

2012

# For Love or Money : The Underlying Motives of a Workaholic

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# Introduction

Current research in the area of workaholism and its associated outcomes has found:

Workaholism is characterised by two core elements:

- Working excessively: work hard and long hours (50+)
- Working compulsively: work out of inner need or drive and beyond what is necessary to meet organisational demands

(Schaufeli, Taris and Bakker, 2006)

Individual and organisational outcomes of workaholism include poor well-being, reduced life and **job satisfaction**, stress, negative affect, **burnout** and poor job performance

(Broeck, Schreurs, Witte, Vansteenkiste, Germeys & Schaufeli, 2011)

## Motivation

- Controlled Motivation: Characterised by external regulation and introjected regulation, where individuals goal is to avoid punishment and obtain reward (monetary or external expectations)
- Autonomous Motivation: Characterised by intrinsic motivation and identified regulation, where an activity is out of internal locus of control and results from a personal interest in the activity

(Deci & Ryan, 2000)

# The mediator

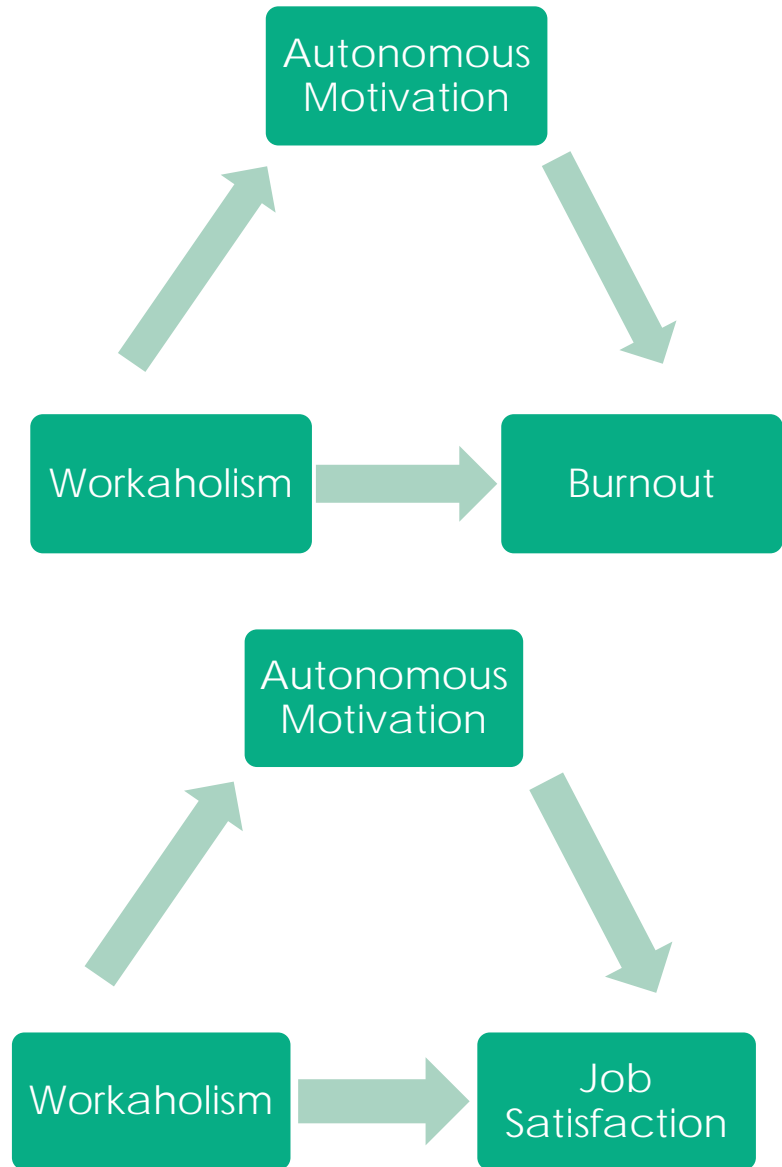
Mediation is a causal chain where one variable effects a second variable that in turn effects another variable.

(Judd & Kenny, 1981)

The two main hypotheses of the current study are therefore:

Hypothesis 1: Autonomous motivation will mediate the positive relationship between workaholism and job satisfaction

Hypothesis 2: Autonomous motivation will mediate the negative relationship between workaholism and burnout



# Research Design

- Participants:

The current study involved a sample of 270 car dealership employees.

Characteristics:

- 227 (84%) males and 43 (16%) females
- Aged between 17 to 69 years ( $M=36$ ,  $SD=12.07$ )
- All full-timers
- Hours worked ranged from 35 to 88 per week ( $M=56$ ,  $SD=8.08$ )

# Procedures

- Employers were contacted via telephone, email or face-to-face to discuss the current study and permission was sought to distribute the questionnaire to employees
- With permission from their employer participants were asked to fill in an anonymous questionnaire regarding demographic information, workaholism, motivation, job satisfaction and burnout
- Completed questionnaires were collected across four weeks

# Findings

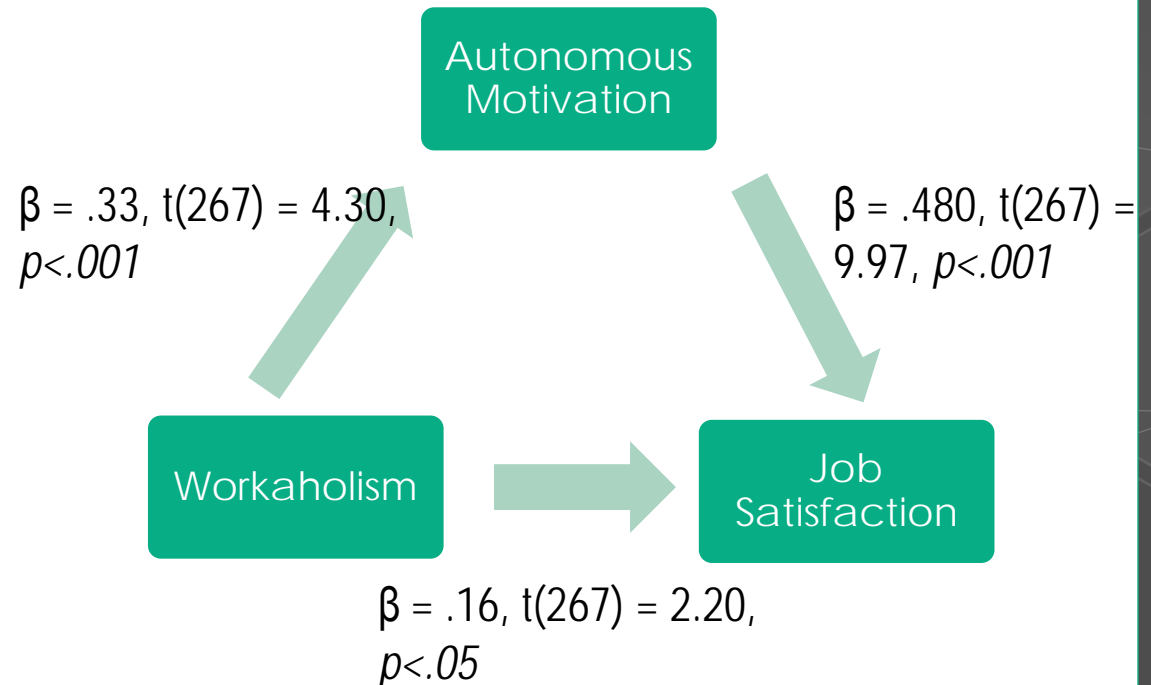
- Completed data were available for 268 participants.
- Responses were analysed using Mediation Analysis followed by Sobel's Test to test for the significance of the mediation effect
- The analysis found support for the mediating role of autonomous motivation in the relationship between workaholism and job satisfaction, as well as a partial mediating role between workaholism and burnout

# Hypothesis 1

- Hypothesis 1: Autonomous motivation will mediate the positive relationship between workaholism and job satisfaction
- Findings: There were positive relationships between workaholism and job satisfaction, workaholism and autonomous motivation and autonomous motivation and job satisfaction.

The relationship between workaholism and job satisfaction is fully mediated by autonomous motivation.

$T = 3.94, p < .001$

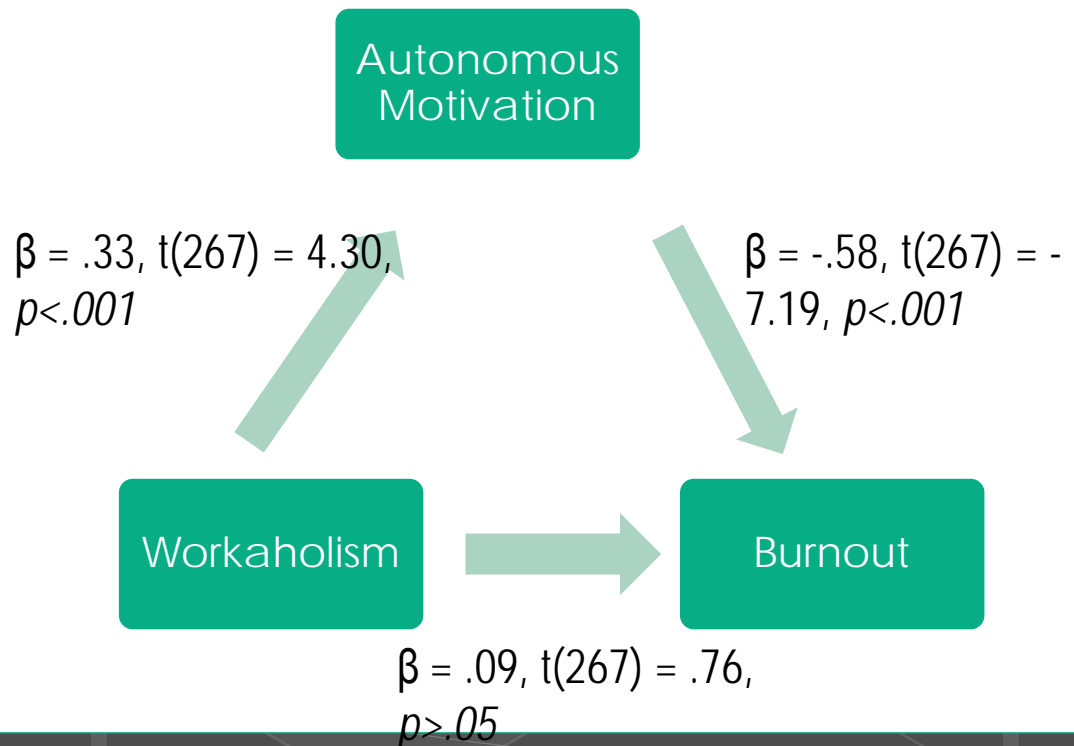




# Hypothesis 2

- Hypothesis 2: Autonomous motivation will mediate the negative relationship between workaholism and burnout
- Findings: Whilst there was no direct relationship between workaholism and burnout, there was a positive relationship between workaholism and autonomous motivation and a negative relationship between autonomous motivation and burnout.

The relationship between workaholism and burnout is partially mediated by autonomous motivation.  
 $T = -3.77, p < .001$



# Conclusions

Overall, the study was successful in showing that:

- Autonomous motivation is able to fully mediate the relationship between workaholism and satisfaction
- Autonomous motivation is able to partially mediate the relationship between workaholism and burnout
- This study is the first to focus primarily on autonomous motivation as being positively related to workaholism and the associated outcomes on burnout and job satisfaction, and the first in the motor vehicle industry covering diverse roles rather than just managers and professionals with high education.
- It concludes that workers who work for themselves, out of personal desire, regardless of the workaholic nature of their hard and long labour will lead to positive outcomes of high job satisfaction and low burnout. This supports previous research which suggests that autonomous motivation is an optimal type of motivation and should be promoted in employees (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

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