THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPENCE AND ROBBINS WORKAHOLISM SCALE WITH ITS VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY MEASUREMENT

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Abstract

Oates (1971) determined the first definition of workaholism as an excessive and uncontrollable need to work that permanently disturbs health, happiness and relationships. In this study, workaholism scale which was developed by Spence and Robbins and was widely used in workaholism research with its three dimensions: work involvement, feeling driven to work and work enjoyment will be assessed. So the purpose of the study is to determine the validity and reliability of workaholism scale in the conditions of our country from the perspectives of MBA Students of Yıldız Technical University (n=109) in İstanbul, Turkey. To determine the reliability and validity of the scale is important for Human Resources Managers as well as top managers in the organization since workaholism can be associated with such organizational outcomes as productivity, job satisfaction, absenteeism, organizational citizenship and organizational commitment. Also, through out this study, workaholism will be examined with their demographic characteristics.

Key Words: *Workaholism, Workaholism scale*

JEL Classification: M1, M19

1. INTRODUCTION

Some organizations view workaholism positively. If workaholics are dedicated employees who are passionate about and enamored of work, then organizational leaders would want to hire, develop and retain them. In contrast, others view workaholism negatively. If workaholics are obsessive, unable to relax, and self-centered, then they might perform poorly and create conflicts with

coworkers. This suggests that employers should avoid hiring workaholics or design workplaces that prevent − rather than encourage − workaholism (Liang and Chu, 2009:646). Although many people work long hours, there are individuals who do so because they feel work is their only source of satisfaction. Consequently, they will neglect other life interests to maintain that level of work involvement (Porter, 2006:440-441). It is also important to analyze the instruments that measure workaholism in order to supply information to organizations about the type of employees they will work with.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CLASSIFICATION OF WORKAHOLISM

The term workaholism was first coined in 1971 by Oates. Oats (1971) defined a workaholic as "a person whose need for work has become so excessive that it creates a noticeable disturbance or interference with his [or her] bodily health, personal happiness, and interpersonal relations, and with his smooth social functioning" (Brady, Vodanovich and Rotunda, 2008:242). The part of this definition emphasized most is the centralization of work as a behavior in a person's life (Ersoy-Kart, 2005:609). Mosier (1983) defined workaholics simply as those who work at least 50 hours a week (Snir and Harpaz, 2006:375). Oates (1971) defined it as an addiction involving an uncontrollable need or compulsion to work continuously (Chamberlin and Zhang, 2009:159). This early description entails two core elements which return in later definitions of workaholism: working excessively hard and the existence of a strong, irresistible inner drive. The former points to the fact that workaholics tend to allocate an exceptional amount of time to work and that they work beyond what is reasonably expected to meet organizational or economic requirements. The latter recognizes that workaholics persistently and frequently think about work, even when not working, which suggests that workaholics are "obsessed" with their work (Schaufeli, Taris and Rhenen, 2008:175). Snir and Zohar (2000) defined workaholism as frequent and considerable allocation of time to work related activities and thoughts that is not based on external necessities (Liang and Chu, 2009:647). Porter (1996, p. 71), posits that workaholism should be interpreted as an addiction, that is, as excessive and persistent behavior with harmful consequences, thus excluding views that consider workaholism a positive state. Workaholics work harder than their job prescriptions require and they put much more effort into their jobs than is expected by the people with whom or for whom they work, and in doing so they neglect their life outside their job. Typically, they work so hard out of an inner compulsion, need, or drive, and not because of external factors such as financial rewards, career perspectives, organizational culture, or poor marriage (Schaufeli, Taris and Rhenen, 2008:175). The "happy workaholic", however, scores highly on both Drive and Enjoyment; he or she may feel driven to work but at the same time derive much pleasure from that work (Spence and Robbins, 1992:162). Buelens and Poelmans (2004) proposed that workaholism has three basic dimensions: over commitment to work, compulsive work addiction, and work enjoyment (Liang and Chu, 2009:647).

Scott et al. (1997) define workaholics as those who spend a great deal of time in work activities (even at the cost of sacrificing time for other non-work activities), persistently think about work when they are not working, and work beyond organizational requirements or economic needs (Ng, Sorensen and Feldman, 2007:113).

Organization members engage in workaholic behavior patterns when: (a) they spend a great deal of time in work activities when given the discretion to do so, which results in their giving up important social, family, or recreational activities because of work; (b) they persistently and frequently think about work when they are not at work; and (c) they work beyond what is reasonably

expected to meet the requirements of the job or to meet basic economic needs (Scott, Moore and Micelli, 1997:292).

Workaholics are more perfectionists, have greater difficulty in delegating work to others, encounter more conflict and tension in their interpersonal relationships and report higher levels of work stress than do non-workaholics (Burke, Matthiesen and Pallesen, 2006:463). In addition to being preoccupied with their work, ''workaholics'' are described as task-oriented, compulsive, perfectionist, neurotic, rigid, highly motivated, resourceful, impatient, and self centered (Andreassen, Ursin and Eriksen, 2007:616).

Scott et al. (1997) proposed another set of workaholic types which are labeled as: (1) compulsive dependent, (2) perfectionist-obsessive, and (3) achievement-oriented (Brady, Vodanovich and Rotunda, 2008:243). They suggest that compulsive-dependent workaholism will be positively related to levels of anxiety, stress, and physical and psychological problems and negatively related to job performance and job and life satisfaction. Perfectionist workaholism will be positively related to levels of stress, physical and psychological problems, hostile interpersonal relationships, low job satisfaction, performance, and voluntary turnover and absenteeism. Finally, achievement-oriented workaholism will be positively related to physical and psychological health, job and life satisfaction, job performance, low voluntary turnover, and pro-social behaviors. (Burke, 2001:114-115). Ng et al. (2007) proposed a cohesive definition of workaholism reflecting affect, cognition, and behavior. They defined workaholics as those who enjoy the act of working, who are obsessed with working, and who devote long hours and personal time to work. There are two subcomponents that underlie the affective dimension of workaholism: joy in working and guilt and anxiety when not working. The cognitive dimension of workaholism is *an obsession with working*, and it reflects a strong preoccupation that workaholics cannot suppress and control. Finally, two subcomponents of the behavioral dimension are excessive work hours and mixing work and personal life (Liang and Chu, 2009:647).

Workaholism has been differentially defined and classified in the literature. Four distinguishing aspects are whether (Douglas and Morris, 2006:395):

- It is defined behaviorally or attitudinally

- It is considered to be an addiction;

- It is viewed positively or negatively; and

- It is recognized as having different types with various antecedents and outcomes.

3. DIMENSIONS OF THE STUDY

In this study, workaholism battery which was designed by Spence and Robbins with three dimensions was analyzed. Spence and Robbins' (1992) measure is the most widely applied self-report assessment of workaholism. Work involvement is the degree to which a person is constructive in using his or her time (both on and off the job), and how committed the individual is to being productive at work. Work drive is a reflection of the person's internal motivation to work. Work enjoyment is the extent to which the person gains a sense of emotional satisfaction from work (Aziz and Cunningham, 2008:554) .

Spence and Robbins' (1992) tripartite model and measurement scale has recently been revised to a two-dimensional structure and consists of Drive to work and Enjoyment of work. Drive relates to

an inner pressure to work and captures the compulsion to work that was central to the early definitions of workaholism. Enjoyment refers to the level of pleasure derived from work, in accordance with evidence that high job satisfaction may be associated with workaholism. Consistent with traditional definitions, a workaholic would score highly on Drive but low on Enjoyment. The "happy workaholic", however, scores highly on both Drive and Enjoyment; he or she may feel driven to work but at the same time derive much pleasure from that work (Johnstone and Johnston, 2005: 181).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4. 1. Sample

The Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. The sample of this study was drawn from MBA Students of Yıldız Technical University. The MBA Students who work in different organizations contributed to the study by responding to the questionnaires and by delivering the questionnaires to the employees in their companies. Convenience sampling method was used for this study. The majority of the respondents are female (59,6 %). Most of the respondents are single (%72.5). In terms of working experience, 87 (32.1%) have at least 1-3 years of working experience.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	42	38,5
	Female	65	59,6
Age	18-27	53	48,6
	28-37	47	43,1
	38-47	6	5,5
Marital status	Married	28	25,7
	Single	79	72,5
Seniority	>1 year	9	8,3
	1-3 years	35	32,1
	4-6 years	28	25,7
	7-9 years	12	11
	10 and above years	24	22

4.2. Data Analysis

In this study, factor analysis was conducted in order to determine the dimensions of measurement instrument. Reliability of the scale was calculated with Cronbach Alpha coefficience. Mean and standard deviation were given as descriptive statistics. The data were analyzed with SPSS for Windows 18.0.

For determining the dimensions of workaholism measurement instrument, the 25 items were analyzed with principal component analysis and varimax was used as a factor rotation. The minimum limit for the factor loading was determined as 0.40 which is the lower limit for the social sciences. The variables that have 0.40 and upper factor loading were included in the scale.

Table 2: Factor Analysis Results of Workaholism Battery

Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin Measurement and Bartlett Test

KMO Measure	0,739	
Barlett Measure	574,028	0.000

KMO measures should be greater than 0.50. Looking at the results the measure was found as 0.739 which means a good adequacy. The result of the Barlett test was found as 0.000. This is statistical significance of the Barlett test measure (p< 0.001), the appropriateness of the data for different statistical analysis are high. This test also shows the appropriateness of the data for the factor analysis (Kalaycı et al. 2005: 322). The results show that our study is appropriate for factor analysis. According to the results the factor loadings of the dimensions of workaholism instrument were found as work engagement (0,644-0,867), feeling driven to work (0,469-817) and work involvement (0,538-0,820) respectively.   Cronbach alpha coefficience which indicates the reliability of factors was 0.8017 for the scale in general, 0.8217 for the work engagement dimension, 0,7646 for feeling driven to work dimension and 0,5986 for the work involvement. All of these values are at the acceptable reliability level in the literature.

First factor obtained from the results of factor analysis means seeing the work as entertaining and seeing it usually enjoyable. According to the literature this factor was named as work engagement. Its eigenvalue was 3.11 and it interpreted 22.23 % of total variance. The dimension about feeling driven to work in every condition was called as feeling driven to work. Its eigenvalue was 3.05 and it interpreted 21.84 % of total variance. The dimension about the work involvement of the workers has a 1.82 eigenvalue and it interpreted 13.03 % of total variance.

5. CONCLUSION

This study intends to draw attention to the awareness of the type of employees who are always busy with their work by also using information technologies intensively and who work to achieve the given tasks even above the expectations. This group of employees always thinks of work when they are far away. To be able to examine and analyze workaholic employees, the adaptation of a scale is required to be used. This study involves testing the validity and reliability of an original scale of workaholism so that its possibility of use in our culture can be analyzed and questioned.

When the results of factor analysis of workaholism scale were examined, it can be concluded that 14 of 25 variables were grouped under 3 factors which is also approved by the result of the study of Spence and Robbins (1992). Work engagement, feeling driven to work and work involvement dimensions were measured with 5, 6 and 3 variables respectively.

This study can be assumed as valuable since its findings may consider both Organizational Behavior discipline and Human Resources Management. The findings drawn from the scale may contribute to the literature for further studies and the scale may also be applied to find out the workaholic type of employees so that the necessary precautions can be taken. By the use of workaholism instrument, Human Resources Managers or professionals can analyze and control workaholic behavior of employees which may have an influence on their performance. Above all, analyzing and examining employees' workaholic behavior may be important in terms of its relationship with such organizational outcomes as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism tendency, organizational citizenship and productivity. Accordingly, this study intends to draw managers' and academicians' attention to the importance of workaholism problem.

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