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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENSATIONS SEEKING, ATTACHMENT AND WORK ADDICTION

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***Abstract***

*The study highlights the importance of attachment and sensation seeking dimensions in predicting the work addiction. The objectives focus on evidencing either the possible bivariate correlations between attachment, sensation seeking and work addiction dimensions or the prediction of the work addiction by the attachment and sensation seeking. The participants were a group of approximately 19 people aged between 21 and 61 (M=41.47; S.D.=11.56). They completed the Google-docs form after they read the instructions and the ethical consent. The instruments are: the Arnett Inventory of Sensation Seeking (Arnett, 1994), Dutch work addiction scale items (Schaufeli, van Wijhe, Peeters & Taris, 2011) and The Attachment scale (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). The results evidence that attachment predicts the work addiction represented by the tow dimension: Work in excess and Compulsive work. Also the Intensity dimension of the Sensation Seeking scale predicts the Compulsive work (p<.05).*

*Further studies should be focused on relationship between workaholic, sensation seeking and work performance.*

***Keywords:*** *Work in execs, Compulsive Work, Sensation seeking, Attachment.*

## 1. WORKAHOLIC BEHAVIOR RELATED WITH ATTACHMENT AND SENSATION SEEKING

Van Wijhe, Peeters, Schaufeli & Ouweneel (2013) conducted a study regarding the employee recovering from either workaholic or non-workaholic experience. The authors applied the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (Schaufeli, Shima-zu, & Taris, 2009) and found out that for the workaholics employee, negative emotions play an important role in work recovery. Furthermore, the authors find out that there are

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strong relationships between daily recovery experience and the next morning positive emotions.

Andreassen, Hetland & Pallesen (2013) were interested to find out the psychometric proprieties of three scales measuring workaholic and work addiction: the Workaholism Battery (WorkBAT), the Work Addiction Risk Test (WART) and the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS). The authors applied the cross-validation and find out low correlation scores highlighting that the instruments do not measure the same constructs. Furthermore, the test-retest reliability evidenced that the scores are stable after 24-30 months application. The limitations of the study were the culture differences, conceptual validity and meaning of the constructs and lack of linguistic and scalar equivalence.

Van Wijhe, Peeters, Schaufeli & van den Hout (2011) conducted a study focused on the relationship between the workaholic and work engagement. In the other words the authors were interested to evidence how workaholic and engages in work employee are determined to work in excess. The sample was a number of 173 employee and the instruments were Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS) and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeliet al., 2006). The findings highlighted that workaholic is related with negative mood and work engagement with positive mood. Di Stefano & Gaudiino (2018) were interested to evidence the effects of workaholic and work engagement. The authors highlighted that workaholic represents addicted to work as pathological behavior and work engagement represents a positive relation with the work and healthy behavior. Using the SEM the results evidenced the quite contrary expected effects.

Massah, HoseinSabet, Doostian, A'zami & Farhoudian (2014) highlight that sensation-seeking and coping strategies may predict drug addiction in high school students.

Zhao, Xu, Ding, Song, & Zhao (2019) were interested to study the relationship between the alcohol and tobacco consume and sensation seeking. The authors introduced the parental psychological control as regulatory effect. The results highlighted that sensation seeking had effects on the tobacco and alcohol use and parental behaviour control cannot influence the relationship between sensation seeking and the use of tobacco and alcohol (Zhao et al., 2019).

Observing that that most studies relate addiction in work with sensation seeking and workaholic with work engagement, the present study is focused highlighting possible relationships between work addiction, sensation seeking and work engagement the attachment scale. Furthermore, most of the studies use the work addiction scale measuring the concept of workaholic (Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS).

Nevertheless, if the addictions mentioned are related with sensation seeking facets, and the work addiction may be related with the sensation seeking.

## 2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES

### 2.1. OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the research:

1. To highlight possible correlations between the variables attachment, compulsive work, work in excess, novelty and intensity.
2. To evidence that novelty as sensation seeking dimensions predicts the work in excess tendency.
3. To evidence that novelty as sensation seeking dimensions predicts the compulsive work tendency.
4. To evidence that attachment predicts the work in excess tendency.
5. To evidence that attachment dimensions predict the compulsive work tendency.

### 2.2. HYPOTHESES

The research hypotheses are the followings:

-Hypotheses for the bivariate correlation

1. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the attachment and compulsive work.
2. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between attachment and work in excess.
3. There is a negative statistically significant correlation between novelty and compulsive work.
4. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between intensity and compulsive work.
5. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between novelty and work in excess.
6. There is a negative statistically significant correlation between intensity and work in excess.
7. There is a negative statistically significant correlation between attachment and novelty.
8. There is a negative statistically significant correlation between attachment and intensity.

-Hypotheses for the predictive models

9. Intensity as sensation seeking dimension predicts the compulsive work.
10. Novelty as sensation seeking dimension predicts the compulsive work.
11. Novelty as sensation seeking dimension predicts the work in excess.
12. Intensity as sensation seeking dimension predicts the work in excess.

13. Attachment predicts the compulsive work.
14. Attachment predicts the work in excess.

## 3. METHOD

### 3.1. The participants

The participants were a group of approximately 19 people aged between 21 and 61 (M=41.47; S.D.=11.56), both females and males from different professional backgrounds. They responded by filling out a Google docs document form between 27.08.2020 and 30.08.2020.

### 3.2. The instruments

1. The Arnett Inventory of Sensation Seeking - AISS (Arnett, 1994). The inventory is structured on two dimensions indicating the risk preferences and is composed from 20 items. Arnett underlined that the sensation seeking represents the need for novel and intense stimulation (Arnett, 1994). The internal consistency of the two dimensions of the AISS inventory were between .81 and .87. The original version was composed on items measured on a 4 points scale from 1- very low to 4 very high. The application version used the same items on a five points Likert scale from 1 very low to 5-very high.

2. Dutch work addiction scale items (DUWAS) short version (Schaufeli, van Wijhe, Peeters & Taris, 2011) consist in two dimensions, each one of 5 items. The dimension are: work in excess and compulsive work. The original questionnaire is structured on a 4 points scale from low-1 to high-4. The application version is structured on a 5 points Likert scale from 1-very low ti 5-very high. Balducci, et al. (2015) conducted a study regarding the psychometric properties of the Italian a Dutch versions of the DUWAS scale. Del Libano (2010) completed a study regarding the validity of the scale and no difference from the Dutch version were found.

3. The Attachment scale (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986) was selected from the Identification and Internalization subscale (the first 6 items). The authors conducted two studies with employee and the findings highlighted the importance of Attachment in explaining the organizational commitment.

Alpha Cronbach Coefficient values between .86 and .91 according Harris, Hirschfeld, Field, & Mossholder (1993), Sutton & Harrison (1993) and Martin & Bennett (1996).

### 3.3. Procedure

The instruments were applied on-line using document Google-docs. The instruments items were measured on 5 points Likert scale from 1- very low to 5-very high. The Ethical code and GDPR legislation were respected. In the beginning of the items application the participants were informed about the study, the ethics and the instructions: "Hello, please complete this questionnaire. Completing this questionnaire represents your acceptance to participate in the study and your agreement that the completed data be used for scientific purposes and that the research be published in a scientific journal. We mention that anonymity, ethical conditions in research and GDPR are maintained. Thank you! "

The participants were informed about the research consent and also about the anonymous identity.

### 3.4. The design

In order to test the regression hypotheses, the variables were the followings:

- Independent variables: novelty, intensity, attachment.
- Dependent variables: work in excess and compulsive work.

## 4. RESULTS

In table 1 can be seen the Descriptive statistics for the variables: Novelty, Intensity, Work in excess, Compulsive work and Attachment.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

| variable | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| Novelty | 34.26 | 5.226 |
| Intensity | 27.42 | 6.677 |
| Work in excess | 14.73 | 4.147 |
| Compulsive work | 11.42 | 5.284 |
| Attachment | 20.21 | 5.874 |
| N | 19 | |

Table 2. Correlations

| novelty | | Novelty | Intensity | Work in excess | Compulsive work | Attachment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Novelty | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .648** | -.327 | .086 | -.317 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .003 | .171 | .725 | .186 |
| | N | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intensity | Pearson Correlation | .648** | 1 | .042 | .689** | .194 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | | .863 | .001 | .425 |
| | N | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Work in excess | Pearson Correlation | -.327 | .042 | 1 | .588** | .545* |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .171 | .863 | | .008 | .016 |
| | N | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Compulsive work | Pearson Correlation | .086 | .689** | .588** | 1 | .686** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .725 | .001 | .008 | | .001 |
| | N | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Attachment | Pearson Correlation | -.317 | .194 | .545* | .686** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .186 | .425 | .016 | .001 | |
| | N | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |

Applying the bivariate correlation Pearson test the following results has been obtained (Table 2):

There are statistically significant positive correlation between the variables: Intensity and novelty (r=.648; p<.001), Compulsive work and Intensity (r=.689; p<.01), Work in excess and Compulsive work (r=.588; p<.01), Work in excess and Attachment (r=.545; p<.01), Compulsive work and Attachment (r=.686; p<.01).

Testing the correlation hypotheses the following hypotheses were confirmed:

- There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the Compulsive work and Intensity of the sensation seeking.
- There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the Work in excess and Compulsive work.
- There is a negative statistically significant correlation between the Work in excess and Attachment.
- There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the Compulsive work and Attachment.

The hypotheses was statistically significantly confirmed at the p<.05 threshold. The other correlation hypotheses were not confirmed (p>.05).

The hypotheses regarding the predictive models (hypotheses 9-14) were tested using the simple linear regression model.

In table 2 can be see the R and R Square values for the first prediction model corresponding to the hypothesis no.9 “Intensity as sensation seeking dimension predicts the Compulsive work”.

Table 3. – Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .689[a] | .475 | .444 | 3.94085 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Intensity
b. Dependent Variable: Compulsive work

Analyzing the Unstandardized Coefficients and the statistically significance of the predictor Intensity for the regression model the hypothesis has been confirmed.

The predictor Intensity was statistically significant for $p<.05$ and the regression equation is the following:

Compulsive work =-3.530+.2545* Intensity

Testing the hypothesis no. 10: Novelty as sensation seeking dimension predicts the compulsive work. For this hypothesis the $p>.05$ and was not confirmed.

Testing hypothesis no.11: Novelty as sensation seeking dimension predicts the work in excess.

Applying the regression model also this hypothesis was not confirmed because $p>.05$ for the predictor Novelty.

Testing hypothesis no.12: Intensity as sensation seeking dimension predicts the work in excess.

Also, for this hypothesis $p>.05$ and the predictor Intensity was not confirmed for the regression model. Hence, the hypothesis was not confirmed.

Testing hypothesis no.13: Attachment predicts the Compulsive work.

Running the linear regression procedure, in table 4 can be seen the R and R Square values.

Table 4. Model Summary[b]

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .686[a] | .471 | .439 | 3.95629 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attachment
b. Dependent Variable: Compulsive work

Analyzing the Constant and the Standardized Coefficients for the regression model related to the hypothesis no. 13, the significance of the predictor is $p<.05$ and the hypothesis no.13 has been confirmed.

The regression equation is the following:

Compulsive work =-1.051+.617* Attachment

Testing the 14th hypothesis: Attachment predicts statistically significant the Work in excess.

In the table 5 can be seen the R and R Square values for the regression model.

Table 5 – Model Summary[b]

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .545[a] | .297 | .256 | 3.57841 |

Predictor: Attachment

In the table 6 can be seen the Unstandardized Coefficients values and the significance of the predictor: Attachment for the criteria Work in excess.

Table 6. – Coefficients[a]

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 6.959 | 3.016 | | 2.308 | .034 |
| | Attachment | .385 | .144 | .545 | 2.680 | .016 |

a. Dependent Variable: Work in excess.

According the results after testing the hypothesis no. 14, the regression equation is the following ($p<.05$):

Work in excess =6.959+-.385*Attachment

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions evidence the results regarding testing hypotheses. Hence, the study highlights that the Intensity as Sensation seeking dimension correlate statistically significant with the Compulsive work ($r=.689$; $p<.01$), Work in excess correlate statistically significant with Attachment ($r=.545$; $p<.01$) and the Compulsive work correlate statistically significant also with Attachment ($r=.686$; $p<.01$). In this way, can be underlined that Attachment and Intensity are predictors for Addictive work measured by the facets: Compulsive work and Work in excess.

Testing the regression hypotheses the results confirmed that Intensity as sensation seeking dimension predicts the Compulsive work and Attachment predicts statistically significant the Work in excess and Compulsive work ($p<.05$).

In conclusion, the employee Attachment represents a very important variable that may predict the work addiction.

Taking in consideration the scientific literature the addictive behaviour is statistically significant correlated with the sensation seeking and may have implications at work place as work addiction. As the scientific sources cited highlight, workaholism is an addiction having negative effects, but studies reveal that may have and positive effects (Di Stefano & Gaudiino, 2018). The authors, underline that workaholism and work engagement showed a positive relation strongly supported by previous studies cited by the authors (Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009; Schimazu et al. 2012).

Further studies should focus on a better separation between workaholism and work addiction concepts measured by the psychological instruments, and also on the

study of the relationship between the workaholism, sensation seeking and work performance in a positive way.

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