



Workaholism and Authenticity: The Role of Life Satisfaction

Katie Vitiello
East Carolina University

Shahnaz Aziz
East Carolina University

Karl L. Wuensch
East Carolina University

Author's note

Katie Vitiello, Department of Psychology, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC; Shahnaz Aziz, Department of Psychology, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC; Karl L. Wuensch, Department of Psychology, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Shahnaz Aziz, Department of Psychology, Mail Stop 565, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, 27858-4353. Email: azizs@ecu.edu

Abstract

This study seeks to serve as a stepping-stone for determining what specific aspects of the workaholic's personality are affected by the condition and how the experience differs by individual. Thus, we investigated the relationships among workaholism, authenticity, and life satisfaction. Data were collected, through an online survey, from 358 faculty and staff members at a large Southeastern university. Workaholism and authenticity were negatively related to each other. Workaholism and authenticity also predicted life satisfaction. Moreover, a partial mediating effect of authenticity on the workaholism and life satisfaction relationship was found. A link between workaholism and authenticity provides a better understanding of workaholic behavioral patterns and gives some insight into how to manage workaholism.

Keywords: Workaholism, Authenticity, Life Satisfaction, Organizational Behavior, Occupational Health

Introduction

For many individuals, work is an integral and meaningful part of life that serves as a source of financial security and contributes to one's personal identity (Burke, 2000a). Jacobs and Gerson (2004) found that in the United States, 25% of men and 11% of women work over 50 hours per week. Additionally, Ng and Feldman (2008) reported that the portion of American employees working at least 40 hours per week has increased to 80% over the last decade. Although these numbers are striking and reveal the demanding nature of today's workplace, the concept of

workaholism is not only characterized by long work hours, but also by intrinsic work motivation and the adrenaline rush from hard work (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000). These data also suggest that individuals are becoming increasingly committed to their work and, consequently, work is becoming a more prominent aspect of life. However, while the workplace is intended to be a space where employees are free to challenge themselves and explore innovative ideas, it can also be an arena for the emergence of dysfunction and negative effects (Clark, Michel, Zhdanova, Pui, & Baltes, 2014). In fact, harmful consequences that stem from work-life imbalance may trickle into other realms of life and threaten one's overall well-being (Aziz & Zickar, 2006; Chen, 2006; Clark et al., 2014).

Given that workaholism can influence most parts of an individual's life, workaholics more than likely struggle in their ability to behave as their authentic selves. Authenticity at work is a beneficial characteristic; therefore, it is important to further investigate the underlying connections between these two variables. The primary goal of the current study was to explore the potential relationship between authenticity and workaholism. These two variables are of particular interest because they both correlate with subjective well-being, but in opposing directions. Considering the detrimental nature of workaholism, it is essential to uncover variables that are associated with addictive work behaviors. Discovering a link between workaholism and authenticity could not only enhance our understanding of workaholism patterns, but also unveil new treatment options.

Workaholism Overview

Work addiction, commonly known as *workaholism*, has received considerable attention by social media, managers, and researchers in recent decades (Clark et al., 2014; Spence & Robbins, 1992). Ever since the term first appeared in the literature by Oates (1971) to describe individuals who have an uncontrollable need and compulsion to work, many different conceptualizations of workaholism have emerged. For instance, although workaholism is not diagnosed as a mental disorder, Robinson (1998) defined it as an obsessive-compulsive disorder portrayed by overindulgence in work. Workaholics, compared to others, are also viewed as working extensive hours, usually at the expense of personal activities and social endeavors, both of which are necessary for optimal functioning (Clark et al., 2014). Despite the fact that workaholism does not identify a recognized mental illness, Aziz and Zickar (2006) thought of it as a syndrome. According to Vodanovich and Piotrowski (2006), in the earlier stages, workaholic behaviors exist and can negatively affect one's work-life patterns and personal relationships, but these behaviors do not yet affect overall health. However, as the syndrome continues, workaholic tendencies intensify and the excessive fixation with work begins to interfere with daily life. Those who suffer from this multi-faceted disorder work incessantly, above and beyond financial and job requirements, to avoid feelings of guilt, distress, or anxiety about not working (Aziz & Zickar, 2006; Burke, 2000b). The inevitable strain that haunts one's personal and social life can have a detrimental influence on health, quality of work, family life, and the organization as a whole (Clark et al., 2014; Spence & Robbins, 1992; van Wijhe, Schaufeli, & Peeters, 2010).

Workaholics experience higher work involvement, more work-life imbalance, and less life satisfaction than non-workaholics (Aziz & Zickar, 2006). However, higher work involvement does not always translate to positive organizational outcomes because the inevitable work-life strain on workaholics can hinder their overall productivity (Clark et al., 2014).

Additionally, workaholism can present a psychosocial risk in that workaholics encounter negative social outcomes such as poor emotional adjustment, difficulties maintaining close relationships, and marital conflict (van Wijhe et al., 2010). This imbalance of work and life makes them more likely to display irritability, self-neglect, and impatience (Robinson, 1998). The compilation and weight of these negative outcomes eventually influence one's overall health, both psychological and physical (Burke & Cooper, 2008; Chamberlin & Zhang, 2009). Despite the negative consequences linked to workaholism, given differing contexts, workaholism as a behavior is socially acceptable and encouraged within companies across various industries (Furnham, 1997). Furthermore, Bonebright et al. (2000) found that workaholics who were enthusiastic about their work had significantly greater life satisfaction and purpose in life than their non-enthusiastic counterparts.

Authenticity Overview

A growing body of research suggests that authenticity contributes to normal human functioning (Grandey, Foo, Roth, & Goodwin, 2012; van den Bosch & Taris, 2014; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). Goldman and Kernis (2002) operationally defined authenticity as “the unobstructed operation of one's true or core self in one's daily enterprise (p. 18).” Subjectively experienced authenticity, or felt authenticity, results from the combined satisfaction of autonomy and relatedness needs (Lenton, Bruder, Slabu, & Sedikides, 2013).

Authenticity can be described as a person-centered construct consisting of three parts: the primary experience, symbolized awareness, and outward behavior (Barrett-Lennard, 1998). According to Wood et al. (2008), the first aspect of authenticity, corresponding with the primary experience, is known as *self-alienation*. This factor involves the relationship between conscious awareness and actual experience of the true self. Self-alienation has been viewed as a central aspect of authenticity and is fundamental to the supposed relationship between authenticity and well-being (Wood et al., 2008); low levels of it are indicative of high levels of authenticity. The second aspect of authenticity is defined as *authentic living*, which involves one's outward behavior, namely, acting and expressing oneself in a way that reinforces conscious awareness of one's true sense of self, as well as one's thoughts, emotions, and true beliefs. The third and final component of authenticity is called *accepting external influence*—those who accept external influence can integrate social norms and societal beliefs into their sense of self in order to function as social beings (Barrett-Lennard, 1998; Wood et al., 2008).

While most research has focused on authenticity as a dispositional trait, recent evidence suggests it can change based on one's perceptions of the environment (Lenton et al., 2013; van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Lenton et al. (2013) found that more than 88% of their study participants experienced both authenticity and inauthenticity, which suggests that authenticity is a malleable construct influenced by external factors outside of an individual's control. Moreover, van den Bosch and Taris (2014) found that employees who feel that the organizational culture is congruent with their core authentic self feel more authentic at work. Autonomy, which is the extent to which an individual can manage his or her own work, is also positively related to authenticity in the workplace (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Similarly, role clarity and variability can affect levels of authenticity in the context of work. Finally, high job demands, work overload, and work stress can cause tension between an individual's work and home life, thereby contributing to the experience of inauthenticity (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). This

support for state authenticity highlights the value of studying this construct in various domains of life. Therefore, in the current study, this theory was applied to the context of work.

Research on authenticity has revealed multiple positive outcomes for the individual. High trait authenticity has been associated with greater life satisfaction, higher self-esteem and mindfulness (Goldman & Kernis, 2006; Lakey, Kernis, Heppner, & Lance, 2008), and increased subjective well-being (Kifer, Heller, Perunovic, & Galinsky, 2013; Wood et al., 2008). Furthermore, authenticity has been linked to decreased anxiety, stress, and depression (Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997), thereby supporting the assumption that authenticity leads to increased subjective well-being (Wood et al., 2008). Thus, those who lack a stable sense of self may put their personal well-being at risk (Lenton et al., 2013). Van den Bosch and Taris (2014) found that authenticity was linked to in-role performance, work engagement, and overall job satisfaction. Additionally, authenticity was negatively related to undesirable work outcomes including, job stress and negative affect (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014).

Subjective Well-Being Overview

Subjective well-being (SWB) reflects an individual's evaluation of his or her purpose and overall satisfaction with life. The three primary components associated with SWB are positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). Together, positive and negative affect comprises the affective or emotional aspect of SWB, while life satisfaction represents one's cognitive assessment of his or her life. Moreover, the life satisfaction component of SWB correlates with both of the affective components (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Research also indicates that SWB is associated with happiness, optimism, greater quality of life, social connectedness, and perceived social support (Diener & Chan, 2011).

Subjective well-being is a personal evaluation; however, research suggests that it correlates positively with health and longevity (Diener & Chan, 2011). Similarly, evidence suggests that there is a negative relationship between SWB and cardiovascular disease (Williams & Schneiderman, 2002). A study on elderly individuals revealed that low life satisfaction nearly doubled one's risk for mortality (Lyrra, Törmäkangas, Read, Rantanen, & Berg, 2006).

Although subjective well-being is typically viewed as a stable characteristic, there are several factors that influence these evaluations. First, personality traits, such as extraversion and neuroticism, are correlated with each of the three sub-dimensions of SWB and can affect how an individual perceives life happenings (Costa & McCrae, 1980; DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). Specifically, extraversion is positively related to SWB, while neuroticism is negatively related to it. Life satisfaction judgments are also influenced by one's current mood, but this effect is relatively small (Eid & Diener, 2004).

Workaholism and Subjective Well-being

The long-term strains associated with workaholism highlight its debilitating effects on personal health and well-being. Specifically, this work addiction has been linked to numerous negative outcomes including, stress, work-family conflict (Chen, 2006), work-life imbalance (Aziz & Zickar, 2006), burnout (Bakker et al., 2006), anxiety, and poor emotional adjustment (Clark et al., 2014; van Wijhe et al., 2010). Evidently, the culmination of these negative consequences raises concerns about workaholics' overall mental and physical well-being.

The direct relationship between workaholism and well-being has also been investigated, and an increasing amount of evidence suggests that a negative correlation exists between these two variables (Burwell & Chen, 2008; Clark et al., 2014). Workaholics report more health complaints, (Burke, Matthiesen, & Pallesen, 2006; Chamberlin & Zhang, 2009), more depressive symptoms (Bakker, Demerouti, Oerlemans, & Sonnentag, 2013), and lower energy levels than non-workaholics (Schaufeli, Bakker, van der Heijden, & Prins, 2009). More recently, Caesens, Stinglhamber, and Luypaert (2014) found that workaholism was linked to negative markers of well-being such as job dissatisfaction, health complaints, stress, and sleep problems.

Workaholism even appears to be negatively related to the primary component of subjective well-being, namely, life satisfaction (Aziz & Zickar, 2006; Bonebright et al., 2000; Burke, 2000a; Vodanovich & Piotrowski, 2006). In a sample of professional employees from different 'white collar' organizations (e.g., consulting firms, oil companies, government agencies), Aziz and Zickar (2006) found that workaholics had significantly higher life dissatisfaction than other worker types. The results of Bonebright et al. (2000) also showed workaholics to have lower life satisfaction scores compared to their non-workaholic counterparts. Similarly, Burke (2000a) found workaholism to be negatively associated with happiness or subjective well-being. As indicated in Vodanovich and Piotrowski (2006), workaholics find it challenging to separate from work and cannot enjoy leisure activities, which in turn can have a negative influence on their quality of life.

Essentially, there seems to be a negative link between workaholism and subjective well-being. There are a variety of factors that might contribute to making workaholics experience lower SWB. For instance, as indicated in Matuska (2010), in comparison to non-work addicts, work addicts report more conflict with both social and personal relationships, which could result in reduced SWB. The work stress experienced by workaholics predicts marital disaffection and less positive affect toward spouses (Robinson, Flowers, & Ng, 2006), which may also decrease SWB. Additionally, the children of a workaholic parent(s) experience greater levels of anxiety and depression, as well as loneliness and abandonment (Carroll & Robinson, 2000), further leading to lower SWB. Finally, Bovornusvakool, Vodanovich, Ariyabuddhiphongs, and Ngamake (2012) tested a model in which they found leisure boredom and loneliness to mediate the relationship between workaholism and life satisfaction, thereby suggesting that these mediators may cause a reduction in SWB.

Authenticity and Subjective Well-being

While authenticity has been linked to psychological health benefits including greater life satisfaction, decreased stress, and higher self-esteem (Lenton et al., 2013), it has only recently been linked to SWB (Menard & Brunet, 2011; Wood et al., 2008). Menard and Brunet (2011) investigated factors that lead to employee well-being, with a focus on authenticity at work, and found that positive affect at work was associated with authentic work behaviors. Also, authenticity was positively linked to SWB at work, but this relationship was partially mediated by meaning of work (Menard & Brunet, 2011). Goldman and Kernis (2002) found a positive relationship between general authenticity and life satisfaction, as well as a negative relationship between authenticity and negative affect. Also, Sheldon and Elliot (1999) concluded a positive association between well-being and feeling that one's life goals are consistent with the core self.

Other studies on authenticity and well-being have explored the relationship more indirectly by evaluating psychological symptoms. For instance, results of a study on well-being

in university students revealed they were less depressed and less anxious when they displayed important aspects of the self in their roles as a student, friend, and significant other (Sheldon et al., 1997). Similar results were obtained in a study of university students' self-complexity — authenticity was strongly related to SWB such that students experienced less depressive symptoms and less perceived stress (Ryan, LaGuardia, & Rawsthorne, 2005).

Current Study

The primary purpose of the current study was to investigate the possible relationship between workaholism and authenticity in the context of SWB. In this study, SWB was assessed using a life satisfaction scale. Although not synonymous, life satisfaction represents a primary component of the broader well-being concept, and is therefore considered a sufficient measure of SWB (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Those who exhibit authentic living generally have higher levels of SWB compared to those who do not act in accordance with their true self (Menard & Brunet, 2011; Wood et al., 2008). Additionally, workaholics are more likely to suffer from poor SWB due to their inability to disengage from work activities (Burwell & Chen, 2008; Clark et al., 2014). Because workaholism can affect nearly all aspects of one's life, it is likely that these individuals also struggle in their ability to act as their authentic selves. It is also possible that workaholism and authenticity are indirectly connected through SWB. Therefore, it is important to further examine the underlying associations between these two variables in an effort to deepen the understanding of workaholism as a syndrome and its potential treatment options. This study seeks to serve as a stepping-stone for determining what specific aspects of the workaholic's personality are affected by the condition and how the experience differs by individual.

This stream of research is relevant to the field because supervisors are beginning to realize the level of influence that employee satisfaction and well-being has on job performance (Clark et al., 2014; Judge, Thoreson, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Specifically, when employees are unhealthy, they cannot reach their full potential at work. Given that illness and poor performance hinder productivity and increase organizational costs (Brady et al., 2008; Martin, 2010), it is imperative to identify the links between variables relating to employee well-being. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented.

Workaholism and authenticity have opposing relationships with SWB (Clark et al., 2014; Wood et al., 2008). Specifically, workaholism is negatively related to life satisfaction, whereas authenticity is positively related to it. Therefore, we predict that workaholism and authenticity will be negatively related, that is, workaholics will report lower levels of authenticity than will their nonworkaholics. As such, the following hypotheses are expected:

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Workaholism will negatively correlate with life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): Authenticity will positively correlate with life satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1c (H1c): Workaholism will negatively correlate with authenticity.

Workaholism and SWB have a significant negative relationship (Burwell & Chen, 2008; Clark et al., 2014). Particularly, workaholics report lower levels of life satisfaction, which is the subscale used to measure SWB in the current study (Aziz & Zickar, 2006; Bonebright et al., 2000; Burke, 2000a; Vodanovich & Piotrowski, 2006). Given the importance of authenticity on one's ability to thrive and reach their full potential, (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014; Wood et al., 2008), it seems plausible to assume that authenticity will have a mediating effect and account for some of the relationship between workaholism and SWB. Therefore, the following hypothesis is expected:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The relationship between workaholism and life satisfaction will be mediated by authenticity.

Method

Participants

Participants included 358 faculty and staff members, (31.4% men, 68.6% women) ranging in age from 24 to 74 years old ($M = 47.44$, $SD = 11.94$), employed at a large Southeastern university. The majority of respondents were Caucasian American (85.5%), followed by African American (7.0%), Asian/Pacific Islander (3.1%), Latin American (2.5%), Other (1.1%), and Native American (0.8%). Over half of the participants were currently married (68.6%) and 66.9% had at least one child. Participants were also well educated, with 65.2% of respondents reporting the completion of a Master's (23.5%), Doctorate (34.4%), or Professional degree (7.3%).

The most commonly reported career statuses were professional (33.0%) and support (22.6%) staff, followed by Assistant Professor (17.0%), Associate Professor (13.6%), Full professor (9.9%), and Clinical Professor (3.1%). The average position tenure was 11.6 years. Regarding annual income, \$40,000-\$59,999 was the most frequently selected range (28.1%). The average number of hours worked per week, which included time spent doing work-related tasks outside of the actual workplace, was 47.41 hours ($SD = 10.06$).

Procedure

Participants were recruited via an online software called LISTSERV, which included all potential respondents' university provided email addresses. The recruitment email detailed the participant requirements, an overview of the topic, the time commitment necessary to complete the survey, and a hyperlink to the survey itself.

Individuals who chose to participate were provided with an informed consent form that assured them that survey completion was voluntary and responses would be kept confidential and anonymous. Upon attaining informed consent, participants began the survey, which included measures of workaholism, authenticity, subjective well-being, and relevant demographics.

Measures

Workaholism. The 29-item Workaholism Analysis Questionnaire, (WAQ; Aziz, Uhrich, Wuensch, & Swords, 2013) was used to measure workaholism. This self-report instrument asks individuals to respond to items such as, "I feel guilty when I am not working" and "I frequently have work-related insomnia." Respondents were asked to select from a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Greater scores indicate higher levels of workaholism. Aziz et al. (2013) reported an internal consistency of $\alpha = .93$. Similarly, an internal consistency of $\alpha = .92$ was found in the current study.

Authenticity. The Individual Authenticity Measure at Work (IAM Work; van den Bosch & Taris, 2014) was used to measure authenticity in the workplace. Participants were asked to respond to this 12-item measure, which utilizes a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*very untrue of me*) to 7 (*very true of me*). Items for this measure included statements that pertain to authenticity in the work context such as, "I do not feel who I truly am at work" and "At work, I behave in a manner that people expect me to behave." High scores on the authentic living subscale indicate

greater levels of authenticity, however, high scores on self-alienation and accepting external influence indicate low authenticity. Thus, to find each individual's overall authenticity score, the items pertaining to self-alienation and accepting external influence were first reverse coded before summing the three subscales together. Van den Bosch and Taris (2014) reported an internal consistency of $\alpha = .82$. Similarly, an internal consistency of $\alpha = .85$ was found in the current study.

Life satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; Pavot & Diener, 2008) was used to assess life satisfaction, which is a significant indicator of subjective well-being. This measure includes five items and utilizes a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Scores between 31 and 35 indicate that the respondent is extremely satisfied with life. A sample item includes, "In most ways, my life is close to my ideal." Pavot and Diener (2008) reported an internal consistency of $\alpha = .87$. Similarly, a Cronbach's alpha of .89 was found in the current study.

Results

To determine the extent to which the sample of respondents differed from the population of university employees, sample distributions of gender, ethnic identity, faculty rank, faculty age, faculty highest degree earned, and faculty income were compared to the known corresponding distributions for the university. The only significant differences that were found were that the overall sample contained more faculty (43.6%) than the population (31.4%) and more women (68.6%) than the population (60.6%). Also, for faculty in the sample, the sample differed significantly from the population in having a higher percentage of persons with a doctoral degree (90% versus 81%). Sample bias due to nonresponses may also be detected by using linear regression to predict study variables from respondents' latency of response (Lindner, Murphy, & Briers, 2001). The only study variable that approached being significantly related with latency was educational level, $r^2 = .009$, $p = .077$. Among the other study variables, $.000 < r^2 < .004$ and $.25 < p < .96$.

Inspection of the residuals plots indicated that linear regression was an appropriate method to test the hypotheses—there was no evidence of non-normality, heteroscedasticity, or non-linearity. As seen in Table 1, Hypothesis 1a was supported in that the relationship between workaholism and life satisfaction was negative, $r = -.325$, $p < .01$, 95% CI $[-.41, -.23]$. Additionally, a positive relationship between authenticity and life satisfaction emerged, $r = .429$, $p < .01$, 95% CI $[.34, .51]$, thereby supporting Hypothesis 1b. Finally, in support of Hypothesis 1c, workaholism and authenticity were negatively related, $r = -.444$, $p < .01$, 95% CI $[.36, .52]$.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics and Inter-correlations

Variable	SWLS	WAQ	IAM Work	Age	Tenure	Income Bracket	Hours Worked
SWLS	(.89)						
WAQ	-.33**	(.92)					
IAM Work	.43**	-.44**	(.85)				
Age	.10	-.07	.17**	—			
Tenure	.11*	-.03	.17**	.57**	—		
Income Bracket	.17*	.23**	-.02	.34**	.18**	—	
Hours Worked	-.03	.45**	-.07	.05	.06	.47**	—
Score Range	5 - 35	29 - 145	12 - 84	-	-	-	-
Mean	25.56	70.91	64.10	47.44	11.57	3.95	47.41
SD	6.38	17.61	10.21	11.94	9.45	1.57	10.06

Note. $N = 358$. Entries on the main diagonal are Cronbach's alpha. SWLS = Satisfaction with Life Scale; WAQ = Work-a-holism Analysis Questionnaire; IAM Work = Individual Authenticity Measure at Work

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

As seen in Table 2, workaholism and authenticity each had significant ($p < .01$) partial effects in the full model. The two-predictor model (i.e., workaholism and authenticity) was able to account for 21% of the variance in life satisfaction, $F(2, 357) = 48.36$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .21$. However, authenticity was a stronger predictor of life satisfaction than workaholism because it had a larger Beta weight in the regression model, $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$.

Finally, the potential mediating effect of overall authenticity on the negative relationship between workaholism and life satisfaction was explored using Hayes' (2013) PROCESS software with bootstrapping. The direct standardized effect, $-.162$, of workaholism on life satisfaction 95% CI $[-.27, -.06]$ and the standardized indirect effect, $.367(-.444) = -.163$, through authenticity 95% CI $[-.23, -.11]$, were significant and similar in magnitude, indicating partial mediation (see Figure 1). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. We also tested the mediation hypothesis with age, tenure, and income included in the model as covariates. Each of these covariates had a significant zero-order correlation with at least one of the variables in the mediation model. Inclusion of the covariates had little effect on the model. The standardized

Table 2.
Predicting Subjective Well-Being from Levels of Work-a-holism and Authenticity

Variable	Zero-Order r			β	sr^2	b
	WAQ	IAM Work	SWLS			
SWLS			(.89)			
IAM Work		(.85)	.43**	.37**	.11	.23
WAQ	(.92)	-.44**	-.33**	-.16**	.02	-.06
Intercept = 15.02						
Mean	70.91	64.10	25.56			
SD	17.61	10.21	6.38	$R^2 = 0.21$		

Note. $N = 358$. Entries on the main diagonal are Cronbach's alpha. SWLS = Satisfaction with Life Scale; IAM Work = Individual Authenticity Measure at Work; WAQ = Work-a-holism Analysis Questionnaire
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

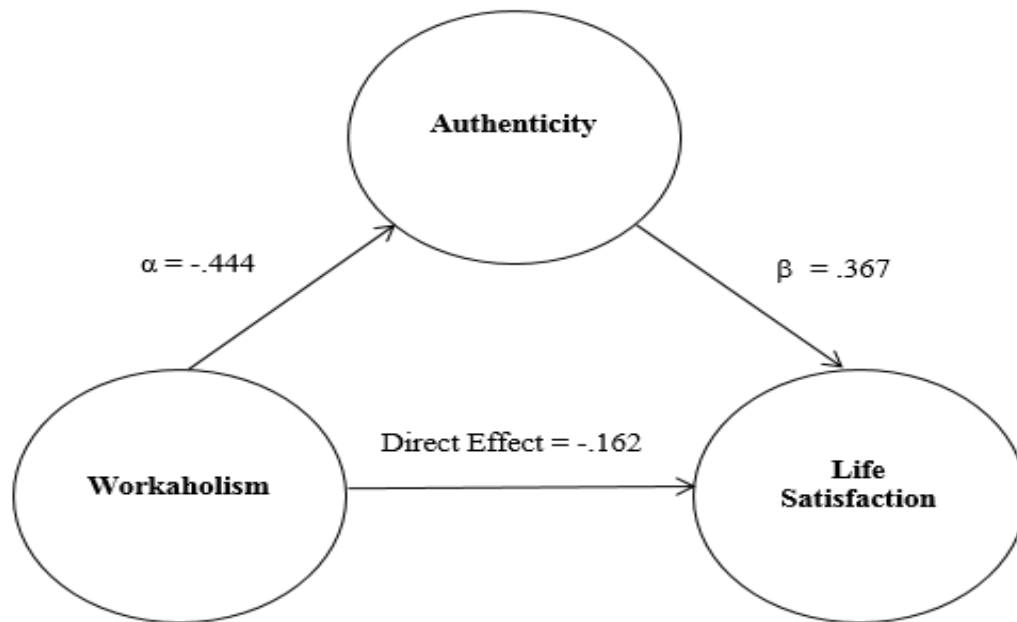


Figure 1. Workaholism, authenticity, and life satisfaction: Path model with standardized direct and indirect effects

coefficient for workaholism to authenticity went from -.444 to -.421, and that for authenticity to life satisfaction from .367 to .363. The direct effect of workaholism on life satisfaction changed from -.162 to -.213 and the indirect effect from -.163 to -.153.

Discussion

The target variables in the current study were workaholism, authenticity, and subjective well-being. These three characteristics were of particular interest because of their unique intercorrelations and their relevance to the context of work. The study added to previous research in several ways. First, van den Bosch and Taris (2014) indirectly explored the relationship between authenticity and worker well-being in the form of work engagement, performance, job satisfaction, stress, and negative affect measures. In the current study, their research was extended by examining the direct relationship between authenticity and subjective well-being in the form of life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Also, in this study we explored the potential relationship between workaholism and authenticity. Finally, the current study moved beyond past research by looking at the possible mediating effect of authenticity on the relationship between workaholism and subjective well-being.

According to previous research, workaholism and authenticity have differing relationships with subjective well-being. Authenticity and subjective well-being have a positive relationship, such that behaviors that are consistent with the core self are associated with higher well-being outcomes (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Alternatively, Clark et al. (2014) found evidence for a negative correlation between workaholism and well-being. Also, previous findings suggest that workaholics report lower levels of subjective well-being (Aziz & Zickar, 2006; Bonebright et al., 2000; Burke 2000a; Vodanovich & Piotrowski, 2006). Finally, given the negative influence that workaholism can have on subjective well-being, it is necessary to uncover variables that may explain this relationship, thus, providing support for the exploration of authenticity as a possible mediator.

Workaholism, Authenticity, and Life Satisfaction

As expected, workaholism was negatively correlated with life satisfaction, while authenticity was positively correlated with life satisfaction. These relationships provide support for Hypothesis 1a and 1b, as well as previous research (Clark et al., 2014; van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). Interestingly, the relationship between authenticity and life satisfaction was slightly stronger compared to workaholism and life satisfaction, $r = .43$ and $r = -.33$ respectively. Perhaps the duration of workaholic symptoms influences the strength of this relationship. Although the findings have been mixed, some evidence suggests that workaholism can have positive short-term effects, including heightened job satisfaction and productivity (Clark et al., 2014). Therefore, it is possible that a short period of positive outcomes prior to the onset of workaholic symptoms can explain this weaker relationship with subjective well-being. Contextual factors such as social support, job control, and workload might also affect the relationship between workaholism and subjective well-being outcomes. High levels of social support or job control may weaken this relationship, while workload or work stress may exacerbate the strength of the negative relationship (Aziz & Cunningham, 2008; Burwell & Chen, 2008).

In support of Hypothesis 1c, a significant negative relationship was found between workaholism and authenticity ($r = -.44$). This is not to say that workaholics cannot be authentic, however, this finding suggests that it is unlikely that many workaholics score high on authenticity measures. Their obsession with work makes it more difficult for these individuals to

display their true self in the face of these internal, work-related pressures. Interestingly, the strength of the workaholism—authenticity relationship was greater than that of their individual correlations with life satisfaction. Again, the work-related specificity of the measures used might explain this finding. Nevertheless, this significant correlation was a novel finding because prior researchers had not explored these two variables together.

Results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that workaholism and authenticity significantly predicted life satisfaction and accounted for 21% of the variance in the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Pavot & Diener, 2008) scores. Being able to predict subjective well-being using these two work-specific measures further supports the assumption that work plays an integral role in one's life (Burke, 2000a) and suggests that perceptions of work can affect one's overall evaluation of life satisfaction.

It is most noteworthy that the partial mediation analysis yielded significant results, thus supporting Hypothesis 2. Authenticity was found to partially mediate the relationship between workaholism and subjective well-being. This partial mediation effect implies that there is a direct relationship between workaholism and subjective well-being, however, authenticity accounts for some of the relationship between workaholism and subjective well-being. While authenticity partial mediates this relationship, there are potentially other mediators (not included in this study) affecting the direct relationship as well—it is important for future researchers to identify additional mediating variables.

Study Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

Despite its novel findings, there were some study limitations. First, due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, participants only completed the study survey one time, so responses were concurrent. According to van den Bosch and Taris (2014), the IAM Work measure evaluates state authenticity rather than trait authenticity. Therefore, it is possible that one's responses to this scale can change over time based on various factors. Also, as previously noted, the trajectory of the workaholism syndrome suggests that there may be positive short-term effects followed by negative long-term consequences as symptoms progress (Clark et al., 2014). Thus, cross-sectional assessments of workaholism levels may not be as reliable as longitudinal designs. In turn, future researchers should analyze these variables over a period of several months to determine if individual scores on authenticity and/or workaholism fluctuate.

Although the method is frequently used, testing a mediational model with cross-sectional data is an important analytical issue that should be acknowledged, in that alternative temporal order hypotheses cannot be ruled out (Gelfand, Mensinger, & Tenhave, 2009). That said, significant findings support the justification for future research using a longitudinal model.

The nature of the sample also constitutes a limitation in terms of generalization to a larger workforce population. Given that the achieved sample in the current study is not representative of the larger population, the sample itself is a possible source of bias inherent in the results.

The fact that this study relied solely on self-report data is also a limiting factor. Common method bias and participants' desire to answer survey items consistently may have artificially inflated relationships between the major study variables. Also, it is possible that these scales were susceptible to biases, especially social desirability or the proactive attempt to present oneself positively (van Beek, Taris, Schaufeli, & Brenninkmeijer, 2014). Given that the study variables are subjective in nature, they are perhaps best evaluated by the self-referent. Therefore, instead of using multisource ratings, a practical avenue for future research could be longitudinal

designs over several time points to better understand the nature of the relationships between the study variables over time (Avey, Luthans, & Mhatre, 2008).

Organizational and Practical Implications

The current study findings reveal several practical implications for employers. These measures of workaholism and authenticity can be used to evaluate a work team or entire organization in order to determine if there are any underlying problem areas. For instance, managers might choose to assess individual authenticity in a particular team to determine if team members feel comfortable being themselves. Therefore, the measures used in this study can be used to both diagnose a problem as well as design specific intervention strategies. Additionally, managers can identify individual “inauthentic workaholics” and “authentic workaholics” using these measures and tailor their managerial style to meet their subordinates’ needs. While “inauthentic workaholics” are the most at risk for negative psychosocial outcomes, it is also important to identify those who may be “authentic workaholics” because they may have the potential to burnout. Perhaps “authentic workaholics” would better succeed in regaining work-life balance with support from a team such as group training about time management, while “inauthentic workaholics” might thrive from more individualized support such as personal reminders to take breaks from work.

Several indicators suggest that well-adjusted individuals are happier, display more positive emotions, and have better physical health (Diener & Chan, 2011; Pavot & Diener, 2008). Additionally, poor employee health and illness can hinder productivity and increase organizational costs (Brady et al., 2008; Martin, 2010). Therefore, it is in the best interest of the employer to provide a supportive work environment that allows employees to have flexibility, autonomy, and meaningful work.

Together, these findings imply that managers have the power to increase employee well-being through cultural characteristics. Specifically, the fact that workaholism and authenticity influence one’s overall subjective well-being suggests that managers should encourage working smart, open communication, support, collaboration, and diversity in their employees.

Conclusions

Many notable results that are useful for practice and for the development of case interventions were revealed in the current study. Results reaffirmed that individuals spend a significant amount of time at work and, therefore, perceptions associated with work can affect overall well-being. Given that workaholism and authenticity both influence subjective well-being, management should find ways to reduce competitiveness and create a supportive work environment where individuals feel welcome to be themselves. While the study results add to the growing body of research surrounding correlates of workaholism and subjective well-being outcomes, it is necessary for more research to be conducted on these variables. Subsequent research on this topic should focus on gathering longitudinal data from a diverse population of adult workers to further examine the progression of workaholism patterns, the nature of authenticity in the workplace, and the influence of organizational culture on subjective well-being outcomes.

References

- Avey, J. B., Luthans, F., & Mhatre, K. H. (2008). A call for longitudinal research in positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 29, 705-711. doi: 10.1002/job.517
- Aziz, S., & Cunningham, J. (2008). Workaholism, work stress, work-life imbalance: exploring gender's role. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 23, 553-566. doi: 10.1108/17542410810912681
- Aziz, S., Uhrich, B., Wuensch, K. L., & Swords, B. (2013). The Workaholism Analysis Questionnaire: Emphasizing work-life imbalance and addiction in the measurement of workaholism. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management*, 14, 71-86.
- Aziz, S., & Zickar, M. J. (2006). A cluster analysis investigation of workaholism as a syndrome. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 11, 52-62. doi: 10.1037/1076-8998.11.1.52
- Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E., Oerlemans, W., & Sonnentag, S. (2013). Workaholism and daily recovery: A day reconstruction study of leisure activities. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34, 87-107. doi:10.1002/job.1796
- Barrett-Lennard, G. T. (1998). *Carl Rogers' helping system: Journey and substance*. London, UK: Sage.
- Baruch, Y. (2011). The positive wellbeing aspects of workaholism in cross cultural perspective: The chocoholism metaphor. *The Career Development International*, 16, 572-591. doi: 10.1108/13620431111178335
- Bonebright, C. A., Clay, D. L., & Ankenmann, R. D. (2000). The relationship of workaholism with work-life conflict, life satisfaction, and purpose in life. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 47, 469-477. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.47.4.469
- Bovornusvakool, W., Vodanovich, S. J., Ariyabuddhiphongs, K., & Ngamake, S. T. (2012). Examining the antecedents and consequences of workaholism. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 15, 56-70. doi: 10.1080/10887156.2012.649994
- Brady, B. R., Vodanovich, S. J., & Rotunda, R. (2008). The impact of workaholism on work-family conflict, job satisfaction, and perception of leisure activities. *Psychologist Manager Journal*, 11, 241-263. doi: 10.1080/10887150.802371781
- Burke, R. J. (2000a). Workaholism in organizations: Psychological and physical well-being consequences. *Stress Medicine*, 16, 11-16. doi: 10.1002/(SICI)1099-1700(200001)
- Burke, R. J. (2000b). Workaholism in organizations: concepts, results and future research directions. *International Journal of Management Review*, 2, 1-16. doi: 10.1111/1468-2370.00028
- Burke, R. J. (2001). Predictors of workaholism components and behaviors. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 8, 113-127. doi: 10.1023/A:1009577230051
- Burke, R. J., & Cooper, C. L. (2008). *The long work hours culture: Causes, consequences, and choices*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Burke, R. J., Mattiesen, S. B., & Pallesen, S. (2006). Personality correlates of workaholism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 40, 1223-1233. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2005.10.017
- Burwell, R., & Chen, C. P. (2008). Positive psychology for work-life balance: A new approach in treating workaholism. In R. J. Burke & Cooper (Eds.), *The long working hours culture: Causes, consequences and choices* (pp. 295-313). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group

- Publishing.
- Caesens, G., Stinglhamber, F., & Luypaert, G. (2014). The impact of work engagement and workaholism on well-being: The role of work-related social support. *Career Development International*, 19, 813-835. doi: 10.1108/CDI-09-2013-0114
- Carroll, J. J., & Robinson, B. E. (2000). Depression and parentification among adults as related to parental workaholism and alcoholism. *The Family Journal*, 8, 360-367. doi: 10.1177/1066480700084005
- Chamberlin, C. M., & Zhang, N. (2009). Workaholism, health, and self-acceptance. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 87, 159-169. doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6678.2009.tb00563.x
- Chen, C. (2006). Improving work-life balance: REBT for workaholic treatment. In R. J. Burke (ed.) *Research companion to working time and work addiction*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Clark, M. A., Michel, J. S., Zhdanova, L., Pui, S. Y., & Baltes, B. B. (2014). All work and no play? A meta-analytic examination of the correlates and outcomes of workaholism. *Journal of Management*, 1-38. doi: 10.1177/0149206314522301
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1980). Influence of extraversion and neuroticism on subjective well-being: Happy and unhappy people. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38, 668-678. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.38.4.668
- DeNeve, K. M., & Cooper, H. (1998). The happy personality: A meta-analysis of 137 personality traits and subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124, 197-229. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.124.2.197
- Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95, 542-575.
- Diener, E., & Chan, M. Y. (2011). Happy people live longer: Subjective well-being contributes to health and longevity. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-being*, 3, 1-43. doi: 10.1111/j.1758-0854.2010.01045.x
- Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The Satisfaction with Life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71-75.
- Eid, M., & Diener, E. (2004). Global judgments of subjective well-being: Situational variability and long-term stability. *Social Indicators Research*, 65, 245-277. doi: 10.1023/B:SOCI.0000003801.89195.bc
- Erickson, R. J. (1995). The importance of authenticity for self and society. *Symbolic Interaction*, 18, 121-144. doi: 10.1525/si.1995.18.2.121
- Fassel, D. (1990). *Working ourselves to death: The high costs of workaholism, the rewards of recovery*. San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins.
- Fleeson, W., & Wilt, J. (2010). The relevance of Big Five trait content in behavior to subjective authenticity: Do high levels of within-person behavioral variability undermine or enable authenticity achievement? *Journal of Personality*, 78, 1353-1382. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2010.00653.x
- Furnham, A. (1997). *The psychology of behavior at work: The individual in the organization*. Hove, UK: Psychology Press.
- Gelfand, L. A., Mensinger, J. L., & Tenhave, T. (2009). Mediation analysis: A retrospective snapshot of practice and more recent directions. *The Journal of General Psychology*, 136, 153-176. doi: 10.3200/GENP.136.2.153-178

- Goldman, B. M., & Kernis, M. H. (2002). The role of authenticity in healthy psychological functioning and subjective well-being. *Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association*, 5, 18-20.
- Grandey, A., Foo, S. C., Groth, M., & Goodwin, R. E. (2012). Free to be you and me: A climate of authenticity alleviates burnout from emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17, 1-14. doi: 10.1037/a0025102.
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Jacobs, J. A., & Gerson, K. (2004). *The time divide: Work, family, and gender inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Judge, T. A., & Bono, J. E. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations traits- self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability- with job satisfaction and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 80-92. doi: 10.1037//0021-9010.86.1.80
- Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E. & Patton, G. K. (2001). The job satisfaction-job performance relationship: A qualitative and quantitative review, *Psychological Bulletin*, 127, 376-407. doi: 10.1037//0033-2909.127.3.376
- Kernis, M. H., & Goldman, B. M. (2006). A multicomponent conceptualization of authenticity: Research and theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 38, 283-357.
- Kifer, Y., Heller, D., Perunovic, W. Q. E., & Galinsky, A. D. (2013). The good life of the powerful: The experience of power and authenticity enhances subjective well-being. *Psychological Science*, 24, 280-288. doi: 10.1177/0956797612450891
- Lakey, C. E., Kernis, M. H., Heppner, W. L., & Lance, C. E. (2008). Individual differences in authenticity and mindfulness as predictors of verbal defensiveness. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42, 230-238. doi: 10.1016/j.jrp.2007.05.002
- Lenton, A. P., Bruder, M., Slabu, L., & Sedikides, C. (2013). How does “being real” feel? The experience of state authenticity. *Journal of Personality*, 81, 276-289. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.2012.00805.x
- Lindner, J. R., Murphy, T. H., & Briers, G. E. (2001). Handling nonresponse in social science research. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 42, 43-53. doi: 10.5032/jae.2003.03078
- Lyrta, T., Törmäkangas, T.M., Read, S., Rantanen, T., & Berg, S. (2006). Satisfaction with present life predicts survival in octogenarians. *Journals of Gerontology*. 61, 319-326.
- Matuska, K. M. (2010). Workaholism, life balance, and well-being: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 17, 104-111. doi: 10.1080/14427591.2010.9686681
- Menard, J., & Brunet, L. (2011). Authenticity and well-being in the workplace: A mediation model. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 26, 331-346. doi: 10.1108/02683941111124854
- Ng, T. W. H., Eby, L. T., Sorensen, K. L., & Feldman, D. C. (2005). Predictors of objective and subjective career success: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 58, 367-408. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2005.00515.x
- Ng, T. W., & Feldman, D. C. (2008). The relationship of age to ten dimensions of job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93, 392-423. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.392
- Ng, T. W., Sorensen, K. L., & Feldman, D. C. (2007). Dimensions, antecedents, and consequences of workaholism: A conceptual integration and extension. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 28, 111-136. doi: 10.1002/job.424

- Oates, W. (1971). *Confessions of a workaholic: The facts about work addiction*. New York, NY: World Publishing.
- Robinson, B. E. (1998). *Chained to the desk: A guidebook for workaholics, their partners and children, and the clinicians who treat them*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Robinson, B. E., Flowers, C., & Ng, K. (2006). The relationship between workaholism and marital disaffection: Husbands' perspective. *The Family Journal*, 14, 213-220. doi: 10.1177/1066480706287269
- Rogers, C. R. (1965). The concept of the fully functioning person. *Pastoral Psychology*, 16, 21-33. doi: 10.1007/BF01769775
- Ryan, R. M., LaGuardia, J. G., & Rawsthorne, L. J. (2005). Self-complexity and the authenticity of self-aspects: Effects on well-being and resilience to stressful events. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 7, 431-448.
- Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., Van der Heijden, F. M. M. A., & Prins, J. T. (2009). Workaholism, burnout and well-being among junior doctors: The mediating role of role conflict. *Work & Stress*, 23, 155-172.
- Sheldon, K. M., & Elliot, A. J. (1999). Goal striving need satisfaction, and longitudinal well-being; the self-concordance model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76, 487-497.
- Sheldon, K. M., & Kasser, T. (1995). Coherence and congruence: Two aspects of personality integration. *Journal of Personality and Psychology*, 68, 531-543.
- Sheldon, K. M., Ryan, R. M., Rawsthorne, L. J., & Ilardi, B. (1997). Trait self and true self: Cross-role variation in the Big-Five personality traits and its relations with psychological authenticity and subjective well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 1380-1393. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.73.6.1380
- Stubbe, J. H., Posthuma, D., Boomsma, D. I., & DeGeus, E. J. C. (2005). Heritability of life satisfaction in adults: A twin-family study. *Psychological Medicine*, 35, 1-8. doi: 10.1017/S0033291705005374
- Sussman, S. (2012). Workaholism: A review. *Journal of Addiction Research and Theory*, S6. doi: 10.4172/2155-6105.S6-001
- Van Beek, I., Taris, T. W., Schaufeli, W. B., & Brenninkmeijer, V. (2014). Heavy work investment: It's motivational make-up and outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 29, 46-62. doi: 10.1108/JMP-06-2013-0166
- Van den Bosch, R., & Taris, T. W. (2014). Authenticity at work: Development and validation of an individual authenticity measure at work. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 15, 1-18. doi: 10.1007/s10902-013-9413-3
- Van Wijhe, C. J., Schaufeli, W. B., & Peeters, M. C. W. (2010). Understanding and treating workaholism: Setting the stage for successful interventions. In R. J. Burke & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Risky business: Psychological, physical and financial costs of high risk behavior in organizations*. Gower.
- Vodanovich, S. J., & Piotrowski, C. (2006). Workaholism: A critical but neglected factor in O.D. *Organizational Development Journal*, 24, 55-60.
- Williams, R.B., & Schneiderman, N. (2002). Resolved: Psychosocial interventions can improve clinical outcomes in organic disease (pro). *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 64, 552-557.

Wood, A. M., Linley, P. A., Maltby, J., Baliousis, M., & Joseph, S. (2008). The authentic personality: A theoretical and empirical conceptualization and the development of the Authenticity Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 55, 385-399. doi: 10.1037/0022-0167.55.3.3