

Workaholics in Urban Society: Diving into the Meaning of Non-Stop Work

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Abstract

Workaholic is a condition of addiction and obsession to keep working. This workaholic phenomenon occurs in one of the companies in the field of photography and videography. This research aims to find out the because of motive and in order to motive. This research uses a qualitative method with Alfred Schutz's approach. Data collection techniques were carried out by interview, observation, book references, and the internet. The technique of determining informants using purposive sampling and data validity techniques using source triangulation. The result of this research is that the motive for employees to become workaholics is experience from the past, the need to continue working, and the organizational environment which is one of the factors while the motive for employees to become workaholics is because they have specific goals to be achieved in the future

Workaholic; Motive;
Urban Society



I. Introduction

A Workaholic is a condition where a person feels the urge to work more or longer because of a compulsion or need to continue working. Workaholic can be interpreted as a person's tendency to push themselves beyond their limits to achieve success, by spending most of their time working (Ave, Ramadhani, Muhammad, Al, & Zami, 2024). Workaholics are viewed as an excessive and compulsive preoccupation with work that leads to neglect of other areas of life, such as family, social relationships, and personal health (Negura, Plante, & Namian, 2023).

A workaholic will feel better if he works alone because he has control and works in detail, compared to having to work with a team (Advisor, Asmarani, & Soedarto, 2017). Work stress that can be triggered by someone who is a workaholic has a significant impact on work motivation. This results in workaholics not only being a factor that affects the accumulation of motivational resources but can also trigger stress levels and work motivation (Yaqin Zainiah, Thamrin, & Herlambang, 2024).

Workaholics can develop into an unpleasant family system, as the addictive behavior affects all family members. The family that forms will produce a set of beliefs, rules, and patterns that become the habits of a workaholic. (Ruiz-Garcia, Castanheira, Borges, & Mosteiro-Diaz, 2022). Negative psychological conditions are characterized by overwork due to an internal drive that cannot be restrained. The long-term negative impact produced by a workaholic due to long working hours is increased stress and fatigue. As a result, work quality and creativity, as well as interprofessional relationships with colleagues and subordinates, can be affected, which is ultimately detrimental to organizational goals (Ruiz-Garcia et al., 2022). Employees who experience negative emotions at work are likely to

suffer from burnout and workaholism simultaneously. (Innanen, Tolvanen, & Salmela-Aro, 2014).

Based on this definition, the researcher sees that several employees experience this obsession and workaholic attitude in one of the industries engaged in photography and videography in Bandung City. From the pre-observation conducted, the researcher saw that in the company there were workaholic employees. This can be seen from the duration of time, the amount of work they do, and their ambitious attitude towards work.

From the data obtained from the company archives, researchers found that 90% of employees are young with the age of 18-26 years. This company is also one of the trendsetters for other product photo service companies because it is a product photo service that has been widely recognized among entrepreneurs, this can be seen from the number of followers on Instagram which is far more than other product photo services. Therefore, the work faced by employees certainly requires more effort in terms of quality and quantity. Working hours start at 08.00 to 17.00 WIB. Researchers also obtained information from attendance records, that almost every day most employees work often exceeding the working hour time limit and there are even some people who spend the night in the office to spend time working.

Researchers found that employees always work late into the night not only because there is a demand to complete work deadlines, but they work because they just want to spend time working in the office. There are several employees who researchers found experiencing workaholic tendencies. Some employees feel anxious if they don't work, some employees have difficulty sleeping and use that moment to work, and there are even those who claim to be stressed because they work too much and even get carried away in their dreams.

Departing from the facts above, the researcher is interested in examining how employees interpret workaholics to themselves. Because so far workaholics have always been considered negative compared to hard workers who are considered positive. For this reason, researchers want to know what motives cause these employees to become workaholics (Because of Motive) and the reasons for doing so (In Order To Motive). To support this research, researchers use Alfred Scultz's phenomenological study as a research approach because researchers want to know how something is interpreted by individuals to produce a series of decisions or certain actions.

II. Review of Literature

The term "workaholic" was coined in 1971 by psychologist Wayne E. Oates, who referred to the "uncontrollable need to work endlessly" as an addiction. Workaholics are characterized by having an inner compulsive drive to work hard, thinking about work constantly, and feeling guilty and restless when they are not working (Brummelhuis & Rothbard, 2018).

A clinical psychologist from Toronto, in an article on Psychology Today, mentioned that Workaholic is a condition where a person feels the urge to work more or longer because of an inner desire or need to continue working but unlike hard workers who still make time for others around them, a workaholic is obsessed with their performance and work. Meanwhile, in another source from the Britannica dictionary, workaholic is defined as an addiction to work (Prasmul, 2021).

A workaholic gets the satisfaction of continuing to deal with work despite having the opportunity to pause. Usually, workaholics work very hard not because of dedication to

the company but economic demands, social demands of perfectionism, or even dependence on work.

The term workaholic has been widely recognized in society. Still, workaholism is not a medical condition or mental disorder because it is not included in the Guidelines for the Diagnosis of Mental Disorders (PPDGJ), which is a standard psychiatric disorder used by mental health workers in various parts of the world. Addiction to work can still be seen on the positive side because this very hard work can sometimes be rewarded financially and culturally. (Pawestri, 2021).

III. Research Method

This research is a causal research. Causality research is a type of scientific research that aims to understand the cause and effect relationship between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2018). The variables in this study are independent variables and dependent variables. Rewards and motivation as independent variables and interests as dependent variables. All leaders of PAUD institutions in Jember are used as the population. By using the Slovin formula with an error of 5%, a sample size of 327 respondents was obtained. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed to respondents in this study. Descriptive analysis, validity test and reliability test, and direct influence test were used in this study.

IV. Result and Discussion

In this study, researchers used primary data as a process of collecting information, including interviews, observations, and other secondary data collection. Thus researchers can obtain accurate sources of information in collecting data on research. The discussion is divided into several sub-chapters regarding motives, namely to motive and because of motive.

4.1 Because of Motive

The cause motive is oriented towards the past or the reasons and also the things that motivate a person to take action in this case, namely workaholics. Here are some statements from informants.

“Because I realize my responsibility. I'm the first child and I'm part of the sandwich generation too. And also because I like the work..” (Interview Informant (UL), 2021)

In addition, similar to the explanation above, Informant Y also mentioned that the reason why he became a workaholic was because of his responsibility as a division head.

“There are two versions. I love doing overtime. I also like photography. I want to be 2 steps ahead of people. ” (Interview Informant (ST), 2021)

From ST's explanation above, it can be concluded that the motive for her becoming a workaholic is because she likes her job and is also aware of her responsibilities as a division

head. Similar to what GM said about liking work, there are other motives according to GM's opinion.

“Firstly, I feel insecure about people who have already achieved something, while I haven't yet. Secondly, because my work is my passion. Oh, one main thing is actually because I have internal problems at home, so I spend more time here working and I happen to like the work.” (Interview Informant (GM), 2021)

Informant Z explained that the reason why he became a workaholic was not only because his current job was his passion, but he also admitted that he used work as a distraction from his family problems and also had a sense of insecurity which in turn motivated him to continue working. One of the factors for becoming a workaholic is to escape from something that is considered to disturb one's psychology such as avoiding problems or running away from sadness or anxiety.

Apart from one's experience or background, the environment is one of the factors in the emergence of a motive. It is felt by the informants that the organizational environment contained in this company is one of the factors that give rise to the motive to become a workaholic. The culture is work hard play. Informant ST explained that this company often rewards its employees every three months for a vacation so that when employees start to feel burnout, this vacation makes their minds clear again.

So workaholic employees are not only triggered by things that disturb their psyches but can also be because the individual really enjoys and loves their work so much that it is difficult to control themselves to continue working without stopping.

This is in line with what the company owner said that indeed one of the company's goals is to make this workplace their home to work, but still not forgetting how to appreciate. One of them provides free vacations for employees and this turns out to affect the work motivation of employees. In addition, the owner of this company also said that he allowed employees to choose a preferred job position so that later employees could enjoy work and could provide better quality for the company as conveyed by the following DN:

“There is also one of the motivations for the crew that may be unconscious, that every crew should be placed in a position that they like and can carry out.” (Interview Informant (DN), 2021)

Work motivation provided by the company is indeed a factor in causing some employees to become workaholics because with various hard work demands the company also compensates by providing good work facilities, a good communication system and also not forgetting appreciation for employees. So it is not uncommon for employees to choose to become workaholics because they feel that they get paid in proportion to their hard work.

In addition to the work motivation provided by the company to employees, the culture contained in the company also indirectly shapes and encourages informants to become workaholic employees. In the company, there are various cultures inherent in it, such as the culture of honesty and diligence as well as process and progress. These things are always emphasized to employees so that the vision and mission of the organization are achieved.

From some of the explanations above, the work environment, organizational culture, and organizational communication that exist in a company are some of the factors in the emergence of workaholic behavior toward employees. However, the informants did

not feel a decrease in quality in organizational communication in the work environment, because they did prioritize their energy and thoughts for work. So they also build communication and maintain communication in the work environment to keep it good so that the work environment still feels comfortable but instead, they feel a decrease in the quality of communication with family at home and friends outside of work because they spend too much time in the office working.

4.2 In Order to Motive

After knowing the motive that causes someone to take action, the next step is to know what the goal motive is. The motive discusses the purpose of a person taking an action, this motive is oriented toward future goals or expectations. The following is an explanation of the motive of workaholic employees:

“Yes, it's the same reason as before. So that I can exceed the ability of other people, so that I am not insecure anymore so that I have my satisfaction. Also, to fulfill economic needs. Of course, to upgrade skills and skill investment is the main point.” (Interview informant GM, 2021)

The informant said that one of the goals of becoming a workaholic was to achieve self-satisfaction. Another thing with what ST revealed as follows:

“To get a sense of calm. Because I'm an overthinking person. Besides that, I want to achieve my dreams. So it's okay at a young age to now, rather than bothering in old age” (Interview informant ST, 2021)

According to ST, the purpose of becoming a workaholic is precisely to get a sense of calm because he always feels anxious about work both in terms of planned targets and the results of the quality produced. Researchers can see that the goal of getting a sense of calm is related to the sense of anxiety or insecurity possessed by the informants which is finally vented by working. Informants who have bad feelings such as anxiety, insecurity and so on feel that by spending most of their time working can relieve these feelings and feel their needs are met.

It is also different from informant UL who explicitly only mentions that his goal is to become a workaholic because he wants to fulfill his family's economic needs. An informant named DN actually said that he became a workaholic because he had a goal to be able to add value to himself by working continuously because for him working is learning new things so the more he works the more new things he can get.

From the information obtained from informants, it can be concluded that the because of motive for them to become workaholics includes loving work, being aware of responsibilities, economic needs, and having feelings of insecurity. Meanwhile, the in order to motive that they said included getting self-satisfaction, being independent, getting a sense of calm and also meeting economic needs.

Because of motive and in order to motive

No.	Name of Key Informant	Cause Motive <i>Workaholic</i>	Objective Motive <i>Workaholic</i>
1	GM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love the work • finding passion in your current job 	In order to add <i>value</i> to yourself.
2	ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a distraction from the sadness or anxiety they have. • Has experience of being undermined by others in terms of career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving <i>financial freedom</i> • To get a sense of calm • As a form of self-proof
3	UL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of their responsibilities • likes your current job 	To fulfill economic needs
4	DN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling insecure about other people's career achievements • likes your current job 	In order to have skill investment and achieve satisfaction when you have a lot of abilities

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews and observations that have been made, the because of motive behind the informants becoming workaholics includes being aware of work responsibilities, loving work, and having internal factors that encourage continuous work such as venting from anxiety and sadness. They admitted that the work environment also supports them to keep working and the work they like makes them spend more time working. One informant said that work is work so he always wants to explore his abilities so that he can always be totality at work. The informants also stated that there were things from the past that were factors in the emergence of motives for becoming a workaholic such as having been looked down upon by the family, having worked in a job that was not a passion, and also having problems that occurred within the informant's family.

The in order to motive is that informants become workaholics because they have goals or hopes to achieve in the future. The purpose motives include achieving financial independence, as an investment in skills, to fulfill economic needs, to get a sense of 'calm'. One informant explained that he worked continuously because he always had anxiety about

the future so that more time was used for work. Another informant said that by becoming a workaholic he hoped to invest in his expertise in the field of work. And there are also those who have a goal to be financially independent, meaning to be able to take responsibility for themselves regarding finances and not depend on an agency for life.

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