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SUPPORT FOR WORKFARE AND LABOR PROGRAMS IN THE  
BAHAMAS: THE ROLE OF SUBJECTIVE POVERTY, INSECURITY,  
CONSERVATISM, AND EMPATHY

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To: Dean William G Hardin III  
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This dissertation, written by Utha Celest Butler and entitled Support for Workfare and Labor Programs in the Bahamas: The Role of Subjective Poverty, Insecurity, Conservatism, and Empathy, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my children D'Chaz Victor, Arnaldo Antone, and Carey Kathleen. They are the rock that keeps me centered. Without them and the grace and mercies provided by the God I serve, I would not have my being.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

SUPPORT FOR WORKFARE AND LABOR PROGRAMS IN THE

BAHAMAS: THE ROLE OF SUBJECTIVE POVERTY, INSECURITY,

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This research extends the literature on individual-level determinants of workfare and labor programs support (WLPs) using a mixed factors model to explain individual behavior. Extant research focused on institutional factors, which did not sufficiently explain much of the variance. This study, conducted primarily online and through mobile applications in The Bahamas, focused on the individual-level determinants that may explain support for such programs. This research revealed that conservatism, empathy, and government spending efficacy contextualized as goal achievement are significant predictors. We found that support for social spending in this context was affected by whether the respondent was a direct beneficiary or interconnected by filial or friendly relations to a participant. This research is essential, as implementing workfare programs has gained traction with policymakers as part of their arsenal in the public finance model. Subsequently, although social spending is a requirement of all governments, it is often

the case that its expenditure produces public concerns and can erode government policy support and create implications for the ballot box.

Keywords: workfare, labor programs, goal achievement, subjective poverty, conservatism, empathy, insecurity

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This study contributes to the rapidly growing literature on the individualistic factors that determine the support for welfare and labor programs (WLPs). This research is an important study for the following reasons. Firstly, WLPs policies impact a country's entire socio-economic profile, as their existence and implementation contribute to the experienced quality of life of the citizenry (Fournier & Johansson, 2016; Razin, et al., 2002a). Accordingly, WLPs expenditures make them a significant component of the public finance model in welfare states, as demonstrated by endogenous growth theory that focuses on fiscal policy's effects on the economy's long-term comprehensive growth (Barro & Xavier Sala, 1992; Fournier & Johansson, 2016).

Evaluating WLPs' support from the country's constituents, principally the electorate, is critical for state actors as part of political economics (Rehm, 2009). State actors should seek congruence between how they present and implement WLPs policies and how the electorate views their performance. An intelligently informed state actor usually wants to know the likely consequences of their social-based fiscal policy actions on voter preferences and intentions (Mughan & Lacy, 2002). Accordingly, this research wanted to know the key indicators that political state actors needed to be aware of and measure to be reliably and intelligently informed. Extant research studied institutional factors to explain some of the variances in support; however, the inability of institutional effects to account for a larger support variance has provided an opportunity to explore a wide array of individual-level determinants. Subsequently, recent studies found that support for social policy preferences described a more considerable amount of the variance through individualistic determinants as predictors rather than institutional

factors (Chung et al., 2018; Garitzmann et al., 2018; Hiel & Kossowska, 2007; Munro, 2017).

Additionally, we noted two cornerstone theories underpin the current research trend into individual-level determinants of social policy preference in welfare states. Those two fundamental theories are economic self-interest (Anderson & Pontusson, 2007; Gonthier, 2019; Knabe et al., 2017) and ideological beliefs (Busemeyer, 2021; Jost et al., 2017; Kettle & Salerno, 2017). These theories underpin the recent major arguments for workfare support in the welfare state. Understanding how attitudes and preferences play into support is critical to the foundation of the welfare state as there is the possibility of political conflicts, as demonstrated in the Yellow Vest Movement in France (Duvoux & Papuchon, 2019) when state actors fail to have a finger on the pulse of the nation. Aside from the importance of this study to the existing literature by extending and filling the theoretical gap on individual-level determinants of support in welfare states, this study focuses on individual determinants for the support of WLPs in The Bahamas.

According to UNESCO's definition of a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), the Bahamas fits the criteria. A defining characteristic of SIDS is that they are susceptible to macro and natural exogenous shock factors over which they have no control (Encontro, 1999). Also, they usually heavily rely on external sources of financing in the form of international loans. Accordingly, in the Bahamas' case, like in other developing countries, continuing the cycle of international loans to fund social expenditures may reduce the SIDS' ability to choose its economic and social paths due to resource dependence and power theory (Battaile et al., 2015). In 2018, the Bahamas' government debt to GDP ratio, which is a measure of the country's public debt, stood at 64.60%

(Trading Economics: Country List, 2018), and although this figure is staggering, the record belongs to 2014 at 73.70%. Therefore, the government must consider the possible shock factor of their economic and social policy decisions. Policy decisions with potential societal transformation effects can often be polarizing and lead to upheavals due to the redistributive wealth policies regarding the social programs (Buss, 2019).

As with other global community members, the Covid-19 Pandemic has highlighted the need to mitigate or eliminate wasteful expenditure on government-funded and managed programs (McGann et al., 2020). Through programs such as WLPs, labor market policy interventions are critical during periods of crisis and have become a readily deployed socio-economic tool (Bedggood, 1999). However, even though governments make choices in redistributing wealth, they must consider the public opinion of their policies as political volatility has increased (Jost et al., 2017; Margalit, 2019). As a result, in this study, we are interested in recognizing those determinants that can assist state actors in assessing the likely support for their social policy actions.

### **History and Scope of WLPs in the Bahamas**

Against the backdrop of the global recession of 2008, countries from the western hemisphere gathered in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and Tobago in April 2009 to discuss their shared economic concerns in the Americas (SIRG, 2012). The predominant concern, of course, like all countries worldwide, was 'how to stimulate the economy and put people to work.' That year, the Summit of America's theme was "Securing Our Citizens' Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability." As part of its commitment to promote human prosperity, the Bahamas government developed several objectives, which included 'strengthening the social safety

net.' Although it has a vast geographic disposition, the country is sparsely populated 395,361 throughout its archipelago. Still, it is densely concentrated in a few islands consisting of small, closely-knit, and inter-related communities.

After the Fifth Summit of the Americas convened in 2009, the government developed the plan to implement workfare programs to assist in alleviating some of the social ills while ensuring the growth of a skilled labor force (SIRG, 2012). The first version of the workfare program was launched in 2011 and termed 'The 52 Weeks Skills Empowerment Program'. This program contracted employment within the private and government sectors for previously unsuccessful job-seekers. The employed were engaged initially for 52 weeks and received subsidized salaries at a fixed maximum during that period. At the end of the predetermined period, the employer was at liberty to hire the individual without government subsidy (\$22m Apprenticeship, 2016). Upon its initial launch in 2011, the then Prime Minister stated that the program would "provide work experience and on-the-job training to improve the skills and enhance the unemployed's employability" (IDB, 2016). This version began with a budget of \$25 million and ended with expenditures of \$48 million in 2012 due to significant cost overruns.

The program was suspended in 2012 but was re-launched in 2016. Upon its re-launch in 2016, the IADB's (Inter-American Development Bank) news release of November 2016 touted the program's expectations. Some of the more prominent expectations included the program's aim to increase labor productivity and address a shortage of job prospects, primarily among the youth and young adults. These aims were important as labor productivity reportedly experienced an average annual drop of approximately one percent between 2000 and 2011 (IDB, 2016).

The IDB (International Development Bank) also noted several other important factors that determined recruitment efforts. Most employers indicated to the IDB that applicants usually lacked job-specific skills (34%), work experience (29%), and soft skills (28%). Department of Statistics data also stated that 16,000 out of 24,000 work permits between 2012-2014 were issued for low-skilled labor (IDB, 2016). At the same time, an analysis of Bahamas Technical & Vocational Institute (BTVI) graduates indicates that there are also several challenges compared to enrollment numbers. According to the National Education Census 2015, of 1,798 students enrolled in November 2015, only 253 graduated in 2014/2015. Of the 253 graduates, there were 56 in construction, 30 in electrical installation, seven carpenters, and six plumbers. No one graduated during the year with masonry skills.

The Bahamas faced severe and significant factors that produced an unsustainable unemployment rate and social assistance challenge coupled with the global recession. Sectors with economic potential for growth needed to be identified and pushed into activity. Consequently, several areas were identified and targeted for inclusion in the program to assist in stimulating the economy. The targeted sectors were selected based on their potential for growth and expansion. They included areas in the maritime industry, health care, and information technology. This ideal may not have been fully realized as participant placement was generally in the occupations of teachers' aides, after-school and playground monitors, neighborhood watch workers, health assistants, and data entry personnel.

The program's objectives were commendable and are encapsulated in the IDB's draft Skills for Current and Future Jobs in the Bahamas Action Plan 2016- Objectives A2

and loan documents. Overall, the workfare programs are supposed to produce discernible and quantifiable outcomes which result in (a) increased employability and quality of employment of beneficiaries of the program, improving access to quality jobs in the Bahamas, especially for youth. (b) The number of work permits offered to unskilled and semi-skilled overseas workers will substantially decrease. (c) Individual companies realize a benefit from more skilled people being available and are prepared to make a fair contribution to training them. (d) Young people will be better equipped for work, earn better wages, and have the foundation for a career.

### **Problem Statement**

The problem under investigation is how to reasonably conclude the public's support for the social spending preference of WLPs in the Bahamas. In political economics, evaluating public support for social consumption and outlay is essential. Presumably, this is part of its political economy because government actors want to make policy decisions that do not antagonize their constituents. The policy decisions can affect the country's endogenous economic growth and, more importantly, the resulting tax structure (Barro & Xavier Sala, 1992).

Conceivably, building resilience can lead to SIDS weathering the harmful effects of external shocks (Briguglio, 2016). Building resilience is essential because the monies utilized to fund these projects are from the tax base. This base has a legitimate right to decide how their wealth should be used and benefit from involuntary investments.

Research into what generates social spending preferences support has taken on a greater significance and importance as there were significant evidentiary shifts in the voting patterns of the left-right wings (Béland, 2005; Häusermann et al., 2020) that

flummoxed voting predictions. This shift suggested that a mix of individual concerns rather than institutional ones may play a key role in explaining a more significant part of the variance (Garitzmann et al., 2018) as in social spending preferences support. Additionally, prior research primarily utilized secondary data such as the World Bank Surveys and representative surveys from European countries for data analysis. Therefore, we intend to fill the gap in current research, which suggests that using primary individual data may yield better results in data analysis.

However, the current research trend did not indicate whether a composite model of individualistic-level determinants would be a better approach to explain a greater degree of variation regarding WLPs support. Notably, the theoretical models did not explore innate characteristics such as empathy. Innate traits such as the empathy quotient play a critical role in societal considerations and interactions, particularly a concern for others, especially those in need, although they may be dissimilar (Riess, 2017). This concern for others is essential for a well-functioning society as a low-level empathy quotient can negatively impact its progress. Consequently, our response to the problem is that in addition to the commonly studied self-interest and ideology theories, we intend to extend the literature by exploring trait theory proxied by the empathy quotient in what generates support for specific social spending preferences.

We want to know what mix of individual-level factors can contribute to measuring WLPs support in the Bahamas. Over the last three decades, welfare programs have become a more attractive form of labor market intervention and social consumption policy government tool. However, this shift occurred during a widening gap regarding labor market income inequalities. Consequently, public support for WLPs has political

consequences as resistance to social policies could disrupt their implementation or success. As a result, there have been extensive studies into the individual determinants of workfare and labor program support. In this study, the gauging of support for WLP is under investigation because there is a contributory implication for resource dependency. Many SIDS like the Bahamas depend on foreign financial resources in foreign direct investments, private country loans, and loans from international organizations such as the IDB. Resource dependency's ramifications can determine the economic and social paths a country will travel. Hence, the following research question will guide this study:

RQ: What individual-level factors contribute to WLPs' support in the Bahamas?

### **Relevance and Significance of the Study**

Accordingly, the overarching purpose of this quantitative study is to contribute to the knowledge of individualistic-level determinants of WLP support. Extant research has determined that the two factors of economic interest and ideological individual-level determinants alone cannot explain the impact of support for workfare or additional social spending (Munro, 2017). We proposed filling the gap and extending the existing knowledge by presenting the individual determinants of conservatism, insecurity levels, subjective poverty, empathy, and goal achievement contextualization. We propose that these factors can indicate social spending preferences support.

The significance of this study is the implications for social spending preferences as part of the public finance model. Our main objective was to provide political economists with a user-friendly tool to enhance the collection and analysis of data on public opinion on social spending policies. The resulting survey may provide an amendable guideline for state and political actors to identify and measure factors

contributing to social spending preferences. We expected that this survey instrument would be a reliable and valid indicator of the respondent's level of WLPs support. This study addresses a practical research problem of sufficiently concluding the public's backing for social preference spending in the form of WLP's expenditure. The intended audience comprises any individual concerned with studying the interactions of government policies and the individual and economic ramifications. In addition to examining the general support for WLPs, this study examined the perceived support of the government's current role in funding and administering such programs. We hope the results will recommend whether the government should continue the policy initiative on its own steam or seek significant participation from the entrepreneurship sector/capital markets. The citizenry is vested in how its wealth is redistributed and will want to see a considerable return on its investment in the public finance model.

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of the study for this dissertation is a quantitative study of public opinion of support for welfare and labor programs in the Bahamas. The cross-sectional survey provided data on which social characteristics contribute to WLP support. The survey was self-administered through online social platforms and mobile applications, and the online forum made it more accessible and provided anonymity for the respondents. Due to the research's applied nature, we had a fair degree of faith in the practicalities of using a non-random sampling method to collect the primary data. Consequently, we relied extensively on convenience sampling in the form of snowballing. The expected sample size was 1100, and we anticipated a seventy-five percent consent rate and fifty percent completion rate for approximately 452 data sets.

There was continued access to the survey during an eight-week window to provide ample completion opportunities.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

This research explored the possibility that a mix of individual-level determinants can assist in explaining a veritable amount of the variance in predicting support for WLPs in the Bahamas. To assist in this research, we examined a variety of past and recent literature on social benefit programs that included labor or work components. We were also interested in the possible correlation of support for WLPs versus support for WLPs' current administrative and funding formats in The Bahamas. Therefore, we also examined the literature on countries which revamped their workfare programs' administrative and financing aspects.

Accordingly, we have organized this chapter in the following manner. We began the research with an overview of how we surveyed the literature and a brief overview of workfare programs. Review sections on the adopted subjective poverty approach, contributions of insecurity and safety levels to poverty concerns, conservative ideology theory, empathy, and the perceptions of the efficacy of goal achievements of workfare programs followed. This chapter also presents an overview of alternative administrative formats some countries have implemented for their workfare program management. The theoretical foundation followed, and this chapter concluded with the research model and hypotheses sections.

Our literature review began with a general all-encompassing search with Google Scholar and FIU's online library on the key search words workfare support to conduct our literature review. We also searched the IDB database and other online sources for workfare programs in the Bahamas using the key search word 52-weeks program. The

mentioned databases were primarily explored during the period November 2019 through January 2022.

Eventually, we conducted further searches by cross-referencing key search words such as conservatism, empathy, subjective poverty, insecurity, and workfare objectives. In addition to our manual cross-referencing, we scoured the relevant articles for possible supplementary references. We also quickly reviewed the abstracts to narrow the list of potential references. As a result, the list was finalized and included in the literature review.

## **Overview of Workfare**

Workfare and labor programs (WLPs) typically target a specific population, such as unemployed youth. Subsequently, one of its defining objectives is to cause a change in the economic profile of the participants (Leigh, 1995) and, ultimately, the economy at large. As we explored the literature, we looked at how workfare evolved into an essential tool of socio-economic development, particularly in economic crises (McGann et al., 2020; Ravallion, 1999). Workfare as a government policy emerged in the 1970s and 1980s in response to demands for the retrenchment of welfare states (Shragge, 2019). Literature gives credit to Richard Nixon for deploying the term workfare in 1969. Although workfare is not conclusively defined, the concept alludes to a mixture of welfare and compulsory action (Casey, 1986). The idea was presaged in the USA and European countries as a more equitable redistribution of wealth (Knabe et al., 2017). The workfare concept was supposed to reduce the financial burden to the funding state by moving persons from the welfare role or preventing them from becoming a burden in the first instance (Solvang, 2017). Its proponents lauded its positive potential in terms of the

system helping individuals progressively self-remove from a welfare position to one that is self-sustaining (Mead, 1989) and touted the benefits as a win-win for both the state and society. The concept was also supposed to encourage a self-sufficient attitude and ability in individuals who lacked the will or capacity (Ravallion, 2019) to self-improve. States have used workfare to achieve heterogeneous goals in education, health, and life-long learning (Choi et al., 2020). However, the overarching aim was to improve society due to the mitigation of afflictions resulting from unemployment or underemployment.

### **Subjective Poverty**

Undoubtedly economic self-interest has strong relations with redistributive wealth and social spending. Notably, research showed that adverse shocks such as the loss of jobs and drops in income tend to increase support for more comprehensive social policies that include redistributive wealth and more generous social expenditures (Im & Komp-Leukkunen, 2021; Margalit, 2019). Research also supports the theory that individuals are concerned about potential adverse shocks to their financial well-being that can affect their social status. Additionally, discontent regarding economic conditions such as low income and educational attainment underpins this concern (Gidron & Hall, 2020), subsequently contributing to feelings of marginalization and perceptions of status decline (Ballard-Rosa et al., 2022).

Research has directly linked adverse economic shocks and job loss to workfare and other social benefits support. They found increased demand for more expansive government-assisted benefits. For example, Im and Komp-Leukkunen (2021) compared how automation risk among routine workers affected workfare support and whether deteriorating economic conditions increased their support for workfare. The researchers

analyzed data from the European Social Survey (ESS) Round 8 (2016), a far-reaching cross-national individual-level survey conducted every two years. The results concluded that support for workfare increased among workers when there were deteriorating economic conditions, but support decreased when there were improvements. They also found that marginalization fears and status decline were exacerbating factors.

Marginalization and status decline is essential in the context of subjective poverty, which is considered an income proxy method and part of economic interest for this study. Duvoux and Papuchon (2019) explored what constituted subjective poverty. They used data from the 2015-2018 French Opinion Barometer (n=12017), a representative population sample conducted in yearly waves. Referred to as the DREES Opinion Barometer, it follows “trends in perceptions of social inequalities and France’s social protection system since 2000” (Duvoux & Papuchon, 2019, p.9). They concluded as to who considered themselves poor. Additionally, subjective poverty indicators and feelings of poorness were determined not to be income-based. A key indicator of subjective poverty was a negative feeling and outlook on their future.

Feelings of poorness due to economic risk exposure or a negative outlook on the future as a component of economic insecurity, which is a principal element of social spending literature on redistribution preferences was explored (Akaeda & Schöneck, 2022; Han & Kwon, 2020; Marx & Picot, 2020). According to their findings, economic insecurity concerns feelings of insecurity around potential income loss or the prospect of unemployment. Additionally, they determined that economic risk exposure stimulates demand for more government expenditure, and individual economic insecurity can account for workfare and other redistribution preferences.

Filandri et al. (2020) also investigated how individual and industry subjectivities play an essential role in judgment formation and preferences. Their findings were that how respondents feel at a particular moment about their social security and how they view their future dramatically influence their judgment. Subsequently, there can be potentially adverse outcomes and non-support to government policies by people experiencing angst over their current and future living standards regardless of their support network (Shek, 2020).

Shek (2020) considered the factors that will cause high net-worth individuals to feel unable to sustain their desired quality of life standards financially. The study data were obtained from the Hong Kong Panel Survey for Poverty Alleviation (2015-2017). The results revealed that economic poverty was not a leading cause for the contraindications but that there may be several mediating factors that governments can address to alleviate the feelings of poverty. A factor for consideration as a leading cause of feelings of poverty is insecurity and safety.

### **Insecurity and Safety**

Safety and insecurity and their economic impact have permanently been anchoring tenets of socio-economic developments. It affects all facets of life, such as health, education, employment, and infrastructure (Diprose, 2007; Martínez-Martínez et al., 2021). Insecurity also revolves around national security and other security issues that affect people and property (Dong et al., 2020).

Citizens of society need to feel secure in their general area, and these perceptions matter more than the actualities. For example, Curiel and Bishop (2016) explored the difference in perceptions between regions with the same crime rates. Their study relied

on secondary data from Mexico's national victimization survey from 2011 to 2014, INEGI. It was found that perceptions will lead to changes in behavior that may encourage resistance to engagement and development within communities—persons move away from their communities when their businesses suffer. Also, the perception of insecurity may lead policymakers to expend additional resources to combat the actual criminality factors and appearances.

As Kujala et al. (2019) and Warr (2000) found, insecurity levels potentially impact all aspects of the citizenry's life, especially perceived threats of violence that clash with the desired quality and standard of living. The perceptions of threats may result in subjective poverty concerns. Bakrania and Haider (2016) observed that the threat of violence can undermine the government's economic and fiscal efforts to assist its citizenry. It dramatically affects a country's ability to attract domestic and international investments. Additionally, Lorca (2018) found that safety and insecurity also speak to perceptions of justice. Lorca found that people have lower levels of concern in the face of the threat of potential violence when the surety exists that they will not be victimized twice by both the perpetrator and the judicial system.

Reid et al. (2020) noted that people feel safer when they see justice as being served. They explored the “fear of crime, risk perception, and feelings of security and insecurity” (p. 620). The researchers collected data via an online questionnaire covering 11 European countries. Participants were recruited through the snowballing method. Findings revealed that a greater emphasis on community policing would reduce feelings of insecurity and encourage greater community participation. There was the belief that decreasing feelings of insecurity through fewer violent crimes such as assaults, robberies,

and other crimes against the person and property, would lead to less unemployed and more jobs.

### **Conservative Ideology**

Ideology is another theory used to assess and predict welfare and social spending preferences support. Ideology defines a group of individuals who share beliefs about how the world should be. Those shared beliefs are "systems of ideas" underpinning an individual's discourse and actions (Entman, 1978). It allows others to categorize the values and beliefs of individuals as a means of explaining why people undertook a specific course of action, particularly as it relates to political activities (Azevedo et al., 2019). Ideology has come to be a keystone in attitudinal research. Social research studies ideology on dimensions of political, social/cultural, and economic preferences.

Extant research such as those of Jost (2019) and Ponce de Leon and Kay (2020) determined that conservative ideology favors maintaining the status quo, minimal government intervention in the economy, and significant government oversight of cultural and social values and activities. The range continues to the opposite side, which houses progressive ideology. Progressive ideology extends the liberal ideology from that of the government intervening in the economy and refraining from impositions on personal and social behaviors; to that of the government addressing all past and present economic disadvantages while implementing infrastructure to mitigate future infractions.

Recent literature has also shown that social and cultural conservatives highly regard structure and tradition (Zmigrod et al., 2020). It is a social attitudes dimension identified by conformity and traditionalism (Fasce & Avendaño, 2020; Nilsson & Jost, 2020). Their studies found that conservatism also typically rejects government

intervention, and it favors capitalistic endeavors without significant government overreach, restricting competition promulgated by personal initiative.

Implicit assumptions underpin an individual's views on politics and the role of the government in social/cultural activities. Consequently, our literature review on conservatism and support for welfare and labor policies revealed that respondents do not consider WLPs social investment or passive transfers (Busemeyer et al., 2021; Garitzmann et al., 2018; Raffass, 2017).

Extant research determined the difference between the different social expenditures and the social spending preferences of respondents. Garitzmann et al. (2018) sought to answer three questions related to whether there were differences, the importance of the difference, and the determinants of those preferences. They conducted an original survey titled INVEDUC, spread over eight countries, n=8905. Participants provided direct responses about support for the three classifications of compensatory spending, (a) social investment, (b) passive transfers, and (c) welfare. The results indicated that there are indeed coherent differences among respondents as the factor analysis produced three clear clusters with the welfare factor a surprise. Also, although support for social investment was highest, welfare support was above that of passive transfers. The support for welfare was more substantial among high-income groups and those that subscribed to a highly conservative position. This group was in their prime age bracket and less likely to experience periods of unemployment. Thus, they supported stringent reforms that would positively affect their redistributed income.

Conservatives tend to be stringy in social/cultural and economic preferences, and WLPs typically impose employment conditions that necessitate a give and take between

the state and the recipient. For example, Busemeyer et al. (2021) analyzed conservatism's importance when they sought to understand authoritarian values' role in the social policy preferences of the radical far-right known as supporters of populist radical right parties (PRRPs). The study conducted a secondary analysis of Garritzmann et al.'s (2018) INVEDUC survey. The results demonstrated that far-right-leaning respondents' preferences strongly supported workfare policies, opposed social investment policies, and were sensitive to social transfers. However, they only endorsed social transfers to persons they felt deserved to receive benefits, such as the elderly, sick, and disabled. The study evidenced a strong inclination towards deservingness with high levels of conservatism. They showed a distinction between them and us regarding who should receive social transfers and under what conditions.

Buss (2019) attempted to examine whether there was an increasing polarisation of attitudes toward social benefits, although his study was years before the great recession and current pandemic. The research was a secondary analysis of the European Values Studies (EVS) 1990, 1999, and 2008, n=75957, spanning 23 European countries. Of importance was whether attitudes towards social legitimacy of benefits had created a greater schism and how attitudes toward workfare had changed. In the survey, support for workfare was directly measured. The results determined that there was no increasing polarisation. Also, stricter workfare policies were overall favored by many but opposed by those who were long-term unemployed and poor. It was found that the young, a group most likely to be affected by workfare policies, favored stricter reform—supposedly based on the young having been socialized to expect benefits with conditions.

## **Empathy**

Extant research determined that empathy is a multi-dimensional construct, and studies generally delineate three facets of empathy: cognitive, emotional, and compassionate (Clark et al., 2019; Hall & Schwartz, 2019). Cognitive empathy speaks to a person's recognition of what transpires with another individual regarding their needs and does not have an emotional trigger (Healey & Grossman, 2018). On the other hand, emotional empathy speaks to the ability to feel what another is perceived to be experiencing (Preckel et al., 2018), and compassionate empathy is the drive to help others deal with their situation (Gilbert, 2019).

The science of empathy has concluded that it is a universal cross-cultural trait that plays a critical role in society's structuring (Waller et al., 2020) and pro-social interrelations (Riess, 2017; Stern & Cassidy, 2018). Schwartz (2012) undertook an empirical study to identify universal values recognized by all cultures. The methods developed to capture the information were the Schwartz Value Survey and the Portraits Values Questionnaire. Schwartz's research spanned 82 countries. Value was defined according to the underlying motives of either "(1) needs of individuals as biological organisms, (2) requisites of coordinated social interaction, and (3) survival and welfare needs of groups" (Schwartz, 2012, p.4). Universalism and benevolence were identified as two of the ten specified values.

Further, according to Schwartz, the principle of Universalism revolves around a person's desire and ability to enhance others and Benevolence to the ability to put others above self (p. 9). A further determination was that a substantial amount of the variance in why people do what they do or behave could be partially linked to their traits and values.

It was determined that traits are consistently displayed sets of actions and patterns of thoughts and behavior (Schwartz, 2012). Traits may guide what an individual values; conversely, values may dictate a person's traits.

For example, Drenik and Perez-Truglia (2018) conducted three surveys that examined the existence of sympathy for the diligent and whether more sympathy translated into more demand for welfare. The data was collected using the Amazon Mechanical Turks platform, n=1778 (Survey 1), n=808 (Survey 2), and n=502 (Survey 3) across the United States. The cash transfers' conditionality was based upon whether the recipient was Lazy, No-Info available, or Hardworking.

The respondents had clear ideological and social preferences for giving to those who were perceived to be diligent and hardworking. There was a conditionality of deservingness where sympathy was shown for those in adverse situations. Across all characteristics, including political respondents, were willing to give much less to those who did not appear to make a personal and conscientious effort to improve their circumstances. The results concluded that the recipient contingent should earn benevolence from the government regarding income redistribution upon the aspect of fairness.

However, in Persson and Kajonius's (2016) study, empathy can drive altruistic intentions contingent on neither fairness nor deservingness. The researchers used Amazon Mechanical Turk to conduct two primary data surveys, n=193 (Survey 1) and n=184 (Survey 2), in the United States. Persson measured empathy using the Interpersonal Reactivity Index and the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ-RR, Schwartz,

et al., 2012). The Big Five Inventory (John et al., 1991) was used to control personality traits. The results concluded that emotional empathy drives altruism.

Altruism as a universal value is vital for pro-social behaviors. Baston (2010) sought to confirm the existence of unselfish motives and giving in his study of empathy-induced altruistic motivation. A series of conducted experiments that simulated real-life and not hypothetical situations allowed the researchers to determine the motives behind the act. The research did not find that self-interest was the underlying motive behind all behavior. Empathy and its heightened level of concern for the well-being of others was a significant factor. Riess's (2017) research article on the science of empathy supports that its existence is central to ongoing support for those in need from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds.

## **Goal Achievement**

Results and efficacy are keywords for evaluating workfare and labor programs. Although they are not easily determined objectively and quantitatively, the public still has an opinion on how they perceive governments' efficacy in goal achievement. (Gonthier, 2019) was an empirical study into the middle class's support for government public spending and its efficacy. It was conducted using secondary data from the World Economic Forum 2016. The researchers analyzed responses to the direct question of "how efficiently does the government spend public revenue" (Gonthier, 2019, p. 157). The results indicate that the middle class, working-class and upper class do not support spending cuts when the government is efficient. However, government wastefulness was an issue among the working and middle classes.

According to Bovaird and Mallinson (1988), governments should set defined, achievable, and assessable goals and objectives when implementing policies. Bovaird and Mallinson stressed that this process is required in social work as it allows those impacted by the policy to objectively evaluate the expected change return. They argued the need for a hierarchical process that will eventually allow practitioners and policy setters to “highlight areas for further change when revised policies” (Bovaird & Mallinson, 1988, p.315) are desired.

A further review of the literature demonstrates the need for governments to consistently evaluate their implemented programs' effects (Ravallion, 2019), as many social assistance programs fail to reach their targets. Ravallion (2019) explored whether persons who wanted to be a part of India's guaranteed income program, officially termed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act program (MGNREGA), were able to obtain employment. The program aimed to assist the poor by guaranteeing them employment if they wanted to work. Ravallion's findings were that the administrative process was weak, lacked coordination and oversight, and high levels of corruption existed among appointed officials who prevented the program from benefitting the intended recipients.

We also explored Raffass's (2017) review article of empirical studies that questioned why policy activists and OECD governments continue the expansion of welfare programs despite the perceived limitations of its positive impact. The review was inconclusive in determining continued support and expansion of the policy but conclusive in determining that the welfare-to-work policies usually did not achieve their labor market and social objectives. Notably, they did not result in “bringing down the

rates of unemployment, decreasing in-work poverty or empowering job seekers as consumers of public services, which were all goals of the reformed activating state" (Raffass, 2017, p. 349).

Evaluating how well welfare programs accomplish goals and objectives is an essential characteristic of support for government policies, as demonstrated by Leung et al. (2019). Leung conducted a study at the behest of the Hong Kong SAR government to perform research studies on the impact of social enterprises in the country. The researchers utilized the Social Return on Investment (SROI) outcome-oriented approach with their 4E conceptual framework to deduce the impacts of the work integration programs. The data collection methods were costing analysis, individual interviews, and focus group interviews. The research found that the work integration approach improved quality of life factors for participants and created positive impacts on other stakeholders.

### **Alternative Forms of Welfare Administration and Funding**

Subjectivities and influences aside, a review of studies conducted has produced a mixed bag of theoretical approaches to resolving the entrenchment dilemma of welfare states. One method advocates significant private sector participation utilizing different streams, and the other is for continued substantial investments by the government and using different streams to get there.

The private sector participation approach calls for less government control and directives to allow social entrepreneurship to flourish and stunt social welfare benefits dependencies (Kibler et al., 2018). Another option for restructuring social assistance delivery was the emerging vehicle of social impact bonds (SIBs) (Vecchi & Casalini, 2019). The SIBs are "outcome-based public-private partnerships (PPP) for the delivery

of welfare services" (Vecchi & Casalini, 2019, p. 353) with significant government interaction. The thought process was that the PPP model had helped public authorities with the efficient, on-time, and cost-saving delivery of public infrastructure; therefore, the model may be adaptable to other uses. According to Vecchi and Casalini (2019), "the capital is upfront and provided by private investors and the payment made by the government if pre-determined performance standards (outcomes) are met" (p. 355).

The two options mentioned above concentrated on private investiture, and the following two demonstrate the possibilities still available to governments who want to maintain a high level of control. The Dutch experiment has decentralized the "quid pro quo" requirements of receiving social assistance. They did this by guaranteeing a conditional basic income. The experiment also gave municipalities the authority and flexibility to tailor social assistance benefits' "basic income" requirements. This experiment also integrated the 'social investment' concept of proactively creating and providing participation opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged citizens (Groot et al., 2019). The proactive social investment policy was based on three anchor tenets. Those tenets encapsulated three primary welfare functions: "stock (raising the quality of human capital), flows (easing life-course transitions), and buffers (maintaining reliable minimum-income protection)" (Hemerjick, 2015, p. 242).

Conversely, New Zealand took the opposite approach. Although New Zealand took the social investment approach to reform its social security system, it focused on those activities that achieved targeted fiscal savings within a defined timeframe. The anticipated fiscal outcomes were considered proxies for positive social results (Baker & Cooper, 2018). A central component of this strategy was that it be a data-driven and not

data-informed social investment approach to "materially alter social welfare provisions" (Baker & Cooper, 2018, p. 7). Subsequently, its reforms to the social security system focused intently on investing in populations and initiatives that potentially achieve fiscal savings over various timeframes.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Theories about support sources for social spending have focused on two main areas that have become cornerstones for sociological studies. Those two theories center on economic self-interest and ideological individual-level determinants such as Conservatism (Chung et al., 2018). Those two theories in the form of subjective poverty and conservatism will provide a bedrock of support for this study. However, extant research has determined that those two factors alone cannot explain the impact of support for welfare or other forms of social spending (Chung et al., 2018; Fong, 2001; Munro, 2017). Therefore, this study adds and contextualizes additional perspectives relative to their possible contributions to WLPs' support. We add insecurity level's direct effect on subjective poverty as an influence on WLPs support. Also, we extend the theories by including trait theory proxied by empathy. We add empathy's possible effect as a determinant to explain some of the variances due to its innate characteristic. The perceived efficacy of governments' goal achievement within the welfare programs was an additive to enhance the composite of factors that would be important to individuals in their determination of WLPs support.

### **Methodology**

Generally, support boundaries are along the lines of political ideology and economic interest (Garitzmann et al., 2018). Similarly, this research will analyze the data

along the lines of subjective poverty and insecurity levels rather than socio-economic status (SES) factors. Historically, the more objective SES measure has been used in sociological studies to predict many perceptions and opinions. However, as this research is interested in individual perceptions, we used subjective poverty as it considers the individual's perception of their current and future desired standards of living (Kingdon & Knight, 2016).

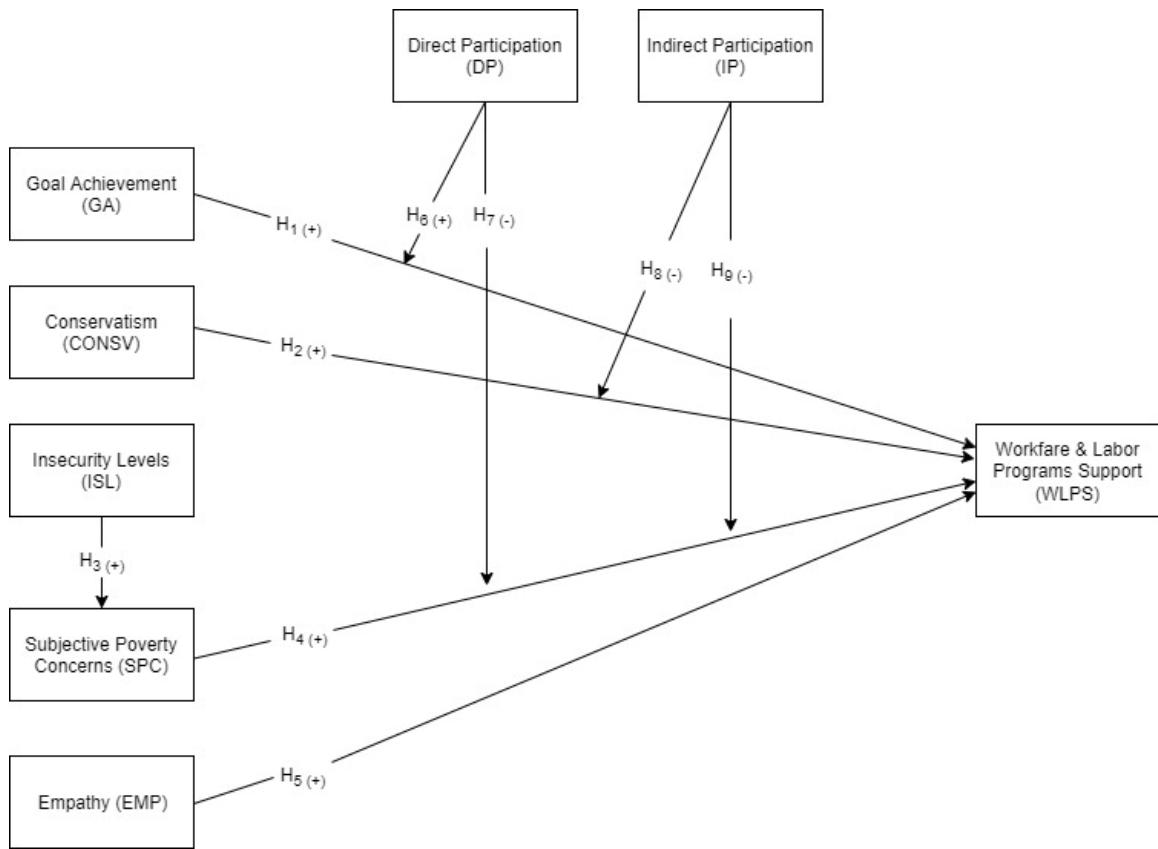
Additionally, most research reviewed utilized secondary data sources representative of European countries. However, several gathered primary data from the United States population through the Amazon Mechanical Turks platform. Our research decided to follow the current trend that used primary data from individual sources. This method was essential to our study as we conducted a survey within a small island state population for which secondary data was unavailable.

### **Conceptual Framework**

In line with the literature review, we adopted subjective poverty, conservative ideology, and trait theory proxied by empathy to develop the research model depicted below in Figure 1. This research model examined how a composite of variables may be better contributors to explaining WLP support rather than a single factor determinant. This model's composite factors include the public perceptions of how well the program is accomplishing its goals, the influences of subjective poverty, insecurity levels, conservatism, and empathy.

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Research Model*



## Summary

The recent climate indicated that welfare states are generally an obstacle to economic growth and development and that redistributive wealth policies endanger economic primacy (Peterson, 2017). However, the political will to reform and finance can ensure their productive survival (Taylor, 2016). In the 1950s and 1960s, redistributive wealth policies abounded, but current economic development may be antithetical to this notion (Midgley, 1999). History has established that there will always

be some level of income redistribution but that it is not necessarily a ruthless mechanism; it depends on whether the redistribution sought to increase economic participation or enhance equality and development solely (Bergh, 2006; Bourguignon, 2015). However, the main concern for proponents who advocate for streamlining income redistribution is its associated cost and who pays (Holen, 1977).

The literature review has given this research ample room for thought. However, we have determined that an aspect of this problem that we do not know or that has not been studied enough is the perceived impact of the redistributive effects on the source of financing, such as the individual taxpayer for the various workfare and labor programs (Danziger et al., 1981). Most research has concentrated on the benefits of WLP and other workforce policy interventions on the intended recipients and direct beneficiaries. By contrast, studies that explore how the citizenry feels that society benefits may provide ample opportunities for further refinement or discontinuation of said programs.

The literature has provided this research with a rich arsenal of studies that underpin the theory that the program promotes economic growth or that delivering social assistance, although viewed as valuable, has not produced the expected results. The typical delivery concept is achieving a mixed level of success. Still, we are hopeful that these research results will help establish alternate restructuring options as the past decades have presented alternatives to developing financially sound programs that will provide socio-economic service. Although citizens have shown that they delineate social spending preferences along three categorical lines, mainly social investment, passive transfers, and workfare, it is still an investment in the care of others.

### III. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodological approaches are (a) research design and instrument development, (b) data collection setting and sampling, (c) data collection procedure, and (d) data analyses.

#### **Research Design, Hypotheses and Instrument Development**

##### ***Research Design***

This research explored the individual-level determinants of support for market and labor force intervention policies such as workfare and labor programs (WLPs). The approach was deductive with clearly defined hypotheses in advance of data collection. The researchers determined that a survey was the best method to collect the required study information. A cross-sectional survey is useful for testing associations between predictors and outcome variables. We conducted the survey online and through mobile applications in a self-reporting and self-administered format to obtain primary data.

The data gathered in this research was primarily quantitative, and we used the Qualtrics Survey platform to prepare, gather and transfer the data for analysis. We chose the Qualtrics platform as it allowed the researcher to prepare and disseminate the survey on a reliable service provider. The data source was individual respondents. Before the survey distribution, the researcher addressed several concerns likely to affect the study during the pre-analysis phase. The researcher designed the study to address data analysis concerns about missing values, data quality, non-response, and data entry errors. We addressed potential missing values through Qualtrics programming and structured the survey to force a response from the respondent before they were allowed to progress.

Data quality was addressed using a wholly electronic format with only Likert and binomial responses.

Additionally, the Qualtrics platform was coded to delete all incomplete responses after 24 hours of inactivity. Data entry error was minimized by utilizing the Qualtrics export function that transferred the data file directly into the SPSS program. Due to the volume of responses, we did not manually address the issue of potential outliers in the pre-analysis phase. We answered the research question through nine empirically tested hypotheses conducted in two analysis phases.

### ***Hypotheses***

This research defines goal achievement as an individual's perception of the state's efficacy in achieving the stated goals of the workfare and labor programs it implemented. Traditionally, governments and state actors always have clear objectives for what they hope to accomplish with workfare implementation. The outline of workfare objectives assists in documenting progress and achievements (Bovaird & Mallinson, 1988). It also provides a roadmap for policies and procedures for future projects as it will indicate what worked and was not so successful. One of the normative objectives is to encourage a self-sustaining attitude and ability in individuals who cannot do so without assistance for many reasons (Ravallion, 2019). In other instances, workfare policies are deployed in an economic crisis (Ravallion, 1999) to allow governments to regulate the economy through labor market interventions (Choi et al., 2020). However, the overarching goal is always that the state expects to see positive returns and a subsequent lessening of the financial burden on the state through the induced effects on the recipients' lives (Busemeyer et al.,

2021; Solvang, 2017). Generally, strict rules and procedures for all participants (Knotz, 2018) guide the programs.

Against the backdrop of the global recession of 2008, there were urgent concerns about how to stimulate the economy and put people to work through macroeconomic policy interaction (Ames et al., 2001). Accordingly, this market/labor force policy interaction developed and implemented the first version of a welfare program launched in 2011 in the Bahamas. The Bahamas' programs targeted several goals over the years. The plans were foremost to reduce unemployment, particularly among the youth (18-40). In addition, The WLPs' was to reduce the number of issued permits for unskilled and semi-skilled labor. They also expected to improve the soft-skills sets of the participants and provide job/work-related training (Pavon et al., 2016). The WLPs' goals were to deliver an economic boost in the form of money circulation and reduce the cost to business participants through the provision of subsidized wages.

Recent studies suggest that individually and collectively, citizens are concerned with the efficacy of government in social consumption and investment policies (Busemeyer et al., 2018; Gidron & Hall, 2020; Gonthier, 2019). Therefore, their perception of how well WLPs deliver on their promises is essential to state and political actors. State and political actors utilize WLPs as part of a long-term growth strategy requiring the citizenry's support. WLPs can help stimulate growth in the capital market through the increased economic activity of direct recipients and cost savings to the private sector employers that they can then potentially use for further capital endeavors. Consequently, if persons in their capacities believe that the programs are not producing

noticeable results, they can impose pressure upon state actors and cause a premature abort of the policy in favor of shorter-term goals (Choi et al., 2020).

We posit that citizens individually evaluate the government according to the metrics they believe the programs should meet. Although governments indicate what they think the plan should accomplish, they can usually not quantify the expected results. The inability to quantify effects leaves the measurement of their efficacy to the subjectivities of the individual citizen. Therefore, citizens' perception of how well they feel that WLPs are achieving the stated goals according to their measurement of the needs it addresses and their value is critical to a government plan that employs WLPs as a social investment tool. In sum, WLPs that citizens believe to be achieving their goals are more likely to gain their support. Hence, we hypothesize:

$H_1$ : Individual perceptions of goal achievement positively influence WLPs support.

Research denotes conservatism as a multi-dimension of social and economic attitudes. It is represented by traditionalism and conformity on the social factor and capitalistic and personal freedom without government overreach at the economic end (Hiel & Kossowska, 2007). The consensus is that conservatives hold traditional views and value authoritarian leadership even at the expense of economic interest (Jost et al., 2017). There exist disparities in the conservative ideological position. Although conservatives generally believe in less government reach regarding the economic state (Kühner, 2018), on the social/cultural range, they tend to favor expansive government reach regarding punitive measures for activities that run counter to their beliefs (Schlenker et al., 2012).

The conservative's high authoritarian values quotient typically dictates that the recipients receive earned benefits and do not prosper from one-way wealth transfer. A recent study (Malka et al., 2017) has demonstrated that although conservatives have differing needs regarding security and certainty, they will advocate individual needs to ensure that the recipient earns "welfare" or access to pooled resources. Malka's result is in line with the thought that conservatism can be a good predictor concerning support for social frameworks and economic intervention support (Jost et al., 2003). The WLP is an economically conservative intervention as it is not simply a wealth transfer. We posit that WLPs should appeal to the conservative's ideological position as they demand active participation and accountability from the participants.

Because of its reciprocity component, the WLPs are a social spending preference of persons who subscribe to economic conservatism and traditional authoritarian values. A recent study demonstrated that a lack of reciprocity in social spending could promote resentment from conservatives at having to contend for limited resources (Kettle & Salerno, 2017) and will motivate individuals to vote for political candidates who tap into that anger (Brader, 2005). Conversely, liberals have also demonstrated their desire for WLPs as part of the social safety net; however, they typically agitate for less restrictive measures and procedures (Levin-Waldman, 1994). Although there is some overlap with the societal desires of the left-right loci, there is still a clear divergence of ideological positions (Fiorina & Abrams, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2014). As concluded by (Sterling et al., 2019) in their exploration of shared commonalities between the left and right, conservatives performed as expected with cultural conservatism, trade, and economy. In contrast, liberals did likewise and were more concerned about the equality

of the economic structure as they tend to operate more on the principle of entitlement rather than deservingness, as with conservatives. Consequently, this study posits that conservatism will be a reliable marker in the composite variables as a determinant of WLPs Support.

Hence:

$H_2$ : Conservatism positively influences WLPs support.

Insecurity is the antithesis of security. It embodies the fear surrounding the perception of increased susceptibility to the threats of violence (Achumba et al., 2013). We note that failure to address the negative perceptions of insecurity can adversely affect the economic and fiscal positions of the country, as high insecurity levels are a deterrent to both international and domestic investment possibilities (Bustillo & Velloso, 2016). Additionally, it is inextricably linked to poverty value even though causality has not been established (Diprose, 2007).

We posit that increased insecurity concerns can inspire the citizenry to support government initiatives such as WLPs through its direct effect on subjective poverty concerns. Although the perception of the threat of violence or crime may be considered a non-economic risk for many, such a perception impacts the quality of life. It has implications for economic security (Romero, 2014). Undoubtedly, persons must feel a certain level of security about their personal safety to execute their ability to secure their wealth and prospects (Peng et al., 2020). It will be very harmful to the economic and social life of a state if business establishments are forced to shutter early or permanently through the fear of crime and violence( George, 2003). The fear of violence impedes the free movement of people (Pantazis, 2000). That fear will hamper others from propelling

the capital market by introducing new market activities, especially in service-based economies (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). Therefore, if persons feel that they can achieve a greater level of security due to lowered levels of unemployment attained through WLPs, they will be inclined to continue to support it.

Subsequently, it is determined that the perception of safety may frequently be exaggerated compared to the actual criminality or threat. However, insecurity concerns directly affect the construct of political economics (Béland, 2005). Constituents will have a more relaxed sense of security that may be attributed to their belief that greater employment levels contribute to reduced threats of harm and violence. This policy concept is bolstered by recent studies, such as the MGNREGA project in India, which have demonstrated that there is a reduction in forms of domestic violence and other conflicts when poverty concern is not the overwhelming factor (Fetzer, 2020; Gilroy et al., 2018; Sarma, 2019).

Hence:

$H_3$ : Insecurity level directly influences subjective poverty concerns.

In this study, subjective poverty is more a measure of quality-of-life indicator rather than an objective socio-economic status measurement that was once the barometer for quality-of-life studies (Papuchon & Duvoux, 2019; Peng et al., 2020; Szukiełojć-Bieńkuńska, 2010). We denote that subjective poverty is a person's perception that they are not able to achieve the economic/material wants that correspond to their desired social situation (Duvoux & Papuchon, 2019; Szukiełojć-Bieńkuńska, 2010). The recent global increase in protest movements has been predicated mainly on the presumed lack of personal control regarding the economic and social security that the citizenry was

experiencing (Sousa, 2019). The challenges of making ends meet and increasing feelings of being overwhelmed by undesirable economic and social conditions contributed to feelings of subjective poverty (Duvoux & Papuchon, 2019).

Historically, a post-independent Bahamas, July 1973, has been heavily reliant on the services sector, contributing approximately 90% of gross domestic product (GDP), which serves as a broad measure of a country's economic health. Its top two industries, tourism, and financial services, contribute 50% and 15% of GDP, respectively, and provide the backbone for its economic viability. Expansive growth in the two industries subsequently has allowed the middle class to experience exponential growth in line with the average world rates in other developing countries (Paprotny, 2021). However, this enhanced quality of post-independence life did not come under its labor and behest but rather at the cost of international loans. Meanwhile, the state's constituents have become accustomed to a high quality of life that is not sustainable in the long term when exogenous shocks occur (Perry, 2020).

Therefore, due to the possible threat posed by economic insecurity (Munro, 2017), they may be inclined to support WLPs. For those persons who have poverty concerns, WLPs support may occur because the programs may offer an avenue to attain gainful employment or learn new skills to put them back into the labor market post an adverse event (Han & Kwon, 2020). Extant literature confirms that economic risk exposure stimulates demand for more government expenditure and that individual economic insecurity can account for WLPs support (Anderson & Pontusson, 2007; Mughan & Lacy, 2002). Im and Komp-Leukkunen (2021) also noted that people would support welfare when economic hardship worsens but oppose it when conditions improve.

Hence:

H<sub>4</sub>: Subjective poverty concerns positively influence WLPs support.

This study adopts trait theory proxied by empathy, and we take the viewpoint that the capacity for empathy has a biological basis (Danziger et al., 2009; Greenberg & Turksma, 2015; Izard, 2007), and empathy is not solely the product of an individual's environment (Walter, 2012). In this study, empathy is "the link between knowing the thoughts and feelings of others, experiencing them, and responding to others in caring, supportive ways" (Dvash & Shamay-Tsoory, 2014, p. 282). Empathy is considered a human transcultural universal trait and is directly associated with positive pro-social behavior (Persson & Kajonius, 2016; Stern & Cassidy, 2018; Yaghoubi Jami et al., 2019).

The absence or low quotient in traits such as empathy is generally seen as a detrimental deficit to overall human development (Dziobek et al., 2008), particularly in antisocial behavior, leadership, and clinical roles (Waller et al., 2020). Empathy, as a universal human trait, is shown to be activated in certain aspects of the neuro upon observing distress in others and thus enables the imagining and understanding of perceptions of potentially distressing states in others (Bernhardt & Singer, 2012). Empathy studies determined that it is an intrinsic part of pro-social and altruistic behavior that positively affects moral disengagement and altruistic intentions (Baston, 2010). It also can alter the preferences of others through its multi-dimensional constructs such as perspective-taking and empathetic concern (Davis, 1983; Edele et al., 2013).

Prior research indicates that a lack of empathy may lead to undesirable social behaviors in situations that require decisions that may negatively affect others.

Conversely, persons that have a high empathy quotient will care about the effects that their decision or that of others may have upon an affected person, but more importantly, they will not want to willingly act on such decisions (De Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Decety & Yoder, 2016). Hence, we posit that even though people may have concerns about their quality of life, their concerns for others will allow them to consider the potential adverse effects of the program's stoppage. We argue that although persons may still feel that a program is not working out as intended, their concern for the well-being of others will influence their valuation of WLPs and the way it continues.

Hence:

H<sub>5</sub>: Empathy positively influences WLPs support.

Extant studies have explored a variety of possible direct determinants of WLP support. Therefore, this study considers that factors may influence support through an interactive effect. The factor we explore in a moderating capacity is participation. We define participation as involvement in a direct capacity; or indirect through familiarity with anyone in the program. Even though the forms of workfare vary significantly between countries and states, the aim of direct participation is generally the same. One of the main employee participants' purposes is that the programs may offer an avenue to attain gainful employment or learn new skills to put them back into the labor market (Han & Kwon, 2020). Due to such engagement and benefit, their direct participation can positively enhance their perception of how well the WLP achieves its stated goals.

Additionally, in the Bahamas, WLPs have a heavy government component that eventually translates into job permanence in many instances, particularly within the civil sector (Rolle, 2021). As one of the goals of the WLPs is to impact the unemployment rate

positively, we believe that participants will feel optimistic about the program. We theorize that WLPs positively affect participants and their communities (Leung et al., 2019). Subsequently, if employee participants receive benefits from the program, such as job training, and employer participants receive subsidized labor, we posit that they will be inclined to believe the WLPs are making positive progress. Thus, in the Bahamas, direct participation can enhance the relationship between perceived goal achievement of WLPs and WLP support through the material effects experienced by the participants. We, thus posit that direct participation will improve the relationship between the perception of goal achievement and WLPs Support.

Hence:

$H_6$ : Direct participation positively moderates the relationship between high levels of the perceived goal achievement of WLPs and WLP support.

Although workfare and labor programs may not take many into the defined middle-class, participation in the programs has skills enhancement components that give the participants hope for their future career prospects (Choi et al., 2020; Knabe et al., 2017). Direct participation in workfare programs as a tool in the fight against poverty may raise the participant's income and thus mitigate their subjective poverty concerns (Besley & Coate, 1992; Jalan & Ravallion, 1999; Ravallion, 1991). Hence, direct participation may reduce the perceived level of anxiety related to economic security (Raffass, 2017; Ravallion, 2019) and thus reduce the impact of subjective poverty concerns on WLPs support.

Hence:

H<sub>7</sub>: Direct participation negatively moderates the relationship between high levels of subjective poverty concerns and WLPs support.

The other participation factor we consider is a notably prominent characteristic of SIDS: the high level of interpersonal relations (Nunn & Kumar, 2017), which in this research is proxied by indirect participation. This factor is essential to this research because this high degree of interrelations has costs and benefits concerning state planning activities. Governments consider that what affects one also affects many (Ritter, 2000). As a result, there is a triadic relationship between the state, direct beneficiaries, and indirect beneficiaries (also called the triad) in evaluations of state policies (Bricco & Xu, 2019).

The literature has found a difference in how highly conservative individuals determine their social spending preferences. Highly conservative individuals rely on a perceived ‘deservingness’ (Busemeyer et al., 2021) quotient in their social spending preferences when they have no information on the recipient. It indicated that highly conservative individuals support more generous redistributions for persons they feel are victims of unfortunate circumstances or are more diligent in their efforts to rejoin the contributing sector of society (Drenik & Perez-Truglia, 2018; Im & Komp-Leukkunen, 2021). Drenik and Perez-Truglia (2018) found that unflattering information on a recipient constrained the conservative respondent from being generous with redistributions.

Conversely, the influence of interconnectedness is fluid and constantly changing (Tjandra et al., 2020); thus, as individuals observe and interact with participants, they may reconsider their support position based on their perception of the individuals with

whom they are connected. Subsequently, they may reevaluate prior conservative views on WLPs. Their spending preferences will not align with high conservatives who rely on the deservingness principle when they do not have a participation connection. Thus, we posit that indirect participation will weaken the normative constraint of conservatism on WLPs support and, therefore, negatively impact the relationship between conservatism and WLPs support.

Hence:

H<sub>8</sub>: Indirect participation negatively moderates the relationship between high levels of conservatism and WLPs Support.

Although the short-term goal of the existence of WLPs is to affect the income and employment prospects of a targeted group of its constituents, the overarching effect is to permeate the socio-economic profile of the state. The state and its actors depend upon this contagion effect to form a coalition of support when they propose and implement policy decisions targeted at a select population sector (Brader, 2005; Bricco & Xu, 2019). The WLPs, by design, are geared to have both direct and indirect effects on the socio-economic status of the state's constituents.

Research has shown that some factors contributing to subjective poverty, such as the fear of social status decline and marginalization, are exacerbated by worsening economic conditions, thus retrenching welfare support (Im & Komp-Leukkunen, 2021). Research also found that people make decisions based on the experiences of others with whom they connect (Block & Heyes, 2020; Bricco & Xu, 2019). Consequently, what is transpiring with a family or friend directly engaged in a WLP can indirectly influence the

opinions of their network. Hence, this hypothesis considers the interactive effect of indirect participation and subjective poverty concerns on WLPs Support.

We theorize that this influence will induce a lower level of support for this category of social spending when the respondent is familiar with a participant. The lessening of support will likely occur because indirect participants may not benefit from reduced anxiety that should emanate from the perceived assurance that there is assistance should they find themselves in an unforeseen adverse circumstance. The diminished support may be due to the programs' typical restrictiveness, which may not provide a comfortable level of anticipated support to the respondent that will ease the fear of status decline. Subsequently, the respondent's knowledge vicariously gained through indirect participation reduces the high subjective poverty concerns typical positive impact on WLP support.

Hence:

H<sub>9</sub>: Indirect participation negatively moderates the relationship between high levels of subjective poverty concerns and WLPs support.

### ***Instrument Development***

The survey consisted of sixty-six questions designed from a composite of prior validated measurement items and self-developed items. The questionnaire was primarily multiple-choice 7-point Likert items with a few exceptions. It included seven factors required for data collection: 6 independent and one dependent variable.

The operationalization of the constructs for this study utilized questionnaires found in prior research. We also developed measurement items for goal achievement, subjective poverty concerns, and WLPs support constructs based on prior research and

information from other public sources. The instrument's factors and their sources are outlined below in Table 1, and the original study questionnaire consisting of 66 structured questions is in Appendix B.

*WLPS Support.* The workfare and labor programs support (WLPS) scale is an eight-item construct designed to measure the degree to which Bahamians support WLPs in the Bahamas. The items were modified from existing research into predictors of support for state social welfare provisions (Munro, 2017) and adopted specifically for this research.

**Table 1***Study Instrument Constructs, Definitions, and Sources*

Construct	Research Definition	Source
WLPs Support	WLP support is the respondent's agreement that the state should continue to provide unemployment support in the form of a guaranteed job at minimum wage.	Munro, N. (2017). Predictors of Support for State Social Welfare Provision in Russia and China. <i>Europe-Asia Studies</i> , 69 (1), 53-75. doi:10.1080/09668136.2016.1265643
Goal Achievement	The state's efficacy in achieving the stated goals of the programs.	Developed by study researchers.
Conservatism	A multi-dimension of social and economic attitudes represented by traditionalism and conformity on the social factor and capitalistic and personal freedom without government over reach at the economic end.	Everett, J. A. (2013). The 12 item Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS). <i>PLoS One</i> , 8(12), e82131. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0082131">https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0082131</a>
Subjective Poverty Concerns	It is the feeling that one is not able to achieve the economic/material wants that correspond to an individuals desired social situation.	Szukieloń-Bierkuńska, A. (2010). Subjective measures in multidimensional quality of life measurement. The example of Poland. In <i>DGINS 2010 Conference, Sofia</i> . <a href="https://bit.ly/39xaW5u">https://bit.ly/39xaW5u</a>
Insecurity Levels	Insecurity is the anti-thesis to security. It embodies the fear that surrounds the perception of increased susceptibility to the threats of violence and its conflicts that originates from other states, non-state actors, or structural socio-political and economic conditions.	Duvoux, N., & Papuchon, A. (2019). <i>Subjective Poverty as perceived lasting social insecurity: Lessons from a French survey on poverty, inequality and the welfare state (2015-2018)</i> (36). <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3465214">http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3465214</a>
Empathy	"The link between knowing the thoughts and feelings of others, experiencing them, and responding to others in caring, supportive ways" (Dvash & Shamay-Tsoory, 2014).	Diprose, R. (2007). <i>Safety and Security: A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators of Violence (CRISE No. 52)</i> . CRISE Working Paper. <a href="https://ophi.org.uk/wp-01/">https://ophi.org.uk/wp-01/</a>
Participation	The respondent's degree of involvement as an active participant or having a relationship with an active participant in a WLP.	Reid, I. D., Appleby-Arnold, S., Brockdorff, N., Jakovljev, I., & Zdravković, S. (2020). Developing a model of perceptions of security and insecurity in the context of crime. <i>Psychiatry, Psychology and Law</i> , 27 (4), 620-636
		Spreng, R. N., McKinnon, M. C., Mar, R. A., & Levine, B. (2009). The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire: scale development and initial validation of a factor-analytic solution to multiple empathy measures. <i>Journal of Personality Assessment</i> , 91 (1), 62-71. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/00223890802484381">https://doi.org/10.1080/00223890802484381</a>
		Developed by study researchers.

*Goal Achievement.* The goal achievement (GA) scale has four items developed by this research. We used it to assess how Bahamians felt that WLPs were achieving their intended goals and objectives.

*Conservatism.* The conservatism scale includes items modified from the 12-Item Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS) (Everett, 2013). We used this scale to assess the linkage of attitudes represented by traditionalism and WLPs support.

However, this research modified the original items from the words and phrases style into complete sentences to keep them structurally in alignment with the other scales in the current survey, thus enhancing the ease of use by respondents. Another significant change to the scale was to use a 7-point Likert scale instead of the sliding scale. We used the 7-point Likert scale to maintain the similarity of response items in the survey.

*Subjective Poverty Concerns.* The subjective poverty concerns (SPC) scale is a seven-item construct. The SPC scale is a composite of items taken from the research into subjective measures as a multidimensional quality of life measurement (Szukiełojć-Bieńkuńska, 2010). We used SPC to assess the link between the feeling that one cannot achieve the economic/material wants that correspond to an individual's desired social situation and WLP Support by Bahamians.

*Insecurity and Safety Levels.* Insecurity levels (ISL) were used to assess how the perceptions held by Bahamians of threats to their security were associated with their support for WLPs. The ISL scale was composed of seven modified items from existing research (Diprose, 2007; Reid et al., 2020).

*Empathy.* The empathy scale with 11 items was modified from the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (Spreng et al., 2009). It was used to determine the link between how Bahamians responded to the possibility of another person's negative experience and WLPs support.

*Program Participation.* The participation construct was self-developed to measure the effects of close relationships in The Bahamas on WLPs support. The construct dictated a dichotomous response of yes or no to questions such as *Have you participated in any of the work programs as an employee or employer*, and *Do you have a friend or relative who has been a part of the program as an employee or employer?* In the first question, we asked the respondent whether they were a participant as an employee or employer; if they answered *yes*, we used skip coding to prevent them from answering the second participation question. If they answered *no*, they could proceed to the second question.

*Demographics.* The participants' demographics were measured using intervals and ordinal and nominal measurement levels. Although the demographic questions were not included in the hypotheses as predictor variables, they can be covariates and produce indirect effects if not controlled for (Salkind, 2010). This ability required sufficient data on the respondents, age, gender, education, income, and marital status was captured (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016).

### **Data Collection Setting and Sampling**

The Bahamas is an archipelago and spans a wide swath of over seven hundred islands and cays. Its population is under 500,000 people, and the majority reside on one island called home by approximately seventy percent of its people. The most populous island in the Bahamas is Nassau, New Providence, the country's capital city.

We recruited participants through convenience sampling, and we determined snowballing to be most appropriate to secure the needed sample size due to the typical possibility of low survey response and completion rates (Couper & Miller, 2009; Fan &

Yan, 2010). The possibility of a low completion rate concerned the researchers due to the survey length (Galesic & Bosnjak, 2009) and that it was solely accessible in an online electronic anonymous format. Therefore, we heavily relied on persons' willingness to repost the survey link to their social platforms and mobile application's family and social groups. Generally, convenience sampling is reliable once the survey can collect all the relevant and valuable data (Kalton, 1983). Participation was voluntary and targeted to persons who (a) were ordinarily resident in the Bahamas and (b) were over 18 years as those persons had prospective voting capabilities.

### ***Sample Size***

This research theorized that a person's feelings, thoughts, and innate traits would be good predictors of WLPs support in the Bahamas. Accordingly, we needed to ensure that our sample size was large enough to mitigate a Type II error (Kotrlík et al., 2001). Additionally, sufficient sample size was an important factor due to the applied nature of the research, the required factor analysis to validate the scales, and the intent to perform a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis (Kim, 2015). Research indicated that a minimum sample size of 300 was required "to guarantee an acceptable level of precision for Cronbach's alpha coefficient and, above all, accuracy and stability of the factor solution" (Rouquette & Falissard, 2011, p.236).

The calculated sample size for this study was 384 on 400,000 at 95% CL and 5 CI (Kotrlík et al., 2001; Taherdoost, 2017). However, the recruitment sample was estimated at approximately 1100 as the consent ratio was expected to be 75%. Out of that total, there would have been a 50% completion ratio for an expected total of 412 (Keller, 2014). Consequently, the recruitment sample was expanded to include all persons who

accessed the link until we achieved the sample quota. However, we surpassed the sample quota to account for persons who would have completed the survey but did not meet the criteria for inclusion which would invalidate their results.

### ***Data Collection***

For this research, the investigator gained access to the potential participants through social media via Facebook and the WhatsApp mobile application. The investigator utilized their contacts within numerous social and professional groups to distribute the survey link and to allow others to forward it onward. We utilized a non-probability sampling method which necessitated that the researcher address certain inherent biases and limitations associated with the technique (Simundić, 2013), such as (a) selection bias, (b) data collector characteristics, (c) response bias, and (d) respondents loss bias.

We addressed the potential sampling selection bias by encouraging participants to forward the survey link. This act enabled the researchers to reach categories of individuals at risk of underrepresentation or overrepresentation. Those categories would not have necessarily been captured through groups associated with the investigator (Shringarpure & Xing, 2014). The investigator also negated the need to be concerned with data collector characteristics affecting the study variables due to the strictly online survey distribution. The researchers were aware that the characteristics of data collectors had been determined to affect responses (Köksal et al., 2014). It was also expected that a lack of face-to-face interaction would have encouraged participants to respond more honestly and reduce response bias associated with a participant's conscious and subconscious desires due to their awareness of being a survey participant (Holbrook et

al., 2003; Marquis et al., 1986). The online accessibility of the survey, ordering, and grouping of questions by topics, providing clear directions, ease of use, and leaving the demographic questions for last, also annulled some of the respondent's loss bias (DeCastellarnau, 2018; Kelley-Quon, 2018).

Additionally, respondents and the investigator did not experience potential inconveniences that would have occurred with an in-person administration; there was no need to find parking, request business establishment approval, or be persistent with reluctant participants. Each participant's maximum possible time commitment was estimated at twenty minutes: five minutes for recruitment activities, five minutes to access the survey link, review and sign informed consent, and ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. Before data collection, the researcher sought and obtained approval from Florida International University's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects see Appendix C. Additionally, Appendix D contains the online consent that addresses potential risks and benefits and confidentiality of data.

### **Extraneous Factors**

It is a common research norm that data collection is not cut and dried, as many uncontrollable factors affect the process and can challenge the study's external validity (Buckwalter et al., 2009; McDermott, 2002). This study did not foresee nor encounter a situation that may have impacted data collection aside from anonymity, as the study was conducted in a highly interconnected environment during the political season. However, this was controlled for by the absence of the collection of identifying data such as IP (internet protocol) addresses or demographic data such as name or workplace.

## **Pretest and Pilot Test**

In this research, the primary approach to validating the research instrument for data collection was pilot testing. However, before pilot testing, the instrument underwent a pretest.

### ***Pretest***

The survey instrument was initially examined by a team of three of the researcher's colleagues. The objectives of the pre-test were to test the clarity of the questions, estimate the time needed to complete, and amend as necessary. The main point that emerged centered on the length of time required to complete the survey. The removal of reverse-coded items was also suggested. It was concluded that the recommended adjustments were made to ensure the instrument's clarity. Subsequently, the instrument was published for piloting with a target sample size of 100 participants.

### ***Pilot Test***

The survey instrument in this study consisted of self-reporting scales. Therefore, validation of the survey instrument was critical (Peter, 1981; Taherdoost et al., 2014) and necessitated factor analysis (Williams et al., 2010). Data for the pilot study was collected via an online survey. The anonymous link to the study was distributed using social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp. The researcher posted the anonymous link to Facebook and various mobile social groups. The groups were invited to repost the link in their associated groups. A total of 104 surveys were completed. After deleting 5 cases that failed the validation controls, the pilot sample consisted of 99 participants. All respondents completed the questionnaire in the same order. The gender composition was

40 (40.40%) males and 59 (59.59%) females and the average age ( $M_{age} = 25\text{--}34$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ).

We explored the factorial structure of the constructs in the pilot sample by including all 45 independent construct items in exploratory factor analysis (EFA). We utilized principal axis factoring with varimax rotation, which simplified data reduction but maintained variability (Taherdoost et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2010; Yong & Pearce, 2013). The initial results were problematic; consequently, we removed several variables from the matrix and reran the analysis with a forced 6-factor solution. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis,  $KMO = .642$ , and Bartlett's test of sphericity  $p < .001$ , indicating that correlation structure is adequate for factor analyses. The principal axis factoring with a cut-off point of .30 and the Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1 yielded the required six-factor solution accounting for 61.22% of the variance, as seen in Appendix E.

Cronbach's Alpha was also used to test the reliability of the selected items. Cronbach's alpha for the six factors ranged from .559 to .832, conservatism and goal achievement, respectively. Per the correlation table in Table 2, there were no correlations  $>.7$ , indicating that construct discriminant validity was not an issue.

**Table 2***Correlation Results for Pilot Study Constructs.*

	GA	CONSV	SPC	ISL	EMP	PART	WLPS
Goal Achievement (GA)	-						
Conservatism (CONSV)		-					
Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC)		0.146					
Insecurity Levels (ISL)	-.311 **		-0.192				
Empathy (EMP)	-.230 *	0.026		.274 **			
Participation (PART)	0.092	.272 **	-0.061	0.082			
WLPs Support (WLPS)	0.047	-0.035	-0.126	-0.087	-0.172		
	.558 **	0.118	-0.054	-.217 *	.245 *	0.028	

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### Main Study

The EFA results from the pilot study showed that several items had high cross-loadings. As a result, the survey instrument was redesigned and shortened from 66 items to 44, as seen in Appendix F. The main data collection followed the same procedure as the pilot study. Data were collected over 8 weeks and consisted of 452 complete surveys. Nineteen were discarded because the respondents were under 18 and not a part of the targeted group. The final sample size was 433 used in the data analysis below (note: all dichotomous responses were coded as 0=no and 1=yes).

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter of the data analysis and results, we tested the measurement model first, followed by the structural model analysis (Wong, 2013) to test hypotheses one through nine. Additionally, we performed cross-tabulations on selected variables. We also performed a post hoc analysis on support for potentially modifying how WLPs are funded and administratively managed in The Bahamas.

##### **Data Analysis Method**

First, we used the IBM SPSS software package for the descriptive and exploratory data analysis. We chose the SPSS suite of programs because it contained the resources necessary to reliably provide all the required exploratory analyses, such as descriptive, correlational, and multivariate. Second, we used the partial least squares SEM (PLS-SEM) based SmartPLS package to examine the measurement model and estimate the structural model of  $H_1$  through  $H_9$ . Generally, regression analysis tests a single relationship at a time, whereas SEM is more flexible and allows multiple analyses to run concurrently (Hair et al., 2019). The SEM is also a more robust platform as it can simultaneously investigate both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis and not only considers the linear relationship (Gefen et al., 2000). There are two classes of SEM: covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and PLS-SEM. Although CB-SEM is the most commonly used SEM, in this research, we employed PLS-SEM. The overarching reason for using PLS-SEM is its robustness to normality issues (Astrachan et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2012; Rigdon et al., 2017; Sarstedt et al., 2016). A comparative summary table of techniques (LISREL, PLS, and Linear Regression) taken from (Gefen et al., 2000) is seen in Appendix G.

## **Descriptive Analysis**

The survey respondent's demographic data overwhelmingly detailed that, of the respondents, 99.3% were ordinary residents of the Bahamas. There was also a fairly balanced gender makeup amongst respondents, as indicated by a mix of 229 (52.9%) males and 204 (47.1%) females. The age range for respondents was 18-85 years old, with the majority within the 25-34 age (29.3%) group. Education-wise, high school graduates (n=288, 66.5%) accounted for the largest percentage, followed by those who possessed professional degrees (n=53, 12.2%). Only 3.0% (n=13) of respondents did not possess a high school diploma. The results indicated that the sample population could comprehend and respond intelligently to the survey questions. See Table 3 below for more details.

**Table 3***Analysis of Demographics Table*

Variable	Variable items	No (N=433)	%
Gender	Male	229	52.9
	Female	204	47.1
Age	18 - 24	70	16.2
	25 - 34	127	29.3
	35 - 44	103	23.8
	45 - 54	64	14.8
	55 - 64	47	10.9
	65 - 74	19	4.4
	75 - 84	2	0.5
	85 or older	1	0.2
Education	Less than high school	13	3
	High school graduate	288	66.5
	Some college	44	10.2
	2-year degree	12	2.8
	4-year degree	22	5.1
	Professional degree	53	12.2
Employment	Doctorate	1	0.2
	Employed full time	192	44.3
	Employed part time	105	24.2
	Unemployed looking for work	77	17.8
	Unemployed not looking for work	5	1.2
	Retired	27	6.2
	Student	26	6.0
Income	Disabled	1	0.2
	0 - \$10,000	251	58
	\$10,000 - \$40,000	157	36.3
	\$40,000 - \$70,000	18	4.2
	\$70,000 - \$100,000	5	1.2
	\$100,000 - \$150,000	1	0.2
Marital Status	More than \$150,000	1	0.2
	Married	113	26.1
	Widowed	9	2.1
	Divorced	26	6
	Separated	18	4.2
	Never married	267	61.7

We aggregated the items in each scale for descriptive analyses, as seen below in Table 4. The measures of variability provided for all were means and standard deviation,

and the mean was applied to measure central tendency and the standard deviation as a dispersion index. The analysis also included normality tests.

**Table 4**

*Analysis of Means, Standard Deviations and Normality of all Variables*

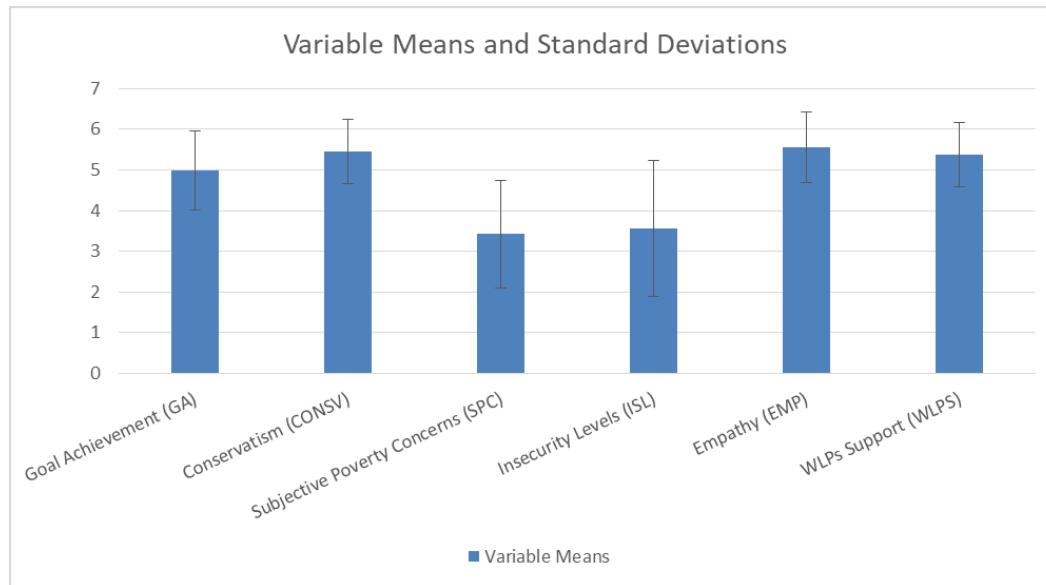
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		Shapiro-Wilk	
						Statistic	Sig.	Statistic	Sig.
Goal Achievement (GA)	4.986	0.982	0.964	-0.868	2.024	0.208	0.000	0.924	0.000
Conservatism (CONSV)	5.450	0.785	0.616	-1.387	4.439	0.137	0.000	0.904	0.000
Insecurity Levels (ISL)	3.565	1.670	2.789	0.021	-0.880	0.095	0.000	0.953	0.000
Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC)	3.249	1.359	1.847	0.348	-0.130	0.086	0.000	0.971	0.000
Empathy (EMP)	5.489	0.924	0.854	-0.656	1.258	0.096	0.000	0.954	0.000
Workfare and Labor Programs Support (WLPS)	5.369	0.795	0.631	-1.211	5.079	0.148	0.000	0.904	0.000

Note. n=433; a=Lilliefors Significance Correction

Examining the individual-level determinants at the aggregate level showed empathy had the highest score (mean:5.49, SD:.92), followed by conservatism (mean: 5.45, SD:.78). Conversely, subjective poverty concerns had the lowest (mean:3.25, SD:1.36). The graph below in Figure 2 indicates that ISL and SPC had the highest variability around their means, which were also the lowest means. In contrast, most variables were above the mid-point level of 4. The graph also points out that conservatism displayed the lowest deviation from the mean.

**Figure 2**

*Means and Standard Deviations of all Variables*



After examining the central tendencies and dispersion, we explored the normality of data as a prerequisite through skewness and kurtosis. This assessment can be both numerical and graphical and helps identify potential violations of univariate and multivariate normality and potential multivariate outliers. It is accepted that a skewness factor of +2 to -2 and kurtosis of +3 to -3 are within the standard ranges for a normal distribution (Kallner, 2018). However, evaluating Kurtosis has rules of thumb that are not consistent. There have been suggestions that values greater than 7 or 8 should be used as indicators of severe non-normality (Byrne, 2013; Kline, 2015). Although this study's skewness and kurtosis indicated acceptable levels, as seen in Table 4, the Shapiro-Wilks test rejected the null hypothesis of univariate normality. Generally, violations of the normality assumption can produce incorrect model fit statistics (Byrne, 2013). However,

SEM-PLS is considered robust to normality issues; accordingly, we chose it for the subsequent statistical analysis.

## **MEASUREMENT MODEL**

### **Exploratory Factor Analysis**

As the first part of the two-step approach, we used EFA to validate the measurement model (Mostafa et al., 2021; Mya, 2021; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Our approach utilized principal axis factoring with varimax rotation, a required five-factor solution, and a cut-off point of .40 for cross-loadings (Gomez - Cano et al., 2022; Mostafa et al., 2021; Mya et al., 2021; Yong & Pearce, 2013). This produced a clean structure accounting for 66.67% of the variance. Appendix H shows the factor loadings after rotation with the deletion of four items. EMP1, ISL1, ISL2, and GA4 were removed from the final analysis as they did not meet the significance criteria.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

The purpose of the measurement model in SEM is to examine construct validity (i.e., convergent and divergent validity) and reliability. The model is a priori specified in confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and confirms the items measuring the corresponding latent constructs. A CFA was performed, and all the items loaded  $>.6$  per the accepted recommendations (Awang et al., 2016; Dash & Paul, 2021; Mătă et al., 2020) except for two items. However, per the recommendations of Hair et al. (2021), we kept those variables to maintain the integrity of the scale as it was previously validated. It was also recognized that lower path loadings are acceptable once construct validity and reliability criteria are determined.

**Table 5***CFA of Field Study Constructs.*

Construct	Item	CONSV	EMP	GA	ISL	SPC	WLPS
Conservatism (CONSV)	consv1	<b>0.597</b>	0.065	0.211	-0.156	-0.177	0.160
	consv2	<b>0.762</b>	0.195	0.164	-0.044	0.027	0.157
	consv3	<b>0.780</b>	0.191	0.230	-0.028	-0.047	0.172
	consv4	<b>0.829</b>	0.119	0.292	0.002	-0.030	0.295
	consv5	<b>0.588</b>	-0.015	0.210	-0.124	-0.198	0.130
Empathy (EMP)	emp1	0.259	<b>0.608</b>	0.153	0.044	0.064	0.227
	emp3	0.069	<b>0.825</b>	0.204	0.174	0.111	0.198
	emp4	0.062	<b>0.746</b>	0.092	0.055	0.038	0.181
	emp5	0.135	<b>0.822</b>	0.187	0.070	-0.001	0.171
	emp6	0.127	<b>0.820</b>	0.147	0.096	0.022	0.201
	emp7	0.074	<b>0.827</b>	0.142	0.184	0.084	0.243
Goal Achievement (GA)	ga2	0.294	0.190	<b>0.889</b>	0.054	-0.060	0.465
	ga3	0.198	0.189	<b>0.810</b>	0.038	-0.095	0.447
	ga1	0.322	0.137	<b>0.879</b>	0.010	-0.114	0.489
Insecurity Levels (ISL)	isl1	-0.103	0.223	0.067	<b>0.907</b>	0.453	0.105
	isl2	-0.036	0.049	0.010	<b>0.925</b>	0.332	0.026
	isl3	-0.062	0.067	0.016	<b>0.914</b>	0.300	0.025
Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC)	spc1	-0.161	0.023	-0.151	0.241	<b>0.757</b>	-0.081
	spc2	-0.121	0.099	-0.131	0.303	<b>0.830</b>	-0.041
	spc3	0.029	-0.017	-0.121	0.279	<b>0.783</b>	-0.029
	spc4	-0.079	0.098	0.006	0.433	<b>0.843</b>	0.122
WLPS Support (WLPS)	supp1	0.266	0.256	0.529	-0.007	-0.049	<b>0.873</b>
	supp2	0.133	0.255	0.422	0.127	0.057	<b>0.848</b>
	supp3	0.269	0.098	0.314	0.044	0.045	<b>0.640</b>

Once we determined the factor loadings, we tested the fit and quality of the measurement model. We evaluated the saturated overall model fit for validity through discrepancy values (Benitez et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2015) which are seen in Appendix I. The SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) value of .07 met the accepted threshold of <.08 (Kock, 2020; Ringle et al., 2015), and the NFI was <.8, which enabled us not to reject the model (Benitez et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2015).

Additionally, the measures were tested for multicollinearity, construct validity (convergent and discriminant), and reliability. In the first instance, multicollinearity was

not feared as all VIF values were within the conventional cut-off range of  $<5$  that has been used to indicate excessive or serious multi-collinearity (Benitez et al., 2020; O'brien, 2007). Convergent validity was also important as it is the degree to which we have confidence that the trait is well measured by the theorized indicators (Carlson & Herdman, 2010; Clark & Watson, 2019; Peter, 1981). The rule of thumb is that Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) should be  $>.5$  and  $>.6$ , respectively (Hair et al., 2019). AVE values  $>.5$  are acceptable; however, AVE $>.7$  is considered very good. The next step in evaluating the measurement model was to test for discriminant validity. Discriminant validity is the degree to which we can confidently say that the different traits are unrelated (Clark & Watson, 2019; Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity is assessed by comparing the variance captured by the construct AVE and the shared variance with the other constructs (Gefen et al., 2000). Discriminant validity construct correlation should be  $<.85$ , and the correlation should be  $<$  the square root of AVE per the Fornell-Larcker test (Benitez et al., 2020).

Reliability measures the consistency as to how a set of items measures the same thing (Golafshani, 2003; Roberts & Priest, 2006). The most popular measure of item reliability is Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is the average correlation of items in a measurement scale and is an internal consistency estimation (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). It is used with factor analysis to check the scale's dimensionality and will always range from 0 to 1. The rule of thumb is that the internal consistency coefficient should be above .70 (Hair et al. 1998). As is seen in Table 6 below, the numbers are within acceptable ranges.

**Table 6***Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity of Field Study Variables*

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Inter-Construct Correlation Matrix							
		CR	AVE	CONSV	EMP	GA	ISL	SPC	WLPS
Conservatism (CONSV)	0.77	0.84	0.52	<b>0.718</b>					
Empathy (EMP)	0.87	0.90	0.61	0.160	<b>0.779</b>				
Goal Achievement (GA)	0.82	0.90	0.74	0.317	0.199	<b>0.860</b>			
Insecurity Levels (ISL)	0.91	0.94	0.84	-0.078	0.139	0.039	<b>0.915</b>		
Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC)	0.82	0.88	0.65	-0.100	0.072	-0.104	0.409	<b>0.804</b>	
WLPs Support (WLPS)	0.70	0.83	0.63	0.275	0.268	0.544	0.064	0.014	<b>0.794</b>

As seen in Table 6, an acceptable level of discriminant and convergent validity confirmed a measurement model for structural path analysis. The construct validity of the measurement model was determined as acceptable, and we performed the structural path analysis.

### Structural Model

Once the measurement model was validated, we performed a basic SEM path analysis in Smart-PLS as the second part of the two-step process on  $H_1$  to  $H_9$ . The SEM combines exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis (Benitez et al., 2020; Gefen et al., 2000). It uses path analysis to explain the relationships between the variables and the shared variance. The  $R^2$  values, standardized path coefficients, and p-values highlight paths (relationships) statistically significant. The  $R^2$  values are the coefficients of determination; they are used to assess the goodness of fit and provide the dependent construct's shared variance (Benitez et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2019). The path coefficients represent the standard linear regression weights that indicate causal

association within the SEM approach (Ringle et al., 2015; Sarstedt et al., 2016). The p-values can be one-tailed or two-tailed, are used as a basis for hypothesis testing, and indicates if the path coefficients are significantly different from zero (Benitez et al., 2020). In this study, two-tailed p-values were chosen to help reduce the possibility of false positives (Kock, 2018).

We developed the structural model to test the hypotheses, and the results are summarized in Table 7 below. The results produced  $R^2$  values of 0.167 (SPC) and 0.454 (WLPS), which explained a sufficient amount of the variance of the two endogenous variables and fulfilled the recommended 0.10 cut-off (Zhang, 2009). The diagrammatical results are in Appendix J. The results also demonstrated the model's predictive relevance as the  $Q_2$  values of SPC and WLPS at 0.099 and 0.281, respectively, were greater than zero. Additionally, Table 7 displays the results of examining the coefficient parameters. We used the coefficient parameters to test the hypotheses.

**Table 7**  
*Summarization Results of Hypotheses Tests*

Hypothesis	Hypotheses Paths	Path Coefficients	p Values	Support/Not Support
H <sub>1</sub>	GA -> WLPS	0.333	0.000	Support
H <sub>2</sub>	CONSV -> WLPS	0.155	0.002	Support
H <sub>3</sub>	ISL -> SPC	0.409	0.000	Support
H <sub>4</sub>	SPC ->WLPS	0.045	0.277	Not Support
H <sub>5</sub>	EMP -> WLPS	0.136	0.004	Support
H <sub>6</sub>	DP_GA -> WLPS	0.703	0.000	Support
H <sub>7</sub>	DP_SPC -> WLPS	-0.023	0.798	Not Support
H <sub>8</sub>	IP_CONSV -> WLPS	-0.281	0.009	Support
H <sub>9</sub>	IP_SPC -> WLPS	-0.123	0.026	Support

## Results

### Direct Effect Hypotheses Testing

The following section discusses the results of the path analysis concerning the nine hypotheses. The results from the structural modeling estimation showed that  $H_1$  through  $H_3$  and  $H_5$  were fully supported. The path coefficient demonstrated that subjective poverty concerns (SPC) were not significantly related to WLPs support (WLPS). Therefore,  $H_4$  was not supported.

As shown in Table 3  $H_1$ , goal achievement (GA) significantly affects WLPs Support (WLPS). GA in predicting WLPS also had a t-value and p-value of 6.623 and 0.000, respectively, indicating that it is significant. The path coefficient of .333 indicated that when GA goes up by 1 standard deviation, WLPS goes up by 0.333 standard deviations.

Likewise,  $H_2$  Conservatism (CONSV) and  $H_5$  Empathy (EMP) significantly affected WLPS. The regression weights for CONSV and EMP in predicting WLPS significantly differed from zero at the 0.01 level. The path coefficients were 0.155 and 0.136, respectively, indicating a positive relationship. As part of our hypothesis exploration, we performed a crosstabulation on empathy and WLPS. The graphical results in Appendix K revealed that in light of empathy's high mean, there was substantially stronger support for the program through its ability to assist those who faced difficult circumstances.

However,  $H_3$  insecurity levels (ISL) significantly affect Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC). The regression weight for ISL in SPC prediction significantly differs from zero at the 0.001 level. Therefore,  $H_3$  was supported. The path coefficient was

0.409, indicating a positive relationship, meaning that when ISL goes up by one standard deviation, SPC goes up by 0.409 standard deviations. On the other hand, the regression weight for Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC) in predicting WLPS Support (WLPS) is not significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level; therefore, H<sub>4</sub> was not supported.

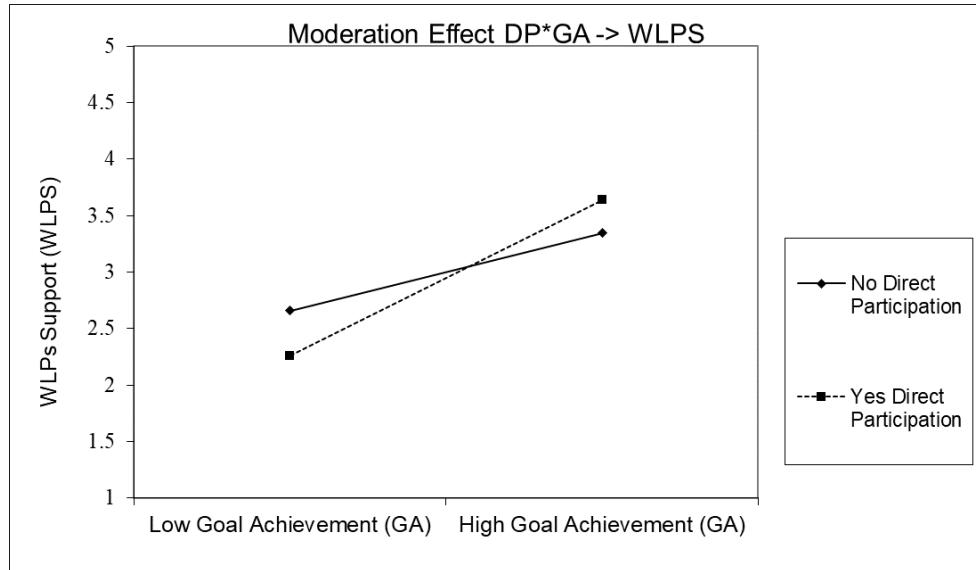
### **Moderation Effect Hypotheses Testing**

In this study, we hypothesized that there were variables that moderated the effect of the independent variables upon WLPS support (WLPS). This meant that the third variable should change the relationship between the independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV). Subsequently, as seen in Table 7, we tested for significant effects and generated plots, and the results are shown in Figures 4, 5, and 6 below. The results demonstrated that the interaction effects of H<sub>6</sub>, H<sub>8</sub>, and H<sub>9</sub> statistically and significantly moderated the relationships between the associated variables and WLPS. The interactive impact of DP on the relationship between SPC and WLPS was not statistically significant. Therefore, H<sub>7</sub> was not supported.

As seen in Figure 3, H<sub>6</sub> DP significantly moderates the relationship between GA and WLPS. The effect of DP interaction with GA on WLPS was statistically significant at 0.001 level; coefficient path = 0.703, t-value = 5.527, p < 0.001. This result indicated that DP moderates the relationship between GA and WLPS. Thus, H<sub>6</sub> was supported.

**Figure 3**

*Moderation Effect of Direct Participation (DP) on the Relationship between Goal Achievement (GA) and WLPS Support (WLPS).*



In Figure 3 above, the two lines were not parallel, which implied the existence of moderation. The relationship between GA and WLPS was positive; hence, it could be concluded that DP positively moderates (strengthens) the relationship between GA and WLPS at a greater level than no DP. It means that with an increase in the level of DP as moderator, the effect of GA as IV on WLPS as DV will increase.

In Figure 4, the results showed that Indirect Participation (IP) moderated the relationship between conservatism (CONSV) upon WLPS Support (WLPS). As shown in Table 7, the effect of IP interaction with CONSV on WLPS was statistically significant at 0.05 level; coefficient path = -0.281, t-value = 2.609,  $p < 0.01$ . Thus,  $H_8$  was supported. The two lines indicated a positive relationship between CONSV and WLPS. The line was steeper; thus, the relationship was greater for lower IP levels than higher ones.

Hence, it could be concluded that IP negatively moderates (dampens) the positive relationship between CONSV and WLPS. It means that with an increase in the level of IP as moderator, the effect of CONSV as IV on WLPS as DV will decrease.

**Figure 4**

*Moderation Effect of Indirect Participation (IP) on the Relationship between Conservatism (CONSV) and WLPs Support (WLPS).*

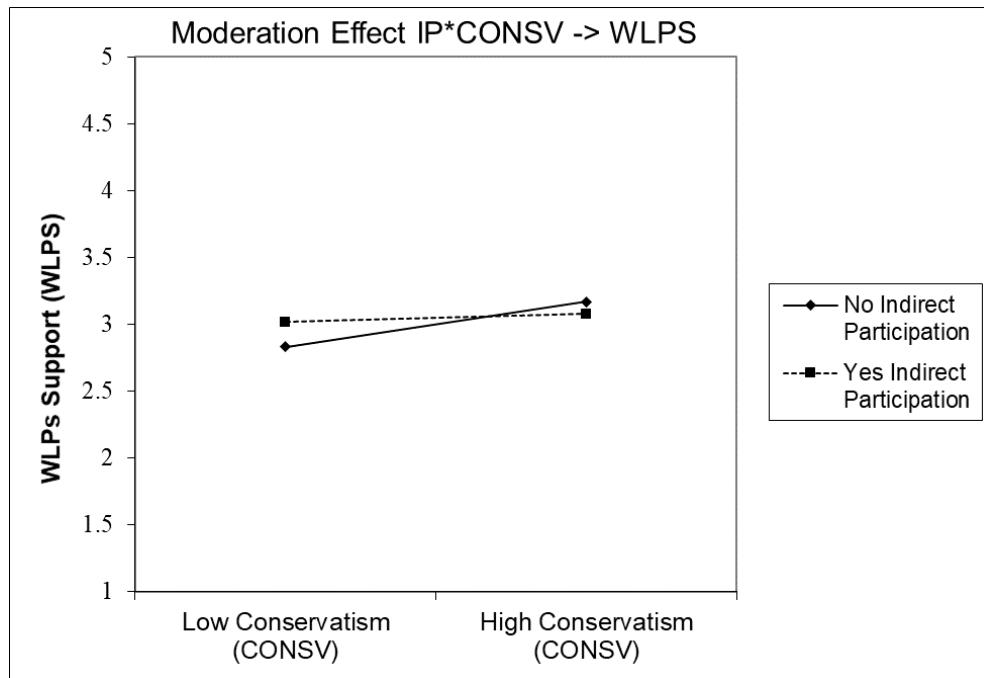
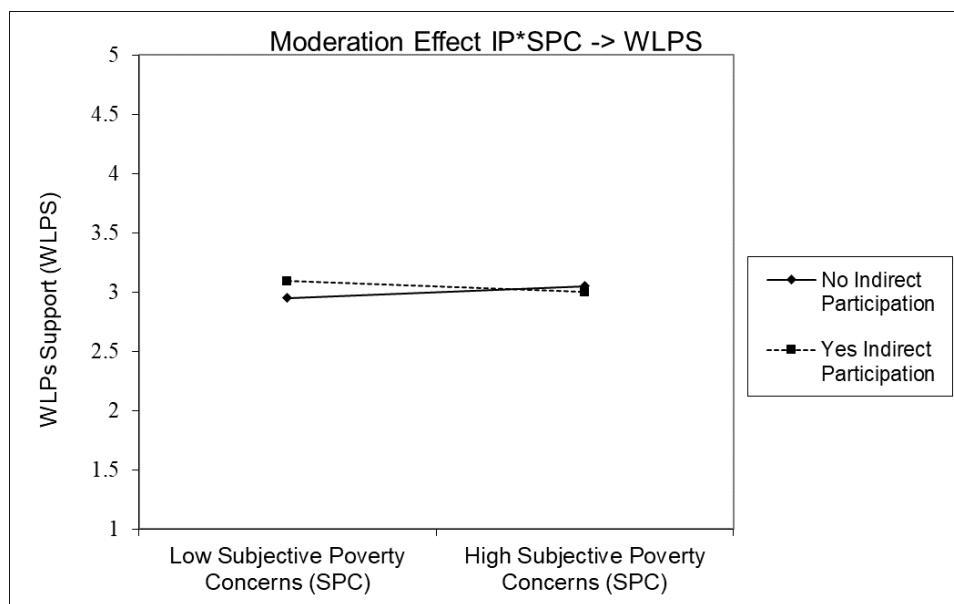


Figure 5 below shows the graph of moderating effect of IP on the relationship between Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC) and WLPs Support (WLPS). It demonstrates that  $H_9$  IP significantly moderates the relationship between SPC and WLPS. As shown in Table 7, the effect of IP interaction with SPC on WLPS was statistically significant at 0.05 level: coefficient path = -0.123, t-value = 2.235,  $p < 0.05$ . The relationship between SPC and WLPS was positive for low levels of IP but negative for high levels of IP. Hence, it was concluded that IP negatively moderates (diminishes) the relationship between SPC

and WLPS. It means that with an increase in the level of IP as moderator, the effect of SPC on WLPS will decrease.

**Figure 5**

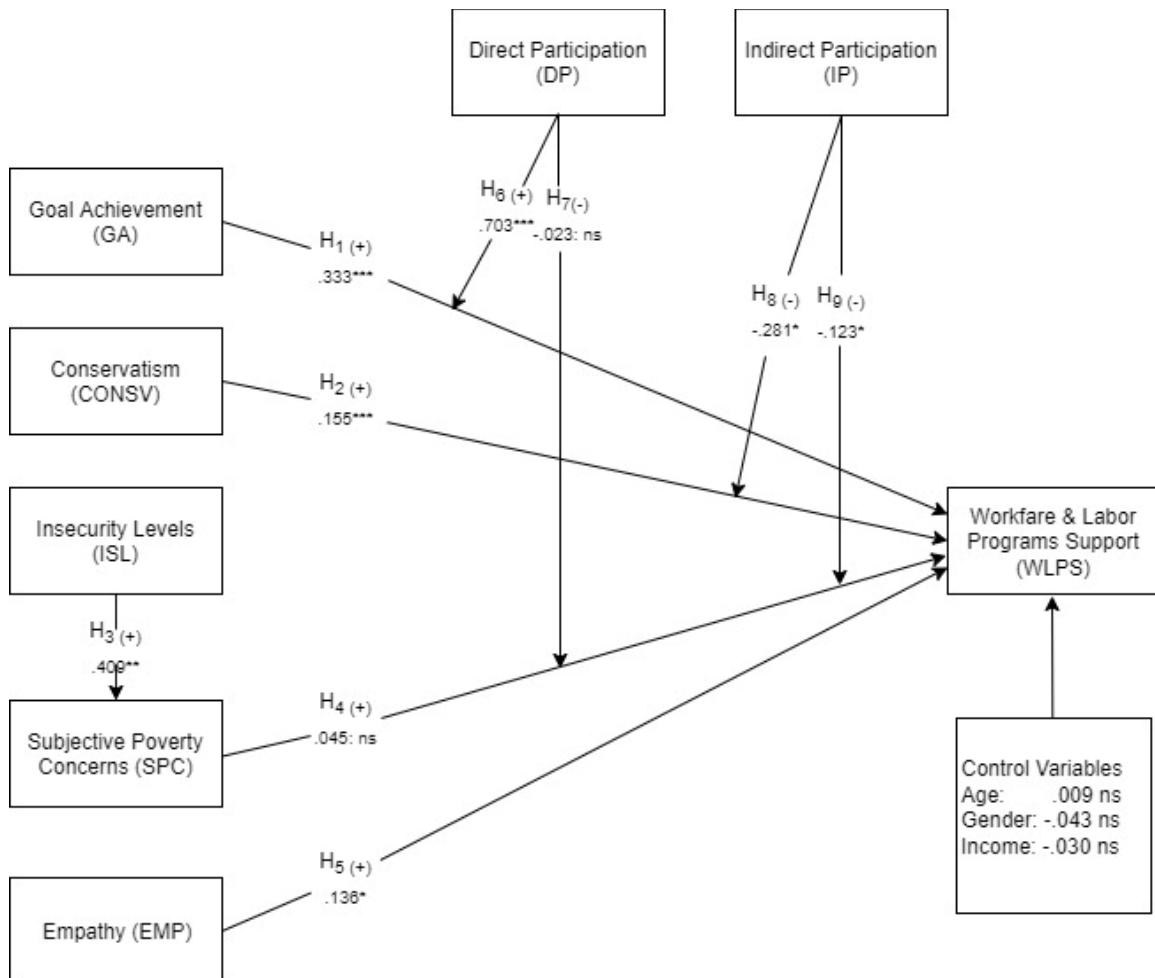
*Moderation Effect of Indirect Participation (IP) on the Relationship between Subjective Poverty Concerns (SPC) and WLPS Support (WLPS).*



The summarization of the results of examining the direct and moderating effects is shown below in Figure 6.

**Figure 6**

*Hypotheses Model Results of Examining the Direct and Moderating Effects on WLPS.*



Note: ns= not significant

\*p< 0.05 , \*\*p< 0.01, \*\*\*p< 0.001

Additionally, as seen in Figure 6, age, gender, and income control variables were insignificant and did not affect WLPS Support.

### Post Hoc Analysis

Though the research question that guides this study focused on support for the WLPS social spending preference, we were also interested in whether that support

translated into a desire to maintain the current status quo of how the program was funded and managed or change its administrative format. Recent studies indicated that some countries had explored various funding and alternative methods with varying degrees of success. Their explorations included restructuring the funding vehicle from strictly central government-funded to using social impact bonds (SIBs), an outcome-based public-private partnership (Vecchi & Casalini, 2019). Additional explorations also included changes to the administrative and management method, such as the Dutch experiment that eliminated the “quid pro quo” requirement and gave the local government the ability to tailor the programs to meet their constituents' needs (Groot et al., 2019).

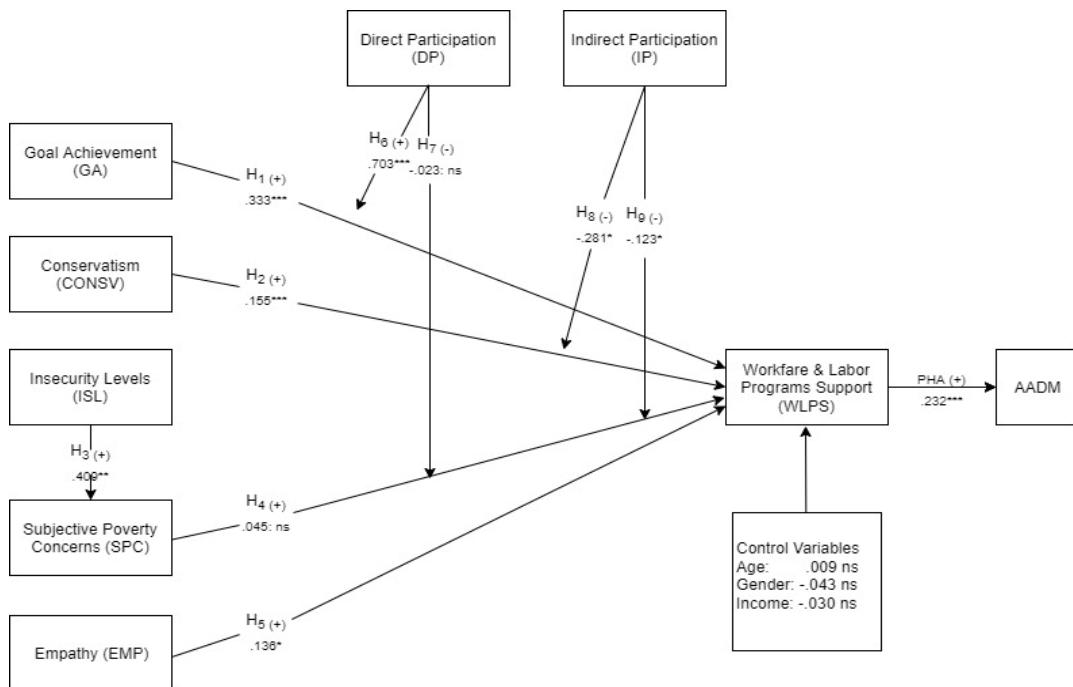
Consequently, as most of the WLPs support (WLPS) hypotheses testing results were significant, we conducted a post hoc analysis of its influence on AADM (Alternative Administrative and Management). The AADM represents a desire to change the programs' funding and management format in this study. We performed a reliability test on the AADM factor, and Cronbach's alpha was .711. Cronbach's alpha if item deleted statistics were less favorable. Subsequently, we concluded that the three factors could reliably measure the construct. It was important to this study to identify the desire for change, thus, the inclusion of an overall AADM construct. We used the AADM construct's mean in the structural model analysis and separately analyzed the individual elements against WLPs support through cross-tabulations. We performed the post hoc analysis referred to as PHA in the following order. We first examined the causality with an alternative model in Smart PLS that included AADM as the endogenous variable and

WLPS as the exogenous. We followed with a cross-tab analysis of preferences among AADM options and WLPS.

The structural equation model results, as shown in Appendix L, indicate that WLPS affects AADM at the 0.01 level. This indicated that WLPS in the prediction of AADM is significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level. In Figure 7 below, the path coefficient indicated a positive relationship which means that when WLPS goes up by 1 standard deviation, AADM goes up. However, AADM showed poor values of  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$ ; therefore, the results of this analysis should not extend to the general population.

**Figure 7**

*Post Hoc Analysis Model Findings*



Note: ns= not significant

\*p< 0.05 , \*\*p< 0.01, \*\*\*p< 0.001

We performed cross-tabulations following the structural analysis to explore the frequencies between the three AADM options and WLPS. To test the associations, WLPS was put into two groups (high and low support) against the three AADM alternatives (AADM1, AADM2, and AADM3). The results are seen below in Table 8. AADM1 and AADM2 offered specific options for change, whereas AADM2 indicated the desire for change. The mean of overall AADM was 5.369, calculated from the 7-item Likert scale.

**Table 8***Results of Pearson Chi-Square Test & Effect Size of Phi of AADM*

Alternative Administration and Management (AADM) Options	Workfare and Labor Programs Support (WLPS)			Pearson Chi-Square		Effect Size of Phi		
	Low	High	Total	$\chi^2$	df	p	$\phi$	ES
<b>AADM1 - Local Government</b>				<b>18.413**</b>	6	<b>0.005</b>	<b>0.206** W</b>	
Strongly Disagree	3	0	3					
Disagree	2	5	7					
Somewhat Disagree	7	6	13					
Neither agree nor disagree	63	38	101					
Somewhat Agree	109	84	193					
Agree	48	44	92					
Strongly Agree	5	19	24					
Total	237	196	433					
<b>AADM2 - Administrative/Funding Methods Change</b>				<b>9.818</b>	6	<b>0.133</b>	<b>0.151 VW</b>	
Strongly Disagree	2	0	2					
Disagree	1	3	4					
Somewhat Disagree	3	3	6					
Neither agree nor disagree	75	51	126					
Somewhat Agree	97	72	169					
Agree	52	53	105					
Strongly Agree	7	14	21					
Total	237	196	433					
<b>AADM3 - Public-Private Partnership</b>				<b>15.272*</b>	6	<b>0.018</b>	<b>0.188 VW</b>	
Strongly Disagree	4	0	4					
Disagree	3	3	6					
Somewhat Disagree	3	7	10					
Neither agree nor disagree	47	43	90					
Somewhat Agree	121	79	200					
Agree	52	47	99					
Strongly Agree	7	17	24					
Total	237	196	433					

Note. n = 433;  $\chi^2$  = Pearson Chi-Square;  $\phi$  = Phi; ES: effect size, VW: very weak, W: weak; \*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001.

Across both low and high WLPS, there was widespread support for a change in how the program was administered and funded by respondents, as seen in Figures 8, 9, and 10 below. Figure 8 below showed that the support for AADM1 (Local government) was concentrated mainly amongst low WLPS who ‘somewhat agree’ (i.e., 109 respondents) with the proposal versus people with higher than average (i.e., 84 respondents) WLPS. Approximately forty-six percent of those in the low WLPS group indicated their support for a change to this method.

**Figure 8**

*Cross-tabulations Results of AADM1 and WLPS.*

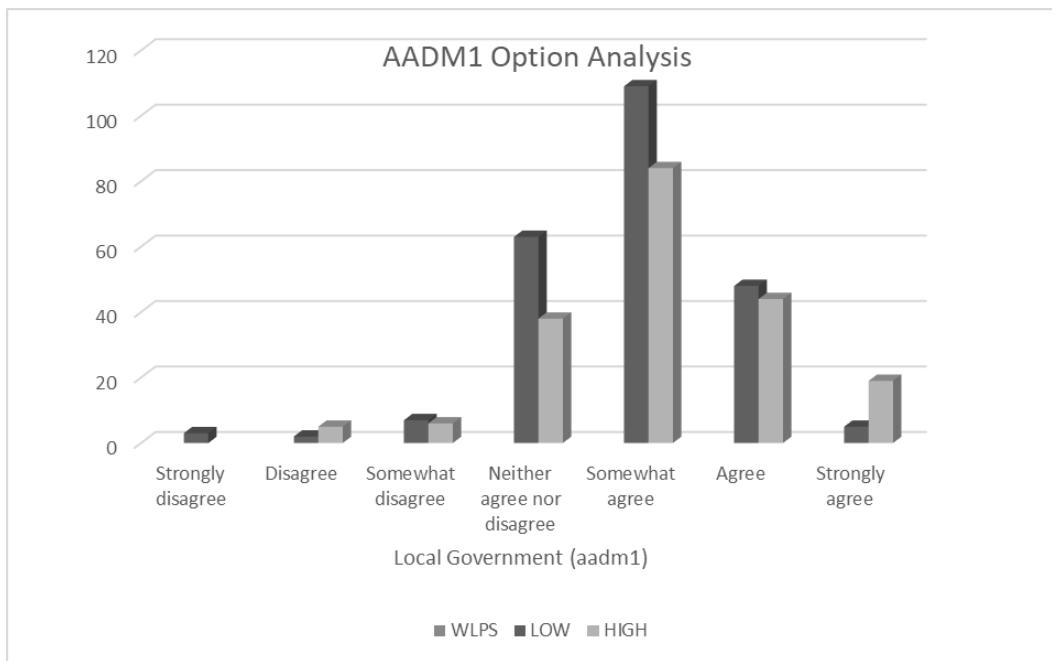
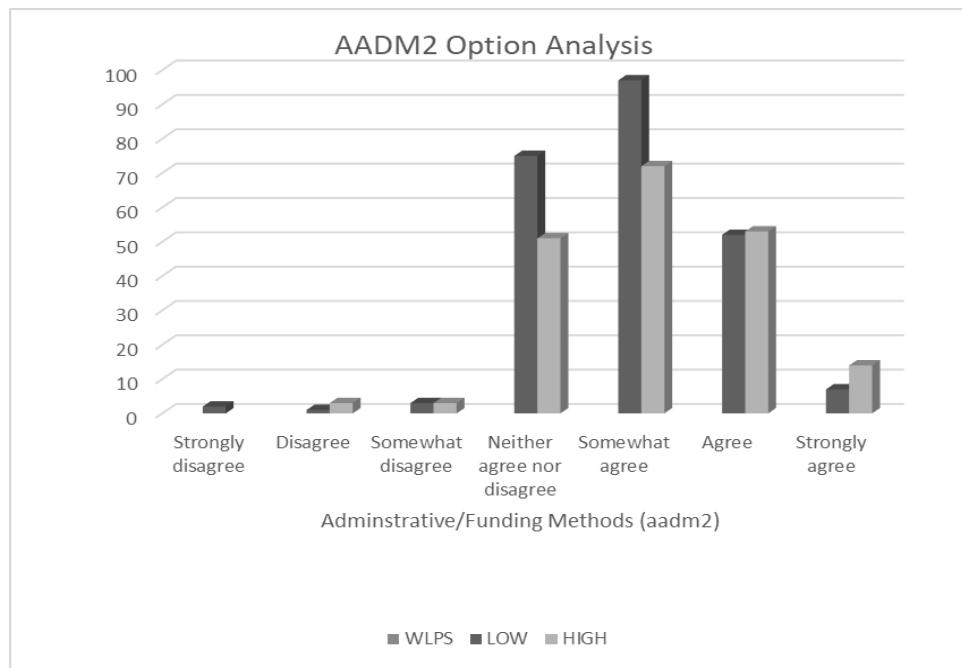


Figure 9 below also indicated a fair amount of support for changing the program's manner of operations. The AADM2 (Administrative/Funding Methods) suggests a higher frequency of people with low WLP support who have ‘somewhat agreed’ (i.e., 97 respondents) than those with high WLP support.

**Figure 9**

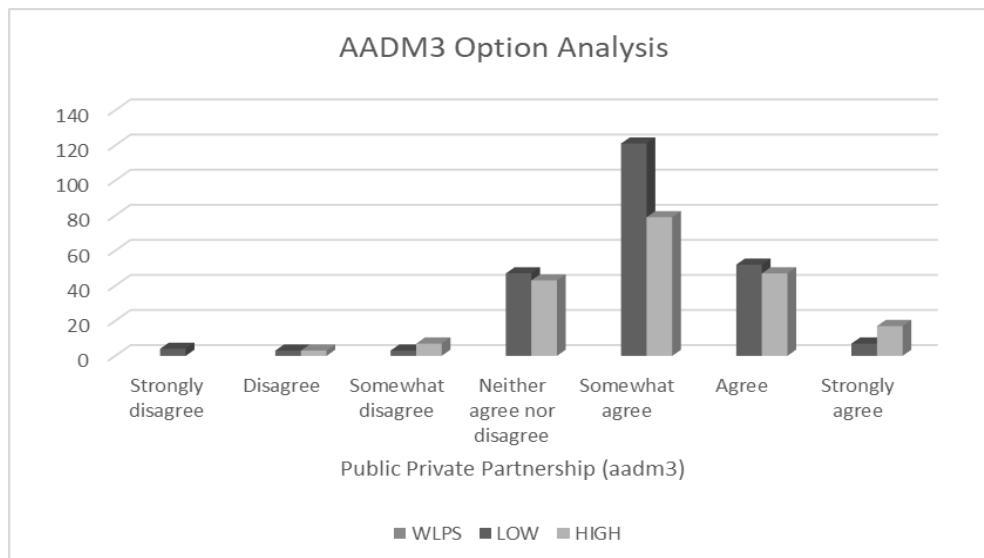
*Cross-tabulations Results of AADM2 and WLPS.*



In Figure 10 below, AADM3 (Public-Private Partnership) received the highest percentage of WLPS among the three options. Approximately seventy-six percent of respondents in the low WLPS indicated their preference for this alternate form of operations. There was a high frequency of 'somewhat agree' (i.e., 121 v 79 respondents) in the low group than those with high WLP support.

**Figure 10**

*Cross-tabulations Results of AADM3 and WLPS.*



## **V. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

This chapter discusses the findings and explores the implications of the research findings for political economics and relevant sciences. This study examined several individual-level determinants and WLPs support in the Bahamas. The investigations suggested that five variables may be important in explaining its support in the Bahamas.

### **Discussion**

A key summary of the results, as seen in Table 7, indicated that goal achievement (GA) appeared to be one of the most important variables impacting WLPs support (WLPS) in terms of its second-highest coefficient value. The finding indicated that the most important concern was whether persons perceived that the government was accomplishing its goals with its established program. Therefore, setting achievable, measurable objectives for policymakers should be central to rolling out policy decisions requiring significant citizenry support. Thus, political actors will find it most beneficial to survey constituents on their perceptions of programs' viability, benefits, and values. This finding indicated that the citizenry was vested in the results of programs from involuntary wealth transfers. They want to believe that the programs affect the intended beneficiaries according to the stated objectives. These findings contribute to the literature on political economics that speaks to the importance of political actors clearly articulating the expected inducements of their social policy program. The constituents must see the demand for what is being supplied and see the supply being provided to where it is needed, or the result is a wasted production that utilizes scarce resources.

The finding related to conservatism in H<sub>2</sub> indicated that conservatism was a significant predictor of WLPS: persons who scored higher on the scale were more likely

to render support. We infer that there is support because WLPs are restrictive and not designed to elevate a recipient to another status quo level through one-way wealth transfers but rather to avoid them becoming a non-contributory financial burden on the state. This restrictiveness may have appealed to the high conservatives' authoritarian nature.

According to the study findings, persons high on the conservative continuum believe recipients should lean into their financial responsibility and only use government-sponsored programs as a temporary crutch (Garritzmann et al., 2018). Consequently, WLPs' low-wage component may also have played into the conservative's need to maintain the status quo with people receiving one-way wealth through government support. Additionally, the highly conservative individual's strong beliefs in the traditional family and social values hold that a person should elevate themselves in the status quo through hard work and merit (Malka et al., 2017). This finding contributes to the literature that has determined that programs with a high level of restrictiveness are likely to garner more support from highly conservative persons.

In H<sub>3</sub>, we sought to determine whether perceptions of safety and security as proxied by insecurity levels directly contributed to how individuals rate their subjective poverty. The findings showed a direct and significant relationship between perceived insecurity and safety levels and subjective poverty. The results demonstrate that the perception of insecurity is integral to how persons feel they can secure their wealth and their prospects for improving their quality of life. Insecurity and subjective poverty are linked because persons seek to accumulate wealth for the benefit of themselves and/or their families. Therefore, securing that wealth is vitally important to them. Central to this

belief is the constituents' faith in the police to do a good job protecting their neighborhoods and project a sense of fair play in how they treat community members (Reid et al., 2020).

The findings infer that as long as people feel that the police are their partners and expect a fair shake in their dealings with them, they can realistically plan the use of their wealth without undue fear of it being violently taken away without recourse. Persons experiencing greater levels of insecurity will experience greater feelings of subjective poverty because they will not be able to plan to enjoy what they have accomplished or intend to. The findings align with the literature in that perceptions of safety, security, and violence have long been associated with economics and prosperity (World Bank, 2016). This determination was important because although violence and poverty have always been linked, a causal relationship was not established.

Subjective poverty concerns (SPC) and WLPS in H<sub>4</sub> were not found to have an associative or causal relationship in this study. Possible reasons for this finding may be related to SPC's mean, which was the lowest of all the independent variables, and the respondents displayed a reasonably high level of variability. With that finding, ISL, which we determined in H<sub>3</sub> to have a significant effect on SPC, also displayed the second-lowest mean and deviated the most from its mean. These findings indicated that although most persons who reported low levels of SPC made less than 10,000.00 per annum in income, they were very optimistic about their future ability to improve their current financial and career situations as they were seemingly satisfied with their current positions. Consequently, their support for WLPs was not contingent on how they viewed their economic status. Hence, this is a finding for further exploration.

The empathy quotient findings of H<sub>5</sub> inferred that most persons have a fair level of empathy. This empathy quotient is indicative of a person's ability or intentions to offer support to another individual who is unrelated or unknown to them. This finding is important to this study because research (De Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Twenge et al., 2007) has shown that a lack of empathy or low quotient is detrimental to society's continued well-being. Also, the findings demonstrate that empathy in its innateness has shown its ability to overpower a person's self-interest when a decision negatively affects another person's livelihood or ability to survive.

Empathy's ability was demonstrated in our crosstabs exploration (Appendix K) between the three items of WLPs support and high and low empathy levels. In the analysis, both high and low empathy overwhelmingly supported the need for government to assist persons who found themselves in difficult circumstances such as losing their jobs. Conversely, the low-level empathy respondents responded as expected and rendered low support on the other two items, which were (a) addressing a need for the program and (b) whether it provided value in consideration of the funds spent. The finding on the ability to assimilate discomfort is consistent with other studies (Baston, 2010; De Vignemont & Singer, 2006) that found that empathy played an important role in lending support to programs that may directly benefit others and not themselves.

Our exploration found that concern for others ranked highest amongst the itemized empathy items, followed by not wanting to see others disrespected. Consequently, this indicated that concern for others and a desire to help those who may experience difficulties through no fault of their own would find support. These findings contribute to the literature on individual-level determinants considered innate trait

characteristics. The use of trait theory in studies of beliefs, opinions, and intentions can be useful in mixed factor models.

Of particular concern to our investigations was the findings of the interactive effect of both direct participation (DP) and indirect participation (IP) participation upon WLPS. The findings of H<sub>6</sub> revealed that a person's opinion of whether the program is accomplishing its objectives as articulated by the policymakers significantly increases their support when they are a direct beneficiary by participation. As a direct beneficiary through subsidized wages or labor, the participant is well-positioned to articulate the results and influence of the program. As seen in Figure 4, we infer that direct engagement in the program leads to an appreciable increase in support as they consider the program capable of creating its intended effects.

Although we expected that DP would moderate the relationship between SPC and WLPS in H<sub>7</sub>, the findings indicated otherwise. As previously stated in the discussions, SPC was not found to be statistically significant or relational to WLPS. Also, whereas SPC in H<sub>4</sub> had a positive coefficient, H<sub>7</sub> was negative. Thus we inferred that DPs were more likely to report reduced economic anxiety and dissatisfaction with their current financial and career situations and future wealth prospects versus non-participants. This is a finding for further exploration through qualitative means

We also investigated IP's moderating effect on WLPs support (WLPS) in a SIDS as The Bahamas. We theorized that the interconnectedness proxied by IP would moderate the relationship between high conservatism (CONSV) levels and WLPS. The moderating effect of familiarity and interconnectedness showed this effect when persons on the

higher side of the conservative continuum rendered lower levels of support when they knew someone directly involved in the program.

The findings appeared to indicate that familiarity with program participants loosened the highly conservative's typical support, as familiarity with participants negatively seems to impact their support. We inferred that highly conservative persons who generally support social spending, such as restrictive workfare programs, would offer less support due to their interconnection than if they did not know a participant. The findings contribute to the literature by suggesting that a mix of conservative ideological beliefs and other individual-level determinants strongly predict social spending preferences.

In H<sub>9</sub>, the indications are that IP played a role in the relationship between subjective poverty concerns (SPC) and WLPs support (WLPS). Respondents were seen to have higher levels of support for the workfare programs when their SPC levels were low if they knew a participant. However, support was reduced when they knew a participant and their SPC levels were high. The results indicate that familiarity with participants will diminish support for such a restrictive social spending preference at higher SPC levels. This diminished support at higher SPC levels likely occurs when the respondent experiences conflict with their current financial or household situations versus where they desire to be. Persons familiar with the program's effects on others' lives may prefer a less restrictive form of social spending.

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Theoretical Implications**

The key contribution of this research to the literature is that we have contributed to filling the gap as to whether individual-level determinants may be better predictors of workfare and labor program support than institutional ones. Our study demonstrated that using a mix of variables to explain a multi-dimensional phenomenon such as support for socio-economic policies is effective. The composite approach may bode well as it eliminates some noise associated with individual factors, much like composite indices, as it represents the influence of all the variables (Grace & Bollen, 2008). Additionally, unlike a composite index that may hide some details (Ismail & Anil, 2014), this mixed factor approach may allow for the individual assessment of each variable's contribution to the outcome and its overall influence. We have also extended the theoretical literature by our significant finding that trait theory as proxied by empathy contributes to understanding support. This research demonstrates the complexity and correlation of various theories within humans that are better predictors together than as stand-alone. In this study, those characteristics were bounded by the theories of ideology, traits, and the contextualization of environmental factors such as perceived government efficacy in goal achievements.

### **Practical Implications**

This study provides an amendable guideline survey that can be used in a similar context by political state actors to ascertain the standing of constituents on fiscal policy matters that affect the social structure. As recent elections worldwide have been hit by a level of voter volatility that was not the norm (Garritzmann et al., 2018), it helps to

understand those factors that determine what matters to constituent voters. Understanding the elements plays a fundamental role within the political economics arena. Our findings validated the importance of the role that the perception of how effective government programs have been in achieving their stated objectives are to respondents. Consequently, state and political actors need to measure whether their policies are perceived as effective.

Political and state actors' understanding of what matters helps develop their messaging platform regarding what affects the voting intentions of constituents. These developments can result in a step forward for understanding what matters to voters when deciding on social-fiscal policies. They are concerned about the value produced by the programs and the needs they address.

## **LIMITATIONS, FUTURE STUDIES, AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Limitations**

The main limitations of this study were the survey method and generalizability. The limitations of the survey method were our use of a structured questionnaire with Likert scale responses to collect primary data. With the survey method, there is always the concern for response bias by respondents' desire to provide acceptable answers and response fatigue. Accordingly, this method created the need to be parsimonious. We had to keep the survey length within a reasonable time frame to ensure as many complete responses as possible. Thus, we could not qualitatively explore the reasoning behind some of the responses. Generalizability also factored in as the survey was constrained to the Bahamas, and we could not secure a random sample that would have been truly

representative of the total population. Therefore, the results may not generalize to other countries with different cultures and demographics.

## **Future Studies**

This study's findings and limitations have left the avenue to conduct further explorations. In the first instance, our findings that SPC was insignificant to WLPs support generated a question we would like answered. The question pertains to the fascination that persons at the lowest level of the income rankings were generally satisfied with their professional situation, although not with the financial one. This has led to curiosity as those persons were also overwhelmingly satisfied with their current household situations. Plausible possibilities to explore include whether some of the questions posed were ambiguous or were not sufficiently concise in their meanings. The demonstrated volatility of SPC in this study is a possible future study.

Another possible avenue for exploration is the role of innate trait characteristics such as empathy in future studies that involve behaviors relative to intent and decision making. Extant behavioral literature has extensively covered the role of personality (Hair et al., 2020) with traits such as the Big-5. However, our study confirms that other innate trait characteristics also have the potential to play a substantial role in such studies. Its effect as a moderating influence is also open to reviewing.

Another finding that has potential for further studies is using a composite of individual determinants versus the use of single factors to explain variance in behaviors. Although decisions may have a make or break factor, lived experiences and innate characteristics ultimately play a pivotal role. Therefore, the composite model can effectively account for large amounts of variance.

In the second instance, one of our limitations allowed follow-up exploration. The suggested investigation delves into constituents' opinions of the most detrimental factors to socio-economic policies not achieving their true potential. This study conducted a post hoc analysis that found that respondents who supported WLPs overwhelmingly indicated a desire for the program to be managed differently concerning its funding and administrative aspects. This finding necessitates a qualitative analysis of why respondents will simultaneously support a policy and desire change.

## **Conclusions**

The overarching purpose of this quantitative study was to contribute to the knowledge of individual determinants of workfare support by filling the gap and extending the existing knowledge by presenting the determinants as a mix of factors. The aim was to provide political state actors with a survey instrument that could serve as a blueprint to evaluate preferences for social spending. This aim was important to us because of its implications for political economics and voter intentions in SIDS, such as in the Bahamas. Constituents of SIDS are aware that the tax base is not very elastic. Therefore, political and state actors must pay consideration to the perceptions and opinions of those who pay for the socio-economic policy programs.

From our research, it appears that the most significant determinant of support for such programs is mainly based on the perceptions held by the individual respondents of government efficacy in achieving the goals set by the policymakers. Conservatism and empathy were also important, whereas subjective poverty concerns were unimportant to WLPs support as the main effect. However, there were interesting findings relative to the impact of indirect participation.

The important issues to the respondents are that the programs provide value, address a need, and that the recipients deserve the support. Generally, respondents were responsive if they felt that the wealth transfer provided value to persons who may find themselves in untenable circumstances. Also, they responded positively to the continuation of WLPs when they felt that the government was operating under levels of efficacy in addressing needs that were important to society's continued well-being.

Respondents generally considered themselves highly conservative and high-level empathetic. Henceforth, persons may not always act upon their levels of empathy, but they may be guided by it. Consequently, those with higher empathy quotients will not be comfortable thinking that a person in an unfortunate circumstance could be negatively impacted by their decision. Empathetic characteristics were prevalent among a relatively young population who may very well not have any political allegiances, thus making them volatile potential voters. As a universal human trait, empathy conceptualizes the ability to "respond to others in caring, supportive ways" (Dvash & Shamay-Tsoory, 2014, p. 282), as lack thereof positively or negatively affects societal attitudes and behaviors (Bellucci et al., 2020).

In our research, interconnectedness and familiarity through indirect participation moderated the response to the social spending preference for WLPs support. Typically highly conservative persons subscribe to a criterion of deservingness (Drenik & Perez-Truglia, 2018). However, indirect participation loosened the support constraints of highly conservative persons who supported restrictive welfare programs. Indirect participation also demonstrated its effect on subjective poverty concerns through diminished support.

Based on the diminished support, we inferred that the respondents' perceptions due to familiarity are important, and state and political actors in SIDS should value their input.

Another critical aspect of this research was whether WLPs support translated into the desire to change the management and funding aspects of the program. We concluded that there was a statistically significant desire to change the program's administrative status quo. We also inferred that the desire to change the programs' administrative status quo was found with a higher frequency within the lower support category. Political state actors may tout the success of the programs by pointing to the unemployment numbers or other success metrics. However, potential voter preferences cannot be ignored as they can shape policy/reform directions that affect welfare states' long-term growth strategy.

This research has demonstrated the possibility and effectiveness of exploring more than one factor as a determinant in a theoretical welfare and labor program support model. Although welfare and labor programs are a standard in the government arsenal during an economic crisis, citizens scrutinize those programs' efficacy individually and through their interactions with participants. The importance of the significance of the perception of the efficacy of goal achievement by the government demonstrated the citizen's need to approve what is being done with their taxes. This is particularly related to their role in the country's economic growth through income redistributions, affecting the labor pool and savings (Danziger et al., 1981). Political and state actors must be mindful that those who do not directly participate or stand to benefit from the induced effect of their policy decisions must still be considered. The opinions and perceptions of those indirect participants potentially can alter intent. The potential future study derived from this research that the researcher desires to explore relates to

determining what causes persons with SIDS, such as in The Bahamas, with a relatively low income below \$10,000.00 per annum, to report low levels of subjective poverty concerns.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A - Definition of Terms

1. Workfare: "Workfare is a social-policy buzzword referring to mandatory work programs for welfare recipients, and it was coined in the late 1960s by the contraction of work + welfare (Peck, 2003)."
2. Small island developing states (SIDS): "These are island countries that share similar sustainable development challenges (i.e., small but growing populations, susceptibility to natural disasters, and excessive dependence on international trade. SIDS was first recognized as a distinct group of developing countries at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992 (Hay, 2013)."
3. Gross domestic product (GDP): "GDP is the most complex indicator of the results of a country. GDP plays an important role in establishing the situation at one time of the national economy's outcome and obtaining accurate information about how it has evolved and will evolve in the future (Anghelache et al., 2020)."
4. Exogenous shocks: "Are uncontrollable external events that substantially affect a country's income level (Tanzi, 1986)."
5. Political economy: "The extent of taxation and redistribution policy is determined as a balance between those who gain and those who lose from a more extensive tax-transfer policy (Razin, Sadka, & Swagel, 2002b)."
6. Public finance model: "The Government's choices of tax rates and expenditure levels that influence the long-term growth rates (Barro & Sala-i-Martin, 1992)."

## APPENDIX B: Survey Instrument Construct Items, Wording, and Sources

Construct	Item	Wording	Source
Empathy	emp1	Please indicate your level of agreeableness for the following statements:	Spreng et al., 2009
	emp2	When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp3	It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp4	I enjoy making other people feel better. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp5	I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp6	When a friend starts to talk about his/her problems, I try to steer the conversation towards something else. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp7	I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp8	I find that I am "tune" with other people's moods. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp9	I do not feel sympathy for people who cause their own serious illnesses. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp10	I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	emp11	I find it silly for people to cry out of happiness. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
Insecurity Levels	isl1	The following questions relate to your feelings of security in your neighborhood in The Bahamas. Please indicate how you feel by answering each question below. How safe do you feel walking down the street in the dark in the area where you live? (1=totally safe, 7=totally unsafe)	Rachael Diprose, 2007
	isl2	Compared to 2-3 years ago, has the level of violence in the neighborhood where you live decreased, increased, or stayed the same? (1=greatly decreased, 7=greatly increased)	
	isl3	In the next twelve months, what is the likelihood that you will become a victim of one of the forms of violence against person or property? (1=extremely unlikely, 2=extremely likely)	
	isl4	In the past 12 months how worried were you about someone threatening or attacking you, your family or friends? (1=didn't worry at all, 7=greatly worried)	
	isl5	Do you agree that the police treat everyone fairly? (1=strongly agree, 2=strongly disagree)	Reid et al., 2020
	isl6	Do you agree that the police do a good job in the area where you live? (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	
	isl7	Do you agree that the police are dealing with the things that matter in the area where you live? (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	
Conservatism	cons1	Please indicate your level of agreeableness about the following issues: Do you feel that the only way a person upholds patriotism is to display it? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Everett, 2013
	cons2	Do you agree that there should be Limited government involvement in the life of residents? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons3	Do you agree that Military and national security concerns should be a major point of importance for the government? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons4	Do you agree that people should have Right of Religion Choices? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons5	Do you agree that Welfare benefits are necessary in society? (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	
	cons6	Do you agree to the right of Gun Ownership? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons7	Do you support Traditional Family Values? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons8	Do you support Traditional social values? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons9	Do you agree that persons should depend on their own Personal Fiscal responsibility? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons10	Do you agree to minimal Government intervention in Business Activities? (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	cons11	Do you support Abortion Rights? (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	

Subjective Poverty Concerns	spc1	The following questions are concerned with your feelings about your quality of life. Please indicate how you feel by answering each question: Do you feel satisfied with your present professional situation? Concerning my present professional situation, I am: (1=extremely satisfied, 7= extremely dissatisfied)	
	spc2	Do you feel satisfied with your current financial situation (including income)? Concerning my current financial situation, I am: (1=extremely satisfied, 7= extremely dissatisfied)	
	spc3	In your opinion, during the last 2-3 years, have the living conditions of your household been much better or much worse than before?	Szukielojo-Bierkuńska, 2010
	spc4	In your opinion, in 2-3 years time, will the standard of living of your household become much better or much worse? (1=become much better, 7= become much worse)	
	spc5	Do you think that you and your family are under threat of poverty? Please take into consideration your current situation and the next several months. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
	spc6	Do you think there is a risk that you, personally, could become poor in the coming years? (1=extremely unlikely, 7=extremely likely)	Duvoux & Papuchon, 2019
	spc7	Please state if your household's life would look better or worse if you had to live only on your current income (without aid obtained in different forms)? (1=much better, 7= much worse)	Szukielojo-Bierkuńska, 2010
Goal Achievement	ga1	The government sponsored work and labor programs were initially implemented in 2011 to assist with reducing unemployment. It has been modified in subsequent versions to have a greater impact according to targeted objectives. The prominent objectives are outlined below. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.  The programs have assisted with reducing unemployment. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	(1) The Ministry of Education Planning & Research Division 2017. (2) The Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) National Report for The Commonwealth of The Bahamas on Adherence to the Declaration of Commitment of Port-of-Spain (The Bahamas) 2012.
	ga2	The programs are effective in improving soft-skills among participants. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	The World Bank. The Bahamas Enterprise Survey (ES) 2010, Ref BHS_2010_ES_v01_M_WB.
	ga3	The programs are effective in improving the work and job related skill sets of participants. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Inter-American-Development Bank (IDB) 2016.
	ga4	The programs are effective in promoting expansion within sectors such as maritime, construction and trade. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Alberta, G. R. (2015).
WLPs Support	supp1	Please indicate your level of agreeableness with the following statements. I agree that, the programs provide an acceptable level of value given the annual \$25 million funding cost. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	(1) McKenzie, N. (May 30 2016). (2) Cunha, M. D. (October 2 2011). (3) Hartnell, N. (July 9 2015).
	supp2	I agree that, the programs address a need within the economy and should therefore continue. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	(1) Social Security Programs Throughout the World: The Americas, 2017. (2) The complexity of Bahamian unemployment. (January 23, 2019). (3) Hartnell, N. (January 16 2015).
	supp3	I agree that, people should take more responsibility for their employment, income and work responsibilities to provide for themselves. (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	Munro, N. (2017).
	supp4	I agree that, the benefits of the program outweigh the possible drawbacks. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	(1) McKenzie, N. (May 30 2016). (2) Cunha, M. D. (October 2 2011). (3) Hartnell, N. (July 9 2015).
	supp5	I agree that, the government should take more responsibility for employment, income and workforce to ensure that everyone is able to provide for themselves. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Munro, N. (2017).
	supp6	I agree that, the state should provide help to only those who are not able to provide for themselves? (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	Munro, N. (2017).
	supp7	I agree that, the state should keep an age limit on who can participate in the programs. (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	(1) Govt Renews Its 52-Week Job Programme. Editorial. (2) Sarles, R. (July 12 2011). Grand Bahama-Youth Employment Program.
	supp8	I agree that, the state should provide help to those who have found themselves in difficult circumstances, for example, after losing their job etc. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Munro, N. (2017).
Alternative Administration & Management	aadm1	The following questions try to know your opinions on possibly restructuring the way the programs are funded and managed. The program funding method needs to be changed. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Developed by study researcher.
	aadm2	The Government should fund the programs but let them be administered/managed through the local government and not central government. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	

aadm3	The program administrative and management method needs to be changed. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
aadm4	The government should not directly fund or manage the programs but operate through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) enterprise whereby the government reimburses the company after they have achieved a set of objectives. (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	
aadm5	The programs are fine the way they are and should not be changed. (1=strongly agree, 7=strongly disagree)	
<hr/>		
Participation	par1	Have you participated in any of the work programs as an employee? Developed by study researcher. (1=no, 2=yes)
	par2	Have you participated in any of the work programs as an employer?(this question will not show if yes is answered at #1) (1=no, 2=yes)
	par3	Do you have a friend who has been a part of any of the government sponsored programs as an employee? (1=no, 2=yes)
	par4	Do you have a relative who has been a part of any of the government sponsored programs as an employee? (1=no, 2=yes)
	par5	Do you have a friend who has been a part of the government sponsored programs as an employer? (1=no, 2=yes)
	par6	Do you have a relative who has been a part of the government sponsored programs as an employer? (1=no, 2=yes)
<hr/>		
Demographics	dem1	Your gender: 1= Male, 2= Female
	dem2	Education: 9= Less than high school, 15=Doctorate
	dem3	Employment: 9=Employed full time, 15=Disabled
	dem4	Marital status: 20=Married, 24=Never Married
	dem5	Yearly income: 1=0 - \$10,000, 7=More than \$150,000
	dem6	Age: 9=Under 18, 17=85 or older
	dem7	Residency: Do you ordinarily reside in The Bahamas? 1=No, 2=Yes
<hr/>		

## APPENDIX C - IRB Approval

Office of Research Integrity  
Research Compliance, MARC 414

### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Dr. George Marakas  
**CC:** Utha Butler  
**From:** Elizabeth Juhasz, Ph.D., IRB Coordinator *EJ*  
**Date:** July 15, 2021  
**Proposal Title:** "C2D - Butler-SUPPORT FOR WORKFARE PROGRAMS AND ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF ADMINISTRATION: THE ROLE OF CONSUMER SUBJECTIVE POVERTY CONCERNs, SAFETY AND INSECURITY LEVEL, AND EMPATHY"  
**Approval #** IRB-21-0205-AM01  
**Reference #** 110391

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The Social and Behavioral Institutional Review Board has approved the following modification(s):

- The survey instrument has been amended. The amendments were made to ensure that the instrument collects the required data for analysis.
- Dr. Yan Chen (Dissertation Chair) is added as a Key Protocol Associate not requiring Topaz Access. Dr. Chen is now the Dissertation Chair and will have access to the data and engage in review and analysis activities.

There are no additional requirements in regards to your study. However, if there are further changes in the protocol after you commence your study, then you are required to resubmit your proposal for review. As a reminder, you are still required to receive continuing review and re-approval prior to your expiration date of **June 4, 2024**.

For further information, you may visit the FIU IRB website at <http://research.fiu.edu/irb>.

EJ

**APPENDIX D: Online Adult Consent Form**

**ADULT ONLINE CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**  
**SUPPORT FOR WORKFARE PROGRAMS AND ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF**  
**ADMINISTRATION: THE ROLE OF CONSUMER SUBJECTIVE POVERTY CONCERNS,**  
**SAFETY AND INSECURITY LEVEL, AND EMPATHY**

**SUMMARY INFORMATION**

Things you should know about this study:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to explore the factors that influence support for welfare and labor programs (WLP's) in The Bahamas.
- **Procedures:** If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire.
- **Duration:** This will take about 20 minutes.
- **Risks:** The main risk or discomfort from this research is discomfort from a question deemed personal.
- **Benefits:** The main benefit to you from this research is to provide insight to the competent authority responsible for economic and fiscal policies.
- **Alternatives:** There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.

**Participation:** Taking part in this research project is voluntary

Please carefully read the entire document before agreeing to participate.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

- The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that influence support for welfare and labor programs (WLP's) in The Bahamas.

**NUMBER OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS**

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of eleven hundred people in this research study.

**DURATION OF THE STUDY**

Your participation will involve 20 minutes.

**PROCEDURES**

If you agree to be in the study, we will ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a multiple-choice questionnaire.

## **RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS**

The study has the following possible risks to you:

1. The risks and discomfort associated with participation in this study are no greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

## **BENEFITS**

The study has the following possible benefits to you:

1. There may be no personal benefit from your participation in the study, but the reflection and analysing may inform your civic duties.
2. The knowledge received may be of national value once the results are published.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The records of this study will be kept private and will be protected to the fullest extent provided by law. In any sort of report, we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher team will have access to the records. However, your records may be inspected by authorized University or other agents who will also keep the information confidential.

The researchers will take the following steps to protect participants' identities during this study:

- (1) Each participant's electronic information will be housed in cloud storage and in a locked cabinet in the principal investigators office until completion of the study.
- (2) Original data files will only be stored on the principal investigators machine.

## **USE OF YOUR INFORMATION**

Your information collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed for future research studies even if identifiers are removed.

## **COMPENSATION & COSTS**

Participants in the MTurk pilot study will receive a one-time payment of \$1.00 for participation in the pilot study upon completion of the survey. For all other participants there will be no compensation provided for participation. There will be no cost to participate in this study.

## **RIGHT TO DECLINE OR WITHDRAW**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You will not lose any benefits if you decide not to participate or if you quit the study early. The investigator reserves the right to remove you without your consent at such time that he/she feels it is in the best interest.

## **RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions about the purpose, procedures, or any other issues relating to this research study you may contact Utha Butler at Nassau, Bahamas 242-465-6216, [ubutl001@fiu.edu](mailto:ubutl001@fiu.edu).

## **IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you would like to talk with someone about your rights of being a subject in this research study or about ethical issues with this research study, you may contact the FIU Office of Research Integrity by phone at 305-348-2494 or by email at [ori@fiu.edu](mailto:ori@fiu.edu).

## **PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT**

I have read the information in this consent form and agree to participate in this study. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been answered for me. By clicking on the “consent to participate” button below I am providing my informed consent.

## APPENDIX E – Pilot Study EFA

	Factor						
	Goal		Subjective				
	Achievement	Participation	Empathy	Poverty	Concerns	Insecurity	Conservatism
ga3		<b>0.835</b>	-0.022	0.104	-0.207	0.020	-0.081
ga4		<b>0.781</b>	-0.147	0.083	-0.181	0.056	-0.018
ga2		<b>0.749</b>	0.069	-0.149	-0.060	-0.190	0.062
ga1		<b>0.631</b>	0.190	0.119	-0.096	-0.271	0.230
part4		0.048	<b>0.780</b>	-0.144	0.043	0.106	-0.072
part5		0.053	<b>0.723</b>	0.003	-0.148	0.043	-0.053
part3		-0.055	<b>0.683</b>	0.009	0.018	-0.179	0.015
part2		-0.006	<b>0.622</b>	-0.213	-0.037	0.027	-0.079
part1		0.007	<b>0.546</b>	0.032	-0.174	-0.157	0.103
emp11		-0.068	-0.128	<b>0.666</b>	0.009	0.095	0.208
emp4		-0.032	-0.014	<b>0.658</b>	-0.036	0.021	0.148
emp3		0.113	0.065	<b>0.619</b>	0.003	-0.091	0.013
emp1		-0.004	-0.084	<b>0.593</b>	-0.088	-0.017	0.131
emp9		0.169	-0.038	<b>0.588</b>	0.160	0.106	-0.124
emp2		0.063	-0.190	<b>0.376</b>	-0.101	0.222	0.206
spc1		-0.070	0.047	-0.072	<b>0.773</b>	0.129	-0.186
spc2		-0.096	-0.118	0.028	<b>0.749</b>	0.123	-0.126
spc3		-0.126	-0.084	-0.116	<b>0.634</b>	0.037	0.069
spc5		-0.212	-0.083	-0.014	<b>0.621</b>	0.072	-0.095
isl7		-0.144	-0.025	-0.007	0.220	<b>0.875</b>	-0.092
isl6		0.015	-0.031	-0.060	0.190	<b>0.849</b>	-0.079
isl5		-0.128	-0.047	0.095	0.048	<b>0.547</b>	0.131
cons4		-0.178	0.072	0.245	-0.099	0.165	<b>0.581</b>
cons8		0.095	-0.055	0.121	-0.084	-0.144	<b>0.544</b>
cons7		-0.002	-0.037	0.049	-0.036	-0.064	<b>0.465</b>
cons3		0.215	0.014	0.085	-0.082	0.208	<b>0.426</b>

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

## APPENDIX F – Field Study Instrument

Field Study Instrument Questions

Construct	Item	Wording
Empathy		Please indicate your level of agreeableness for the following statements: When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp1	It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp2	I enjoy making other people feel better. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp3	I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp4	I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp5	I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	emp6	
	emp7	When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards him \her. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
Insecurity Level	isl1	In the next 12 months, what is the likelihood that you will become a victim of one of the forms of violence against person or property? (1=extremely unlikely; 7=extremely likely)
	isl2	In the past 12 months how worried were you about someone threatening or attacking you, your family or friends? (1=didn't worry at all; 7=greatly worried)
	isl3	Our local police treat everyone fairly. (1=strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree)
	isl4	Our local police do a good job in the area where I live. (1=strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree)
	isl5	Our local police are dealing with the things that matter in the area where I live. (1=strongly agree; 7=strongly disagree)
Conservatism		Please indicate your level of agreeableness about the following issues: country's culture? (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	cons1	Do you support Traditional Family Values? (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	cons2	Do you support Traditional social values? (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	cons3	Do you support the belief that persons should depend on their own personal financial responsibility? (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	cons4	Do you support the idea that there should be minimal Government intervention in business activities? (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	cons5	
Subjective poverty concerns	sp1	Do you feel satisfied: - with your present professional situation? (1=extremely satisfied; 7=extremely dissatisfied)
	sp2	Do you feel satisfied: -with your current financial situation (including income)? (1=extremely satisfied; 7=extremely dissatisfied)
	sp3	In your opinion, during the last 2-3 years, have the living conditions of your household been much better or much worse than before? (1=much better, 7=much worse)
	sp4	Please state if your household's life would look better or worse if you had to live only on your current income (without aid obtained in different forms)? (1=much better, 7=much worse)
Goal Achievement		Work programs were initially implemented in 2011 to assist with reducing unemployment. It has been modified in subsequent versions to have a greater impact according to targeted objectives. The prominent objectives are outlined below. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statements.
	ga1	The programs have assisted with reducing unemployment. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	ga2	The programs are effective in improving soft-skills among participants. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	ga3	The programs are effective in improving the work and job related skill sets of participants. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)
	ga4	The programs are effective in promoting expansion within sectors such as maritime, construction and trade. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)

Field Study Instrument Questions		
Construct	Item	Wording
WLPs Support		<p>Please indicate your level of agreeableness with the following statements.</p> <p>I agree that the programs provide an acceptable level of value given its million dollars funding cost. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p> <p>I agree that the programs address a need within the economy and should therefore continue. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p> <p>I agree that the state should not have stringent requirements for participants. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p> <p>I agree that the state should provide help to those who have found themselves in difficult circumstances, for example, after losing their job etc. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p>
Alternative Administration		<p>The following questions try to know your opinions on possibly restructuring the way the programs are funded and managed.</p> <p>Do you agree that the Government should let the programs be administered/managed through the local government and not central government. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p> <p>Do you agree that the programs' application, administrative and management method needs to be changed. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p> <p>Do you agree that the government should operate through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) enterprise whereby the government reimburses the company after they have achieved a set of objectives. (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree)</p>
Participation		<p>Have you participated in any of the work programs as an employee or employer? (1=no; 2=yes)</p> <p>Do you have a friend or relative who has been a part of any of the government sponsored programs as an employee or employer? (this question will not show if 1 was selected at <i>par1</i>) (1=no; 2=yes)</p>
Demographics	dem1	Your gender: 1= Male, 2= Female
	dem2	Education: 9= Less than high school, 15=Doctorate
	dem3	Employment: 9=Employed full time, 15=Disabled
	dem4	Marital status: 20=Married, 24=Never Married
	dem5	Yearly income: 1=0 - \$10,000, 7=More than \$150,000
	dem6	Age: 9=Under 18, 17=85 or older
	dem7	ResidencyDo you ordinarily reside in The Bahamas? 1=No, 2=Yes

## APPENDIX G – Comparative Table of LISREL, PLS and Linear Regression

Table 2. Comparative Analysis between Techniques

Issue	LISREL	PLS	Linear Regression
Objective of Overall Analysis	Show that the null hypothesis of the entire proposed model is plausible, while rejecting path-specific null hypotheses of no effect.	Reject a set of path-specific null hypotheses of no effect.	Reject a set of path-specific null hypotheses of no effect.
Objective of Variance Analysis	Overall model fit, such as insignificant $\chi^2$ or high AGFI.	Variance explanation (high R-square)	Variance explanation (high R-square)
Required Theory Base	Requires sound theory base. Supports confirmatory research.	Does not necessarily require sound theory base. Supports both exploratory and confirmatory research.	Does not necessarily require sound theory base. Supports both exploratory and confirmatory research.
Assumed Distribution	Multivariate normal, if estimation is through ML. Deviations from multivariate normal are supported with other estimation techniques.	Relatively robust to deviations from a multivariate distribution.	Relatively robust to deviations from a multivariate distribution, with established methods of handling non-multivariate distributions.
Required Minimal Sample Size	At least 100-150 cases.	At least 10 times the number of items in the most complex construct.	Supports smaller sample sizes, although a sample of at least 30 is required.

Note. Table taken from Gefen et al. (2000, p. 9).

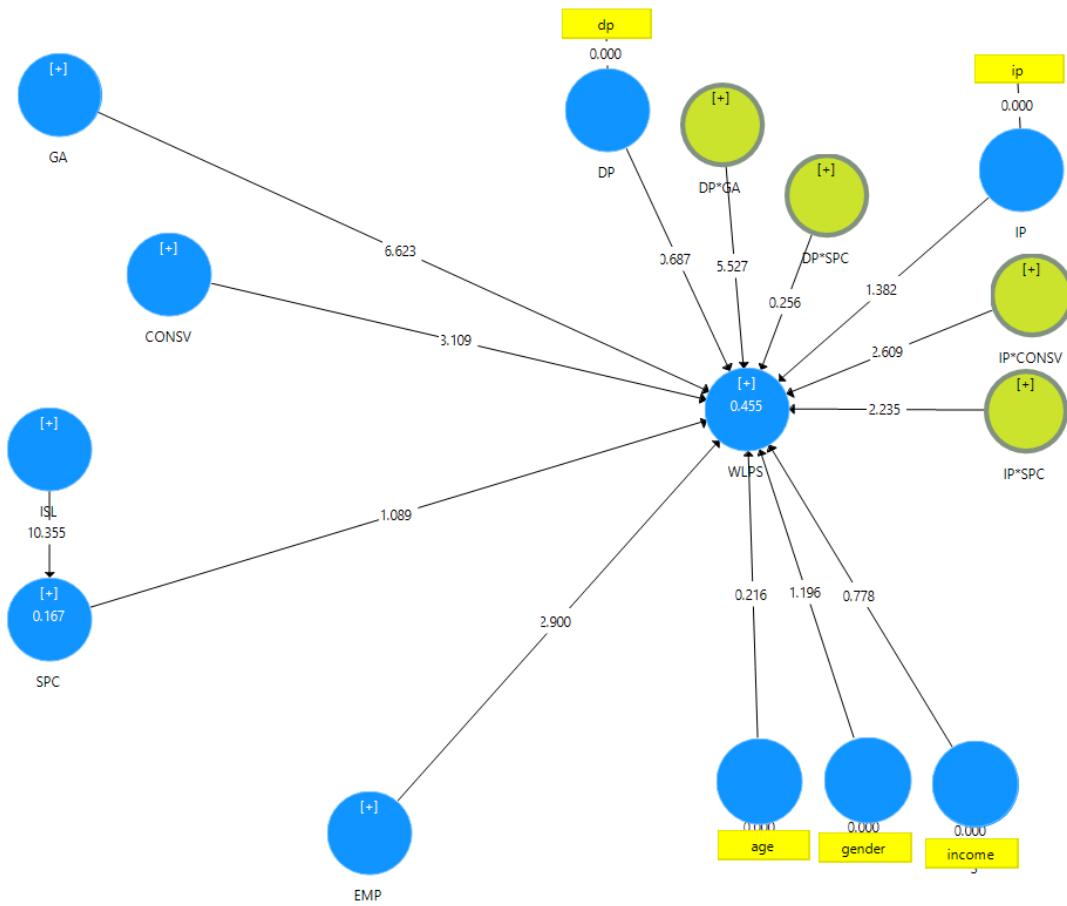
APPENDIX H – Field Study EFA Table

Construct	Item	1	2	3	4	5
Empathy	emp5	<b>0.826</b>	-0.065	-0.006	0.025	0.032
	emp6	<b>0.802</b>	-0.084	0.025	-0.036	-0.031
	emp7	<b>0.801</b>	-0.044	-0.034	-0.097	-0.013
	emp3	<b>0.786</b>	0.054	-0.074	-0.019	0.103
	emp4	<b>0.694</b>	0.001	-0.011	0.049	-0.040
	emp2	<b>0.413</b>	0.089	0.202	0.037	0.035
Subjective Poverty Concerns	spc2	0.049	<b>0.831</b>	-0.047	0.041	-0.021
	spc1	-0.011	<b>0.737</b>	-0.092	0.059	-0.029
	spc3	-0.105	<b>0.677</b>	0.148	-0.062	-0.055
	spc4	0.011	<b>0.650</b>	-0.039	-0.172	0.103
Conservatism	consv2	0.094	0.128	<b>0.799</b>	0.029	-0.092
	consv3	0.091	0.019	<b>0.798</b>	-0.037	-0.049
	consv4	-0.029	0.038	<b>0.635</b>	-0.052	0.130
	consv5	-0.090	-0.165	<b>0.467</b>	-0.019	0.062
	consv1	-0.009	-0.083	<b>0.425</b>	0.094	0.083
Insecurity Levels	isl4	-0.043	-0.018	0.062	<b>0.954</b>	-0.045
	isl5	-0.020	-0.057	0.002	<b>0.943</b>	-0.019
	isl3	0.152	0.202	-0.099	<b>0.683</b>	0.083
Goal Achievement	ga2	0.000	0.053	-0.009	0.017	<b>0.896</b>
	ga1	-0.047	-0.011	0.057	0.010	<b>0.811</b>
	ga3	0.066	-0.039	-0.006	-0.009	<b>0.622</b>
Eigenvalues		4.28	3.84	2.51	1.89	1.49
% Variance		20.37	18.27	11.95	9.00	7.09

APPENDIX I – Overall Saturated Model Fit Evaluation

Discrepancy	Overall saturated model fit evaluation			
	Value	HI <sub>95</sub>	HI <sub>99</sub>	Conclusion
SRMR	0.074	0.050	0.081	Supported
d_ULS	1.935	0.892	2.302	Supported
d_G	0.552	0.359	0.553	Supported

## APPENDIX J – Diagram of Structural Modelling Results



APPENDIX K – Crosstabulations of High and Low Empathy and WLPS Items.

Figure K1

*Crosstabulations of High and Low Empathy and WLPS item 1.*

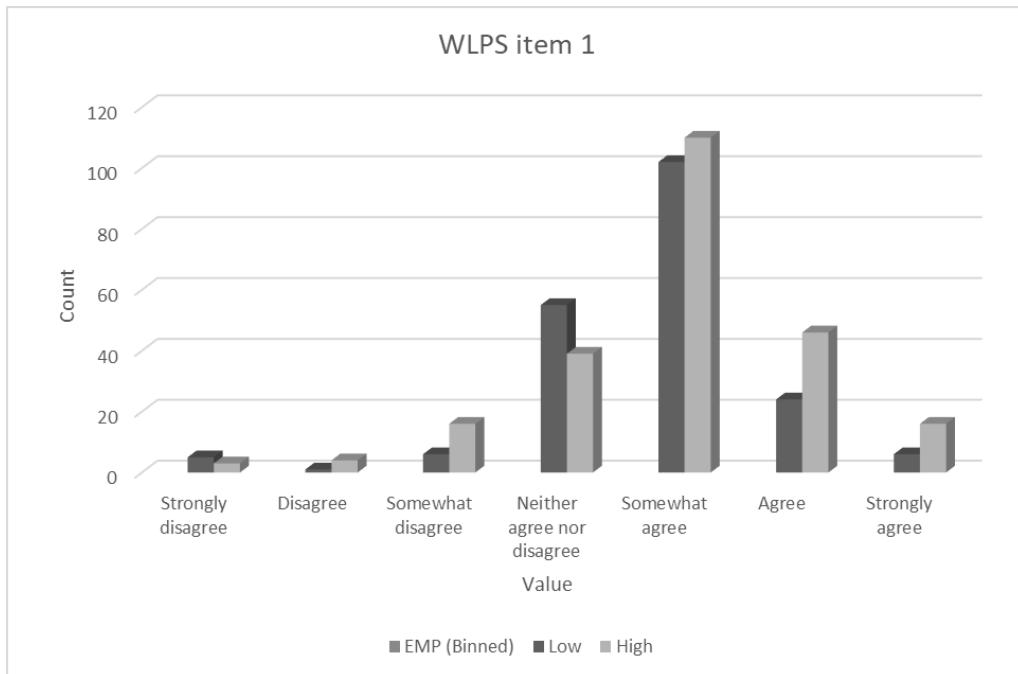


Figure K2

*Crosstabulations of High and Low Empathy and WLPS item 2.*

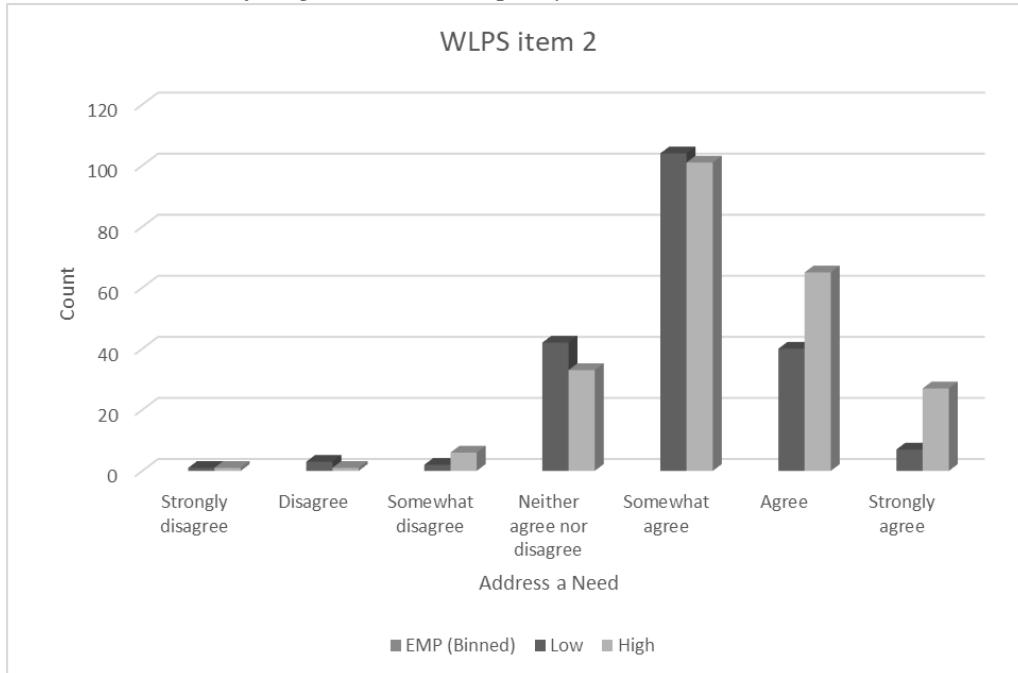
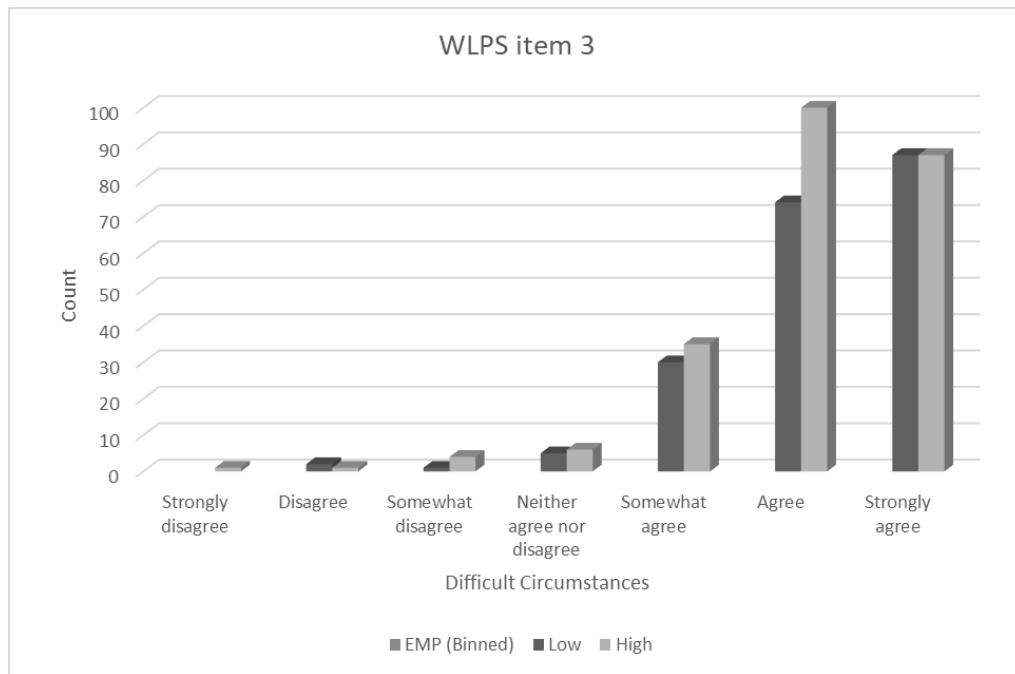
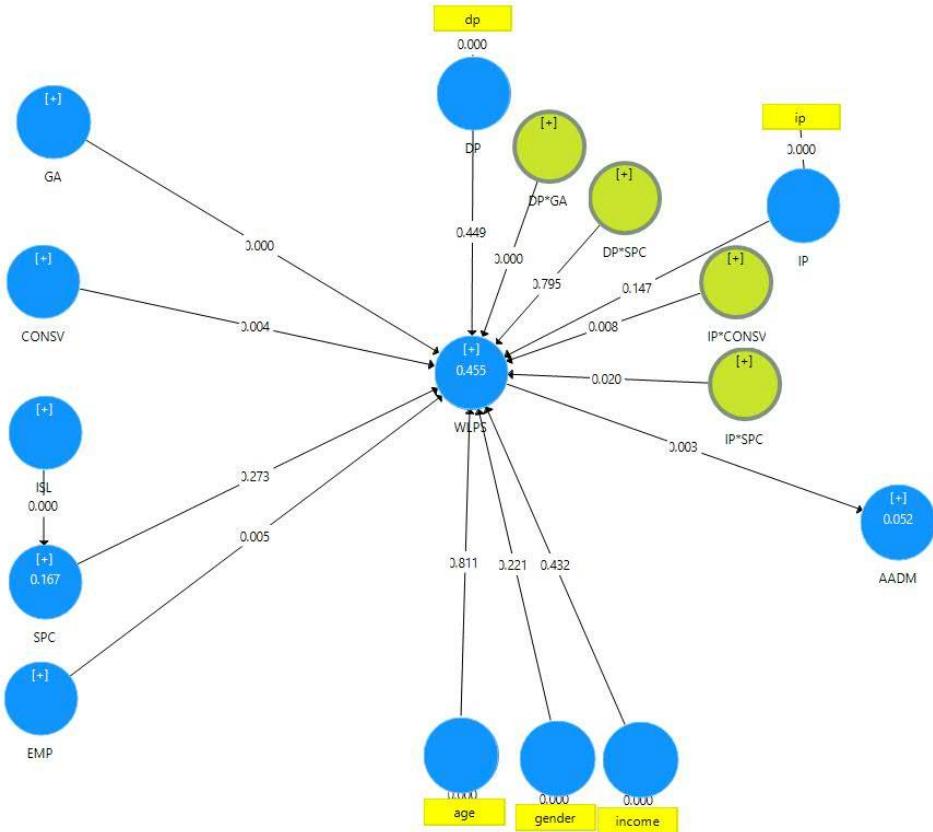


Figure K3

*Crosstabulations of High and Low Empathy and WLPS item 3.*



APPENDIX L – Diagram of Structural Modelling Results for Post Hoc Analysis with AADM



## VITA

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