over relatively short operational activities
810 (< 15 days). In terms of acute fatigue, we found that overload and underload show
811 different relationships with state fatigue over time. Of note, overload and state
812 fatigue were found to reinforce each other over multiple shifts throughout a day. This
813 has important implications for endurance. In a context where personnel are working
814 rotating shifts with limited opportunity for respite and rest, it suggests that a vicious
815 cycle of overload and exhaustion may easily manifest, leading to a rapid build-up of
816 fatigue and strain which impedes ongoing performance.

817

818 **4.7 Appendix 4A**

819 **Burnout**

820 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

821 (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree)

- 822 1. I always find new and interesting aspects in my work
- 823 2. There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work
- 824 3. It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way
- 825 4. After work, I tend to need more time than in the past in order to relax and feel
- 826 better
- 827 5. I can tolerate the pressure of my work very well
- 828 6. Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically
- 829 7. I find my work to be a positive challenge
- 830 8. During my work, I often feel emotionally drained
- 831 9. Over time, one can become disconnected from this type of work
- 832 10. After working, I have enough energy for my leisure activities
- 833 11. Sometimes I feel sickened by my work tasks
- 834 12. After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary
- 835 13. This is the only type of work that I can imagine myself doing
- 836 14. Usually, I can manage the amount of my work well
- 837 15. I feel more and more engaged in my work
- 838 16. When I work, I usually feel energised

839

840 **Overload**

841 Please rate your perception of overall workload for the work period just completed by
842 circling a number for each dimension of workload

843 **Mental Demand:** How much mental activity was required (e.g., thinking, deciding,
844 calculating, remembering, looking, searching etc.)?

Low Demand					High Demand					
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

845

846 **Physical Demand:** How much physical activity was required? (e.g., pushing, pulling,
847 turning, controlling, activating etc.)?

Low Demand					High Demand					
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

848

Chapter 4: Investigating the Dynamics of Overload and Underload in Submarine Operations

849 **Time Demand:** How much time pressure did you feel due to the rate or pace at which
850 the tasks occurred?

Low Demand						High Demand				
0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

851

852 **Underload**

853 How often did you experience the following during the work period you have just
854 completed?

855 (1 = Not at all, 5 = Very often)

- 856 1. I struggled to remain alert and vigilant
857 2. I found it difficult to concentrate
858 3. I found work boring and monotonous
859 4. Time passed slowly

860

861 **State Fatigue**

862 How are you currently feeling? Circle the relevant number below.

863 (1 = Very alert, 3 = Alert, 5 = Neither alert nor sleepy, 7 = Sleepy but not fighting
864 sleep, 9 = Very sleepy, fighting sleep)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

865

866 **State Affect**

867 How are you currently feeling? Circle the relevant number below.

868 (1 = Awful, 10 = Great)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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869

5 GENERAL DISCUSSION

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of this thesis was to advance knowledge of how the demands and constraints unique to extreme work environments impact sustained performance over time. Guided by this overarching aim, this thesis sought to: 1) establish a theoretical framework of endurance that models how human performance is sustained over time and impacted by work, non-work, and sleep factors over an intense long duration mission; and 2) to use this framework to guide initial investigations into how different types of demands impact endurance in real-world extreme work environments. In this chapter, I explain how the research in this thesis contributes to an understanding of how humans perform in both extreme and conventional work environments, and discuss how my findings stimulate the development and integration of existing theories of human work, strain, and fatigue. I will also discuss limitations and opportunities for future research. First, I provide a summary of the findings from this thesis.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In Chapter 2, I developed a theoretical framework of endurance, and defined endurance as an individual's capacity to sustain performance at high levels for safe and effective operations over the extended duration of a mission. I argued that the concept of endurance is well suited to understanding the unique requirements and demands placed on humans that must perform in extreme work environments. In the face of chronic stress and limited opportunity for respite, the capability to endure depends on avoiding accumulation of strain as this leads to negative changes in mental and physical health, which ultimately affects future readiness to perform. An endurance-approach to performance concentrates on how a worker sustainably manages energy across daily work, non-work, and sleep (i.e., their work-life system). The theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2 integrates many literatures (e.g., work stress, recovery, and sleep) to describe ongoing performance in terms of short – and long-term energy management processes as individuals interact with their work-life system. Based on the proposed framework, I put forward several theoretical and practical implications, including the need for researchers to explore the temporal dynamics of within-person processes using intensive longitudinal data

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

(ILD), and recommendations for conducting applied research to inform organisational interventions for endurance.

In Chapter 3, I presented an empirical study aimed at understanding how different types of work demands impact on endurance in a real-world extreme environment - long-haul seafaring. The study examined how two demands commonly experienced in extreme environments, overload and underload, contribute separately and in combination to long-term endurance outcomes. Results showed that while overload and underload were both associated with chronic fatigue, underload showed stronger relationships with chronic fatigue and impaired psychological wellbeing compared to overload. Furthermore, overload was found to have a compensating effect on the negative relationship between underload and psychological wellbeing. That is, work that was characterised by frequent periods of low demands and boredom, with few periods of high demands and time pressure, was most harmful to wellbeing. Overall, the results revealed the importance of accounting for the separate and combined effects of overload and underload on long-term endurance, and that underload may actually present increased risks to worker fatigue and wellbeing than overload.

In Chapter 4, I extended my investigation by examining the dynamic relationship between overload, underload, and worker fatigue in a different extreme work environment – submarine operations. In this longitudinal study, I accounted for the role of time, and explored how overload and underload impacted endurance indicators over two different time frames: 1) a longer-term mission timeframe (i.e., change in chronic fatigue over the time course of a submarine operational activity), and 2) a shorter-term time frame (i.e., dynamic fluctuations in acute fatigue on a shift-to-shift basis). In terms of chronic fatigue over an operational activity, results showed that submariner burnout did not change. This suggests that submariners are enduring over at least relatively short operational activities (< 15 days), and burnout may change over longer operations, or over multiple operations. In terms of acute fatigue, overload and underload had different within-person relationships with state fatigue and state affect on a shift-to-shift basis. For example, overload and state fatigue were found to reinforce each other on a shift-to-shift basis (note: there was a 12-hour time lag between shifts), whereas underload did not predict (nor was

predicted by) state fatigue. This suggests overload poses risks for accumulation of fatigue throughout an operational activity. Similarly, overload and underload exhibited different relationships with state affect such that overload showed a negative relationship with state affect ~12-hours later, while underload showed a positive relationship with state affect ~12-hours later. Overall, these results suggest that overload and underload may have different causal pathways to fatigue. Implication arising from this are that the mitigation and management of fatigue requires: 1) joint consideration of how work may elicit overload and underload; and 2) different interventions strategies targeted to overload and underload.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

In the following section, I will explain how by developing a theoretical framework of endurance (Chapter 2) and shedding light on how multiple complex demands interact and are experienced together across multiple timeframes (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4), this thesis has advanced existing knowledge in the field. Additionally, I show how my findings integrate with the wider theoretical body of works in the literature.

5.2.1 An Integrated Approach to Understanding Performance and Functioning in Complex Work Environments

A key contribution of this thesis is the development of a conceptual model (Chapter 2) that facilitates an integrated and holistic approach to understanding the factors that impact performance and functioning in extreme work environments. One challenge posed by extreme environments is the blurring between work, non-work, and sleep life domains (Sandal et al., 2006; Suedfeld & Steel, 2000); meaning a worker's performance and functioning is closely linked to how they interact with their entire environment. To address challenges such as this, scholars have urged for more integrative and interdisciplinary efforts and approaches (e.g., Bishop, 2004; Landon et al., 2019; Sandal et al., 2006). However, limited research to date offers integrated models of human functioning relevant to extreme work environments (for exceptions see Crain et al., 2018; Landon et al., 2019). Morphew (2001) argues that this diffusion is due to researchers being spread across disciplines focused on subspecialty topics, which has promoted unidimensional research not conducive to identifying the extraneous factors that are relevant to understanding a complex

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

phenomenon. For instance, the work recovery literature is concerned with how experiences and activities during non-work time facilitate or hinder the reduction of strain after work, however, researchers usually focus on the impact of waking activities and experiences, such as household chores (e.g., Fritz et al., 2010), leisure activities (Sonnentag et al., 2014) and psychological detachment (e.g., Chawla et al., 2020). By contrast, the role of sleep is often neglected (Crain et al., 2018; Zijlstra & Sonnentag, 2006), despite sleep being “the recovery activity par excellence” (De Lange et al., 2009, p. 375).

The endurance framework and associated concept of the work-life system (Chapter 2) helps to address limitations in previous research by providing a useful approach that integrates traditionally disparate literatures, ranging from work ergonomics (e.g., Young et al., 2015), work stress (e.g., Ganster & Rosen, 2013), recovery (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2009), and sleep science (e.g., Dawson & McCulloch, 2005). By articulating the common energy management processes that underlie work, non-work, and sleep, the endurance framework provides a theoretically valid foundation for future research to systematically incorporate a larger range of variables that explain and predict human performance in stressful and demanding working environments.

Further to this, the importance of adopting an integrated approach is reinforced by findings from Chapter 3 which revealed that different configurations of work demands should be examined to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the sources of stress in an extreme work environment. This is consistent with recent research (e.g., Riedl & Thomas, 2019; Rosen et al., 2020), that suggests there are multiple situational conditions, such as the presence and frequency of other demands in the working environment that ultimately shape how specific demands lead to worker strain and fatigue. More broadly, my findings contribute to a growing body of literature that advocates for a more contextualised approach towards understanding work roles and the work designs they imply (Griffin et al., 2007; Johns, 2006; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991; Morgeson et al., 2010; Parker et al., 2017). For instance, in his seminal article on the impact of context on organisational behaviour, Johns (2006) suggested that researchers should move beyond studying features of work in an

isolated and “piecemeal fashion” (p. 389) and suggested the study of configurations or ‘bundles’ of stimuli as one way to better appreciate work context.

Of note, my examination into configurations of overload and underload in a job (Chapter 3) revealed that some demands (i.e. overload) can have a positive and compensating effect in some situations. That is, although overload and underload had negative impacts individually, when examined collectively, increasing levels of overload appeared to protect the wellbeing of workers who also experienced high underload. In the few previous studies that have examined configurations of demands, high levels of multiple demands generally attenuated negative outcomes (e.g., Jimmieson et al., 2017; van Woerkom et al., 2016). For example, in several samples of healthcare workers, the negative impact of emotional demands on job satisfaction was exacerbated when both time and cognitive demands were high, creating a “triple disadvantage” of job demands (Jimmieson, et al., 2017, p. 317). As such, my findings offer a novel and expanded perspective on the different ways a complex working environment impacts human performance and functioning (see also Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Parker et al., 2017).

5.2.2 Underload as an Under-researched but Critical Work Demand

The finding that underload is associated with fatigue and strain outcomes is an important contribution of this thesis, and warrants further attention. A consistent finding in this thesis across both seafaring (Chapter 3) and submarine environments (Chapter 4), was that while both overload and underload demonstrated significant cross-sectional associations with fatigue-related outcomes, underload showed stronger associations compared to overload. This was an important finding that provides new avenues for organisational behaviour research, because as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, underload has typically received much less attention compared to overload (Andrei et al., 2020; Bowling et al., 2015; Fisher, 1993). For example, underload is not included in the list of job demands associated with the JD-R framework as compiled by Schaufeli & Taris (2014). The dearth of organisational research on underload is concerning, given the nature of work is changing due to widespread adoption of digital technologies which will likely reduce demands and increase underload for human operators by implementing higher levels of automation

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

(e.g., remote control and monitoring operations) (Parker & Grote, 2020). The findings presented above suggest that organisational scholars should look beyond conventionally studied work demands to consider what novel or under-researched demands relevant to changes in current/future work (e.g., implementation of digital technologies) require more attention (see also Parker et al., 2017).

I make a related point that it is timely for organisational researchers to address underload in modern working environments by drawing on and integrating existing knowledge and methods from other disciplines (see also Parker & Grote, 2020). The issue of underload is not new and varying aspects of underload have long been investigated by other disciplines. For example, the human factors and ergonomics literatures have investigated how human operators maintain vigilance (a construct closely related to underload) in human-machine systems for several decades (e.g., Parasuraman, 1986; Warm et al., 2008; Young et al., 2015). Similarly, the cognitive psychology literature is concerned with the complex relationship between effort and fatigue (e.g., Hockey, 1997; Inzlicht et al., 2014, 2018). Moreover, boredom (a state that can be caused by underload) is receiving renewed research interest across various fields (e.g., Bench & Lench, 2019; Hooff & Hooff, 2014; van Hooff & van Hooff, 2018; Wolff & Martarelli, 2020), as scholars propose that a better understanding of the mechanisms that lead to boredom and disengagement may help advance theories of human stress and fatigue (Wolff et al., 2020).

One potential reason for the disconnect between organisational behaviour and human factors/cognitive psychology research are the differing levels of conceptualisation and analysis used between the literatures. Organisational behaviour research has mostly examined how job-level demands relate to longer-term outcomes (e.g., how general perceptions of overload and/or underload within a job role relate to burnout and wellbeing). By contrast, the human factors and cognitive psychology literatures have typically investigated task-level demands (e.g., how task-specific overload and/or underload relates to performance and fatigue during that task). From the perspective that digital technologies are not likely to replace whole jobs, but will instead lead to changes at the task-level (e.g., automation of specific tasks) (Parker & Grote, 2020), it may be relevant for organisational scholars to draw on approaches

(i.e. experimental designs, short-term task-based timeframes) from the human factors and/or cognitive psychology literatures to investigate how underload at a task-level affects overall work design. However, to reiterate from Chapter 2, an understanding of both short-term task-level performance and fatigue, and long-term health and wellbeing, are critical for endurance. Therefore, future research on underload as a whole would benefit from an interdisciplinary approach that draws on different theoretical lenses to better understand how underload manifests and affects outcomes at different levels (see also Parker & Grote, 2020; Parker et al., 2017).

5.2.3 Incorporation of the Role of Time to Enrich Theory and Research

A third contribution of this thesis is the incorporation of the role of time to provide new insights on the processes that lead to fatigue and stress in extreme work environments. A large part of organisational research is concerned with the study of processes – for instance, the cognitive, energetic, motor, and social processes that underlie how people work, and how work affects people (Navarro et al., 2015). Given these processes necessarily unfold over time, a temporal lens is essential for advancing organisational research (Roe, 2008). Despite this, scholars still argue that temporal features have not received enough attention, with previous research tending to neglect the role of time in theory-building, measurement, and data analysis (Navarro et al., 2015; Shipp & Cole, 2015). For example, previous research has typically adopted a between-persons approach which answers static questions (i.e., how do individuals differ from one another?) and/or studies stable constructs (George & Jones, 2000). Accordingly, there have been calls for more research to take a within-persons approach which allows for the incorporation of the role of time as it explores how individual's states and behaviours change as they interact with their environment over different timeframes (Dalal et al., 2020; McCormick et al., 2020).

Time plays a key role in the theoretical framework of endurance presented in Chapter 2. Given that extreme work environments require workers to sustain optimal performance every day over a long duration mission, it is useful to take a within-persons approach to focus on how performance (and the factors that impact an individual's performance) might change or fluctuate over a mission (Roe, 2014). This reflected in the framework as constructs and their dynamic relationships are

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

defined and specified according to various timeframes. For example, I distinguish between short-term and long-term factors in a work-life system (e.g., daily work hours vs. a work-rest pattern over a mission) and how they relate to outcomes over different time frames (e.g., daily task performance, vs. a pattern of goals over a mission). By accounting for dynamic processes that unfold and are linked over multiple timeframes, my framework offers a comprehensive and systematic approach to theorising and studying the factors that impact performance over time.

Additionally, the empirical studies conducted in Chapter 3 and 4 demonstrate how the theoretical framework can be used to generate insights about fatigue with enhanced temporal precision. One example relates to the specification of timeframes to model how different demands may involve different underlying causal pathways to fatigue. Relative to the static between-persons approach (Chapter 3), using a dynamic within-persons approach (Chapter 4) revealed that the relationships between overload and underload with fatigue are qualitatively different, suggesting these demands may not cause fatigue over time in the same way. Although overload and underload initially showed significant cross-sectional associations with long-term fatigue measures in Chapter 3, an examination of the dynamic day-to-day relationships between the two demands and acute fatigue revealed that only overload showed a significant relationship with acute fatigue. As discussed in Chapter 4, this suggests the way underload causes fatigue over a 12-hour timeframe may be different to overload. This might be due to the different nature of tasks associated with overload and underload. For overload, spill-over of tasks into after-work time and/or rumination about unfinished work may lead to longer lasting feelings of fatigue (Syrek & Antoni, 2014). However, the fatigue associated with the boredom and monotony of underload may be more task-bound and short-lived, as boredom can be alleviated as soon as the tasks ends, and attention can be redirected towards more rewarding or engaging activities (Inzlicht et al., 2014; Wolff & Martarelli, 2020).

These findings support and extend on the notion that not all job demands seem to be equal (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). A growing body of research over the last decade argues that the category of job demands is not as homogenous as initially proposed by frameworks such as the JD-R model (e.g., Crawford et al., 2010; van

Chapter 5: General Discussion

den Broeck et al., 2010). For example, researchers have found that demands can be sorted into two further categories: challenge demands and hindrance demands, which each yield different relationships with burnout and engagement (van den Broeck et al., 2010). By examining how overload and underload lead to fluctuations in fatigue over a specific short-term time frame, the findings of this thesis reveal yet another way that not all demands are created equal. That is, specific demands may cause fatigue that is experienced differently over time by workers. Future research looking to expand on these findings could explore how different *patterns* of fluctuations in overload and underload are experienced over time – for example, looking at how variability and/or predictability of fluctuations moderate the relationship between overload/underload and fatigue over a period of time. Recent research suggests that a more variable patterns of demands lead to more negative outcomes compared to a stable pattern (Downes et al. 2020, Rosen et al., 2020), however it is unclear whether we could expect to see the same effects for different demands such as overload and underload.

A second related example relates to use of time series analysis techniques in Chapter 4 to examine how daily carry-over effects manifest in a stressful submarine work-life system. In Chapter 2, I argued that workers in extreme work environments may be vulnerable to a build-up of strain and fatigue due to ongoing performance requirements and limited respite opportunities. The use of ILD and time series-based analysis techniques (i.e., dynamic structural equation modelling) in Chapter 4 provided support for this argument. Specifically, overload and fatigue reinforced each other over multiple work periods within a day, meaning submariners facing high levels of demands may be at risk of experiencing higher carry-over of fatigue from one-shift to the next. These findings could not be elicited with conventional approaches, such as cross-sectional or small *t* panel designs, which typically only allow for between-person analysis at a few time points. However, by collecting many data points over a shorter observation window and examining within-person variation, showed the processes underlying how fatigue manifests and develops on a day-to-day basis.

Furthermore, this finding supports and extends on assumptions made by existing models of employee fatigue and strain such as the JD-R model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014) and Hockey's (1997) model of compensatory control. While these

models propose that demands and strain are reciprocally related (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Zapf et al., 1996), existing research has usually examined reciprocal effects between job demands and worker strain across longer time frames (i.e., one to three years) (e.g., Ângelo & Chambel, 2015; Ford et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2010; Houkes et al., 2008; Kinnunen & Feldt, 2013). The focus on longer-term relationships and processes is not surprising, as job demands research has typically been concerned with outcomes that are relatively stable over long periods, such as burnout (I note that in Chapter 4 submariner burnout was also demonstrated to be relatively stable over an operational activity). By contrast, studies of short-term dynamics are more common in the research of work stress and affect, where episodic approaches are used to examine how emotions fluctuate in response to specific events at work (e.g., Fuller et al., 2003; Zohar, 1999). Given extreme work environments require sustained performance across both short- and long-term periods, it is critical to understand both the long-term processes underlying how demands lead to burnout, as well as the short-term processes that generate fatigue daily.

5.3 Practical Implications

This thesis has several practical implications for human performance and well-being in both extreme and more conventional work environments. Beginning with Chapter 2, by integrating short- and long-term approaches to performance and shifting the focus to that of endurance, this thesis provides practitioners and organisations with a model they can leverage to address what has typically been two competing goals – work performance and employee well-being (Andrei et al., 2017). A common issue observed in high stress and safety critical work environments is that expert workforces are required to tackle complex demands to a high performance and safety standard, however the chronic stress experienced by these individuals leads to impaired physical and psychological functioning in the long-term (Bishop, 2004; Brasher et al., 2010; Landon et al., 2018). The theoretical framework of endurance makes clear that to enable workers to perform across both daily work episodes and across an entire career, organisations should play an active role in the design and support of a sustainable work-life system for their workers. Specifically, the framework provides organisations and practitioners guidance on the types of levers

Chapter 5: General Discussion

that can optimise endurance across different time frames (e.g., circadian synchronisation, work design), and the indicators and outcomes that shed light on how workers may be tracking over time.

The theoretical framework of endurance is also relevant to recent issues surrounding the increase in remote working posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many workers throughout 2020-2021 (and likely into the future) found themselves in situations not unlike the extreme environment of a submarine, as they experienced work, non-work, and sleep activities unfolding in a potentially isolated and confined physical space. The model of endurance presented in Chapter 2 is particularly well suited to inform how individuals and organisations can support ongoing performance and wellbeing in these situations. Where work, non-work, and sleep are highly interconnected, such as in a remote working situation, interventions for performance and wellbeing should optimise across work, non-work, and sleep experiences so that potential negative carry over effects are reduced. For example, given the lack of physical distance between office and home in a remote working situation, it is critical for employees to pursue non-work activities and boundary management practices that facilitate effective psychological detachment (Allen et al., 2021; Cho, 2020); this includes engaging in non-work activities that require full attention (e.g., specific hobbies) (Sonnetag et al., 2010) and manipulation of physical space to create physical borders between work and non-work domains (Allen et al., 2021).

The two empirical studies presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 also pose implications for the mitigation and/or reduction of stress and fatigue caused by overload and underload – that is, underload and overload may require different intervention strategies. Interestingly, in Chapter 4, at a within-person level, underload was not related to state fatigue measured 12-hours later, despite underload showing significant positive cross-sectional correlations with fatigue measures across both seafarer and submariner samples (Chapter 3 and 4 respectively). This was likely due to the nature of tasks that evoke underload; fatigue from underload may be more task-bound and can be reduced rapidly when concentration on the unstimulating task at hand is no longer required. Following this line of reasoning, interventions to reduce fatigue from underload may be more effective if targeted at the design of the task (or work shift) that is causing underload. For example, scheduling tasks so that workers get enough breaks and rests to reduce fatigue arising from monotony and

boredom (Azizi et al., 2010), or introducing task rotation within a shift such that workers can switch to more engaging and stimulating tasks to reduce fatigue and protect performance (Gander et al., 2011). More importantly, as underload can be caused by automated systems that relegate humans to being passive operators (Young & Stanton, 2002), organisations and system designers looking to implement automation to increase performance and safety should adopt a human-centric approach towards the design of these technologies to ensure human operators are supported, rather than replaced (Grote et al., 1995; Parker & Grote, 2020; Stanton & Young, 1998).

On the other hand, the findings of this thesis suggest the reduction of fatigue from overload may be achieved by considering the broader design of daily work, non-work, and sleep elements. In terms of work design, given results in Chapter 4 showed that overload experienced on one shift has consequences for fatigue during the next shift, interventions should target overload on each daily shift, rather than average levels of overload over a long duration operation. An example of such an intervention is the implementation of microbreak activities during work shifts, which have been found to reduce fatigue on an hourly basis throughout a workday (Zacher et al., 2014). Supporting high quality daily inter-shift recovery (by optimising non-work and sleep time) is also critical, as it may allow workers to replenish as much energy as possible before the next working period, thereby reducing the carry-over of fatigue from previous shifts, and interrupting the vicious cycle of overload and exhaustion (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2015; Zijlstra & Rook, 2016).

Lastly, the results of this thesis suggest that organisations should be mindful of not inadvertently creating conditions which increase risk of underload, in their attempts to reduce overload. For example, the significant interaction between overload and underload found in Chapter 3 suggests that overload is not detrimental to workers across all situations, and overload may in fact be able to buffer some of the negative impact of underload. This highlights that organisational interventions targeted at purely reducing overload (e.g., by automating tasks and processes) may be ineffective or even exacerbate fatigue, as workers are left with tasks that are largely monotonous, boring, and unstimulating. As mentioned earlier, organisations should prevent underload in these situations by paying attention to the early design

stage of new technologies and work systems so that technology is designed for optimal human and machine performance.

5.4 Limitations and Future Directions

In the next section I note the potential limitations and corresponding future directions of this thesis. A first limitation of this thesis is in the potential to make causal claims. The first empirical study presented in Chapter 3 used a cross-sectional survey design, and therefore cannot inform causality. Although this limitation was partially addressed by employing a longitudinal design in Chapter 4 to explore the reciprocal relationships between overload and underload and fatigue on a within-day basis, it is still difficult to draw causal inferences from this second study alone. This is because although ILD afford a closer look at a phenomenon of interest, I was unable to rule out alternative explanations. For example, it is likely that there are omitted variables that vary over time and may affect both perceptions of demands and fatigue (e.g., an individual's circadian rhythm). Unfortunately, the nature of conducting a field study in an extreme work environment precludes the ability to measure and control a range of additional variables.

Future research may be able to shed more light on causality in several ways. One possible future avenue is to employ laboratory-based experimental designs that allow a high degree of control to manipulate variables and investigate specific mechanisms. However, it is important to consider that performance decrements and worker strain are more readily observed in laboratory tasks than in naturally occurring work activities (Hockey, 1997). This is thought to be because there is a greater concern with maintaining task goals and priorities in natural work contexts (e.g., safety reasons), which encourages workers to sustain their performance (Kahneman, 1971; Teichner, 1968). To address this issue, experimental designs may benefit from the use of realistic simulations that replicate the experience of working and/or living in an extreme environment. For example, an experimental design seeking to understand the development of fatigue should not only attempt to replicate a sleeping pattern, but also ensure participants are engaged in realistic work tasks.

An additional avenue is to conduct quasi-experimental field research where endurance enhancing interventions are adopted by certain extreme teams but not others, which allows for the observation of worker states and behaviours in real-world situations but also a higher degree of control than is typically afforded in field

Endurance in Extreme Work Environments

studies. However, I note that interventions involving work tasks and activities (e.g., work re-design) may be difficult or impossible to implement in many extreme environments, because work tasks are inherently linked to mission performance and safety. For example, it is not ethical, nor operationally feasible to change the structure, type, and amount of work tasks a submarine sonar operator must complete during their work period. As such, sleep (e.g., sleep hygiene education) and/or waking recovery interventions (e.g., active vs. passive recovery activities) may be more feasible to implement and measure in quasi-experimental field study situations.

A second limitation of this thesis is the reliance on single source self-report data which presents the potential for common method variance (CMV). Common method variance is systematic error variance due to using a single reporting method and can either attenuate or disattenuate relationships found in a study (Spector, 2006). However, there are reasons to believe that the results presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 are unlikely to be influenced by CMV. In terms of Chapter 3, CMV may be less of an issue as a significant interaction between overload and underload was detected, and previous research suggests CMV cannot create an artificial interaction, but rather may deflate the magnitude of true effects (Siemsen et al., 2010). In terms of Chapter 4, although all variables were self-report, the intensive within-person approach has been suggested to be less subject to issues of CMV (Foo et al., 2009; Williams & Alliger, 1994). Nevertheless, future research could build on the findings of this thesis by incorporating multiple sources of data, such as physiological measures of stress and fatigue (e.g., heart rate variability, pupillometry).

Third, it should be acknowledged that the studies contained within have focused on two specific extreme work environments: long haul shipping in Chapter 3, and submarine operations in Chapter 4. Given the specific context is crucial in shaping organisational phenomena (Johns, 2006), there are potential concerns regarding the generalisability of the samples and findings to other extreme work environments and conventional workplaces more broadly. For example, the high-risk nature of extreme environments may heighten situational strength; situational strength affecting the nature of predictor and performance relationships (Bell et al., 2018; Meyer et al., 2010). Compared to conventional work environments, the risks

Chapter 5: General Discussion

inherent in extreme environments may put pressure on individuals and/or teams to engage in or refrain from certain behaviours, which may then underscore the importance of particular behaviours, while minimizing the impact of other predictors (e.g., individual differences) (Bell et al., 2018).

To overcome this limitation and enable studies in specific extreme environments to be more generalisable, future research should provide clear contextual parameters within which effects are found, as well as articulate the common and unique features of a specific extreme work environment (for more detail, I refer readers to Bell et al., 2018). The more clearly communicated the features of the specific context are, the more easily subsequent research will be able to leverage the findings and/or use the findings as a basis for creating locally calibrated predictions in another context. For instance, researchers should pay attention to the degree of extremity in an environment (Maynard et al., 2018; Van Thielen et al., 2018). To illustrate, seafarers and submariners both experience isolation and confinement, however, the submarine environment involves a higher degree of extremity; a submarine is a confined capsule where workers receive no natural sunlight and must remain hidden/undetected to the outside environment. Characterising the degree of extremity allows for more detailed explanations for how and when extreme environments might intensify or attenuate effects. This would also help researchers and practitioners to bridge findings and insights from various extreme environments to more conventional contexts.

Last, future research can adopt a phenomenon-driven research (PDR) approach to enable more generalisable insights. Compared to theory-driven research which aims to contribute to a specific (and often pre-existing) theory, a phenomenon-driven research (PDR) approach aims to capture and extend the body of knowledge within a field by focusing on a specific organisational phenomenon. (Schwarz & Stensaker, 2014). This involves describing and conceptualising real-world challenges, and leveraging and modifying existing theory, or developing new theory, to better understand and address these challenges (Mathieu, 2016; Schwarz & Stensaker, 2014). For example, by identifying the challenge of sustained performance in a submarine environment and shifting the focus to how short-term fatigue develops over multiple work shifts, I was able to develop and contribute to fundamental theories of human fatigue and strain (Chapter 4). In this way, a focus on

addressing challenges identified in specific real-world contexts does not necessarily preclude generalisable findings, given findings are used to position, build and/or refine fundamental theories and addresses questions of interest to the broader field (e.g., human performance and stress).

5.5 Conclusion

This thesis aimed to develop a better understanding of how the complex demands and constrains within extreme work environments impact sustained performance over time. Chapter 2 introduced a theoretical framework of endurance that models how human performance and functioning is sustained and impacted over time by a ‘work-life system’. Chapters 3 and 4 provided empirical investigations into the work element of the work-life system and examined how overload and underload impact endurance in real-world extreme work environments. Overall, the findings of this thesis demonstrate the importance of: 1) taking an integrated and holistic approach towards understanding performance in complex extreme environments, 2) accounting for the effects of increasingly prevalent but under researched demands such as underload, and 3) incorporating temporal dynamics to better understand the mechanisms and processes that underlie endurance. I hope that the findings and concepts herein provide a useful foundation for future research and practice. Specifically, I hope this thesis will motivate a continual refinement of research theory and generation of insights in an interdisciplinary manner; and the development of solutions that will help address the complex challenges that workers in extreme work environments (and workers in increasingly demanding conventional work environments), must face and endure on a daily basis.

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