A Qualitative Study on the Consequences of Intensive Working

Melrona Kirrane, Marianne Breen, Cliodhna O'Connor

The nomological network of intensive working, or 'workaholism', is unclear. Taking a theoretically driven social constructivist approach, anchored in the field of human resource development (HRD), this study sought to explore how male intensive workers understand the consequences of their work patterns with respect to the experience of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the work and nonwork domains. Deploying an interpretivist paradigm, data from 30 interviews were analyzed. These comprised 10 people who construed themselves as intensive workers, a coworker of each intensive worker, and 10 moderate workers. Each interview was analyzed using discourse analysis techniques. Intensive workers readily described the satisfaction they experienced from their work. Coworkers corroborated these accounts. Many experiences of dissatisfaction among intensive workers were readily offset against gains from intrinsic pleasure in the work or else rationalized. Data from coworkers suggested that intensive workers were both inspirational and troubling colleagues who unwittingly impaired their own career progress. Comparative data from moderate workers further illuminated the consequences of intensive work patterns. This study contributes to theories of intensive work by highlighting the variegated nature of the consequences of intensive working. Understanding how these work patterns are justified and maintained is a critical starting point to support HRD professionals in addressing the consequences that ensue. Such insights have implications for the design and development of organizational policies and procedures that have repercussions for workers' lives.

Key Words: dissatisfaction, intensive working, qualitative analysis, satisfaction, social construction

Human Resource Development Quarterly
Published online in Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com) • DOI: 10.1002/hrdq.21284

Introduction

The major purpose of HRD is to improve workplace learning and organizational performance (Holton, 2002; Mankin, 2009; Swanson & Holton, 2009; Werner, 2014). Effectively managing the organization's talent base has been identified as a fundamental feature of this objective and, as such, is deserving of serious research attention (Sheehan & Anderson, 2015). Learning about patterns of work behavior, their effect on employee performance, and devising effective responses by HRD professionals to such matters is a critical feature of this endeavor.

Intensive working is largely regarded as having negative consequences for individuals, organizations, and society. It is often described and explained using a variety of terms, including *workaholism* (Libano, Llorens, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2010), *work addiction* (Sussman, 2012), *excessive work* (Andreassen, 2014), *heavy work investment* (Snir & Harpaz, 2012), *craving* (Wojdylo, Baumann, Buczny, Owens, & Kuhl, 2013), and *work passion* (Houlfort, Philippe, Vallerand, & Ménard, 2013). Research suggests that approximately 10% of the general U.S. population engage in these lifestyles (Sussman, Lisha, & Griffiths, 2011), with other international studies reporting higher incidences (Andreassen, Griffiths, Hetland, & Pallesen, 2012). Most public and academic discussions of these types of work practices regard them as dangerous phenomena (Robinson, 2013), thus requiring attention from researchers and HRD professionals alike.

A number of starting points for understanding this behavioral pattern have been advanced in the literature, including addiction (M. A. Clark, Michel, Zhdanova, Pui, & Baltes, 2014; Matuska, 2010; Porter, 1996; Robinson & Kelley, 1998), disposition (Burke, Matthiesen, & Pallesen, 2006; L. A. Clark, Livesley, Schroeder, & Irish, 1996; McMillan, O'Driscoll, & Burke, 2003), and learned behavior (Cohen, 1995). However, the nomological network remains unclear (Snir & Harpaz, 2012), as too much of the prevailing research lacks the strong theoretical guidance required to move the field forward decisively (Giannini & Scabia, 2014; Sussman, 2012). This backdrop suggests that a theory-driven approach using an innovative methodology to understand this phenomenon now has some merit.

We take a social constructionist approach in our investigation (Russell, 2012; Weick, 1979), using the theoretical starting points advanced by Ng, Sorensen, and Feldman (2007) and Snir and Harpaz, (2012) to analyze the consequences of intensive working. In advancing in this manner, we move away from using the poorly defined term *workaholism* in favor of the more expansive term *intensive working* and take an ontological perspective (Morgan & Smircich, 1980) to explore how those who work intensively construe the consequences of this working pattern. We synchronize these accounts with coworkers' perceptions of intensive workers and additionally incorporate work pattern narratives into our analyses from those who do not work intensively, to

whom we refer as moderate workers. In pursuing this approach, we respond to the calls of Andreassen Hetland, and Pallesen (2013); Mazzetti, Schaufeli, and Guglielmi (2016) and Snir and Harpaz (2012), who encourage researchers in this field to collect collateral responses to allow for data triangulation (Seale, 1999), and Sussman (2012), who advocates for more real-world studies to complement existing knowledge within the field.

Following Machlowitz (1980), we adopt a qualitative approach in our study as a route to uncovering experienced consequences of intensive work practices. In taking this approach, our study illuminates the variegated nature of the effects of intensive working patterns, thus contributing to the theoretical debate. We find that intensive workers reported profound enjoyment of their work, deriving particular satisfaction from working hard and achieving objectives. Intensive workers also reported strong dissatisfaction with the requirement to work cooperatively with others, in stark contrast to moderate workers who described this as one of the most attractive features of their work. Coworkers endorsed the limitations of intensive workers in cooperative work, which they positioned as self-imposed obstacles to their career success. Some frustration with imbalance between work and life domains was evident among intensive workers, and innovative strategies to manage these issues appeared in their data. Moreover, intensive workers invoked complex, self-serving portrayals that minimized the negative effects of their working patterns while coworkers articulated compassion for family members affected. Set against the more benign descriptions of work and nonwork satisfaction from moderate workers, our study provides a rich understanding of the manifold repercussions of intensive work patterns, which can be used to inform workplace practices and appropriate HRD policy and procedure. Together, our findings contribute to the theoretical debate regarding the consequences of intensive working and have implications for HRD practitioners in a number of domains, including employee development, workflow management, and teamwork.

Literature Review

Clarifying the conceptual landscape of intensive working is an appropriate starting point for exploring how intensive workers interpret their work practices. In this section, we begin by reviewing empirical findings on the consequences of intensive working and then proceed to examine the theoretical background of research in this field.

The Consequences of Intensive Working

Intensive working was first described by Oates (1968) to describe a compulsion to work incessantly. He used the term *workaholism* as a play on *alcoholism* to describe such behavior. This term was taken up within the literature and is now commonly used, albeit not exclusively, to describe intensive temporal and

psychological investment in work. Studies describe different types of intensive workers (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000; Robinson, 2013; Scott, Moore, & Miceli, 1997; Spence & Robbins, 1992; Taris, van Beek, & Schaufeli, 2012), but what remains unclear are the consequences of intensive work patterns for those affected by them.

At the individual level, studies have found that intensive working produces many risks for employees' physical and mental well-being (Balducci, Avanzi, & Fraccaroli, 2016; Giannini & Scabia, 2014; Patel, Bowler, Bowler, & Methe, 2012; Sussman, 2012). Longitudinal research demonstrates the causal directionality of these relationships: intensive working precipitates deterioration in health rather than vice versa (Shimazu, Schaufeli, Kamiyama, & Kawakami, 2015). Intensive working is also linked to compromised peer relationships, with intensive workers exhibiting more interpersonal conflict at work (Mudrack, 2006), demonstrating a greater tendency toward workplace aggression (Balducci, Cecchin, Fraccaroli, & Schaufeli, 2012), and having poorer relationships outside work (Andreassen et al., 2013; Bonebright et al., 2000). Research also suggests that intensive work practices ultimately disadvantage organizations due to poorer performance, high staff turnover, low organizational commitment, and negative workplace atmosphere (Brauchli, Bauer, & Hämmig, 2015; Gorgievski, Moriano, & Bakker, 2014).

However, other literature has problematized the construal of intensive working as singularly negative (Baruch, 2011; Machlowitz, 1980; Ng et al., 2007). While correlations between work hours and negative health outcomes are usually statistically significant, effect sizes are small (typically $r < .2$) (Sparks, Cooper, Fried, & Shirom, 1997). Null findings, which detect no or only indirect relationships between intensive work and negative health outcomes, are also present in the literature (Bovornusvakool, Vodanovich, Ariyabuddhiphongs, & Ngamake, 2012; Vodanovich, Piotrowski, & Wallace, 2007). Similar ambivalence surrounds the effects on family relationships: Burke (2000) found no relationship between intensive working and divorce, while McMillan, O'Driscoll, and Brady (2004) presented evidence suggesting that intensive working has only a minimal impact on intimate relationships. Indeed, some studies conclude that intensive workers report high enjoyment of work (Baruch, 2011; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman 2005), which is negatively correlated with job stress, burnout, and health complaints (Andreassen, Ursin, & Eriksen, 2007), a finding perhaps explained by high levels of enthusiasm for work (Bonebright et al., 2000). Russo and Waters (2006) conclude that the psychological outlook through which one approaches work, rather than hours worked per se, is key in determining the nature of the outcomes from intensive working. One of the explanations for such equivocal findings is the atheoretical nature of many studies. Calls have been made for a greater use of theory in this domain in order to allow firmer conclusions to be drawn regarding the consequences of intensive working (Andreassen, 2014; Sussman, 2012).

Theoretical Background

The most dominant theoretical frameworks within this field of study are provided by Ng et al. (2007) and Snir and Harpaz (2012). The starting point of Ng et al. (2007) is that intensive work, in the form of workaholism, is an addiction that involves the three components of affect, cognition, and behavior. They define workaholics as people who enjoy the act of working, who are obsessed with working, and who devote long hours and personal time to work (Ng et al., 2007, p. 114). The antecedents of workaholism (including dispositional features, sociocultural experiences, and behavioral reinforcement) lead to affective, cognitive, and behavioral features of workaholism, which then deliver a number of consequences. These include higher job and career satisfaction and higher extrinsic career success, but increased distrust of coworkers, along with poorer mental and physical health and worse social relations. Ng et al. (2007) call on researchers to incorporate data from people around intensive workers such as coworkers to assist in more fully understanding the nature and consequences of intensive work patterns.

Later, Snir and Harpaz (2012) proposed a second theoretical model to explain the antecedents and consequences of intensive work patterns in their Heavy Work Investment (HWI) model. Like Ng et al. (2007), Snir and Harpaz position workaholism as a form of HWI that emerges from an addiction to work due to dispositional rather than situational characteristics. Anchored in Person–Situation Interaction Theory (Pervin, 1989) and Attribution Theory (Heider, 1958), and differing from Ng et al. (2007), they propose that the outcomes for those who work intensively include burnout, stress, and low career and life satisfaction. Snir and Harpaz also urge researchers to take a multisource approach in future investigations of the consequences of intensive work practices. These diverging theoretical positions on the outcomes of intensive work practices suggest that further investigation is valuable in providing evidence for their status.

Current Study

Our study explores the nature of the experienced consequences of intensive work, paying specific attention to the experience of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, given their equivocal positioning in theoretical models. As studies of intensive working have been criticized for their near-exclusive reliance on quantitative, sometimes problematic, measures (Andreassen et al., 2013; Giannini & Scabia, 2014; Sussman, 2012) and assumptions of intensive working as an intrinsically pathological phenomenon (Libano, et al., 2010; Porter, 1996), our work responds to the calls of Gorgievski and Bakker (2010) and Andreassen (2014) and contributes to the literature in two ways.

First, we adopt a qualitative approach to explore how intensive working is experienced by intensive workers and their coworkers, allowing us to eschew *a priori* assumptions regarding the nature of intensive working

(Goodwin & Horowitz, 2002). Continuing in the quantitative vein of most studies of intensive working may limit new discoveries (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013) and mask individual variation in how working lives are experienced. In turn, this may restrict the ability of research to inform HRD practice and policy (Shuck, Twyford, Reio, & Shuck, 2014; Stahl, Björkman et al., 2012). Unfortunately, empirical qualitative data are scarce within contemporary research on intensive working (see Russell, 2012, 2016). As a result, little insight into what people *believe* the consequences to be is available. How do people subjectively experience the repercussions of intensive working? Are negative consequences acknowledged, ignored, or rationalized? What, if any, are experienced as the rewarding aspects of intensive working? Without evidence to answer these questions, it is difficult to understand how intensive working patterns are sustained over time or, equally, what may prompt people and organizations to initiate changes where difficulties are encountered. Further, it is difficult to devise appropriate HRD responses to intervene effectively in these dynamics.

Second, in line with Bronfenbrenner (1986), whose Ecological Systems Theory (EST) emphasizes the importance of considering the context(s) in which a person is located in order to understand the emergence of a particular characteristic, we take a contextual approach to our study of intensive working practices by incorporating data beyond that provided by the focal worker. We do this in two ways. First, although intensive working is often explicitly defined in terms of work's intrusion into nonwork activities and interests (Hauk & Chodkiewicz, 2013; Kravina, Falco, De Carlo, Andreassen & Pallesen, 2014; McMillan et al., 2004), minimal research has explored how the people surrounding intensive workers are affected by these patterns. Burke and Ng (2007) asked intensive workers to nominate a close colleague to complete an intensive working questionnaire, which intensive workers also completed themselves. Results showed considerable agreement in self- and colleague-rated responses, indicating close others' perspectives are a reliable source of insight into a person's lifestyle. Thus, we include coworkers of intensive workers in our study. Second, we complement this data by analyzing interpretations surrounding work and life satisfaction derived from moderate workers in the same professional contexts as intensive workers, and we use these to elucidate intensive work patterns. We explore whether the consequences mentioned by these parties align with those identified by quantitative research in the field of intensive work patterns, or whether they introduce new theoretical dimensions. We undertook this study with the following research question:

> How are the consequences of intensive working construed by those who work intensively and their coworkers, and what more do we learn about intensive workers when their work patterns are reflected against expressed work patterns of moderate workers?

Method

This study takes a phenomenological approach in that we emphasize the subjective experiences of actors' "lifeworlds" (Husserl, 1969; Schutz, 1972). Our intention is to capture the rich and detailed experience of the consequences of participants' working styles. We present the data in raw form to accommodate a comprehensive interpretation of the participants' understanding of their experiences, and pay close attention to the language used by them (Moustakas, 1994; Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). We locate our study within an interpretivist ontological framework, which emphasizes that humans create their realities by introducing their own thoughts and ideas to the world they perceive (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Qualitative approaches take the view that reality is socially constructed and should be interpreted rather than measured (Johnson & Waterfield, 2004); thus, participants' explanations and comments are of central significance.

Sampling

We gathered our sample using a two-stage sampling process comprising sequential use of convenience and purposive theory-based strategies (Bauer & Aarts, 2000). Stage 1 of our sampling process was convenience based in that we used an available source of primary data (i.e., local employees). Stage 2 was purposive in that we deliberately selected information-rich cases (i.e., respondents who met cutoff points using Machlowitz's (1980) screening tool, which established them as intensive workers) to give rise to data relevant to the research aims (Patton, 1999). Our sampling process was theory based in that our sample was selected on the basis of their potential manifestation of important theoretical constructs. The sample then becomes reflective of the phenomenon of interest. This type of sampling yields in-depth understanding rather than generalizations (Patton, 2002). That is, the aim of such an approach is not to attain a statistically representative data set that can be generalized to the entire population, but to provide an in-depth account of the range of ideas present and examine what underlies and justifies them (Gaskell, 2000; Patton, 2002, 2005).

Certain occupational fields, such as financial services and management consultancy, are known for their demanding workloads (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions [EFILWC], 2015) and have previously been identified by researchers as attracting and selecting individuals willing to work long hours (Harpaz & Snir, 2003; Machlowitz, 1980). To recruit participants for our study, 110 companies were contacted from the databases of the International Financial Services Centre based in Dublin and the Institute of Management Consultants and Advisers in Ireland. The head of HR in each company was contacted about the research study via e-mail, after which they received a letter and follow-up telephone call to explain the study. After the explanation, HR specialists of 65% ($n = 72$) of the

companies agreed to disseminate invitations to participate in the study from the researchers to their employees. As the HR specialists circulated the invitations, it is not possible to know how many people received them.

Recipients of the invitation who declared an interest in participating in the study received a second e-mail from the research team incorporating a link to the Machlowitz (1980) screening tool, which assessed their work patterns. There are 10 items in this measure; a sample item is "Do you dread retirement?" All items emerged from data rather than from *a priori* theoretical assertions of researchers, and thus our use of this tool was consistent with the contextualized interpretation of intensive work behavior adopted in this investigation. Deployed in a number of studies (Doerfler & Kammer, 1986; Greenberg, 2002; Kilburg, 1986), each item on this measure has a "yes/no" response option whereby "yes" responses warrant one point, and "no" responses warrant zero points. A score above eight points is deemed to represent intensive work behavior.

Using these cutoff points and satisfying the criteria of Bertaux (1981), 18 participants met the benchmark for intensive working and were interviewed. These participants are referred to as the Intensive Worker (IW) group. In line with Mason (2002), these participants were asked to elect a coworker to be interviewed to add contextual data about the working style of the focal participant. Only 10 participants contributed a coworker (C group members), and so the first part of the analysis pertains to these matched 10 pairs with the data from the remaining eight intensive workers set aside. Finally, interviews were conducted with 10 employees of the targeted companies who also completed the screening tool but fell below the cutoff point for engaging in intensive work practices on Machlowitz's (1980) scale. These scores established them as moderate workers (M group members). This group was incorporated into the research design to afford further contextualization of work patterns of intensive workers. Data from coworkers of moderate workers were not sought as they were regarded as beyond the scope of the study. Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes.

Members of the IW group were all male. As respondents self-selected themselves to participate in the study, controlling for gender balance was not possible. As a result, our findings may not be generalizable to female intensive workers. We address this matter further when discussing study limitations. The average age of IW group members was 45 years. Seventy percent were married/partnered, all had a university degree, and they had on average 19 years of work experience. All of these, bar one, proposed a male coworker, and each pairing had at least 3 years' experience of working together. The average age of the coworker group was 41 years, eight were married/partnered, all had a university degree, and they had on average 21 years of work experience. Three of the moderate group were female, nine were married/partnered, the average age was 38 years, all had a university education, and they had on average 20 years' work experience.

Procedure

One-on-one semistructured interviews were conducted to gather information relevant to the research question. The interview approach combined a guided approach with a standardized format using a number of open-ended questions that were theoretically informed. A certain amount of flexibility in questioning was retained to accommodate issues pertinent to participants (Gioia et al., 2013). Interviews took place over the phone, in participants' workplaces, or in nearby appropriate spaces. Interviews were recorded and transcribed following the recommendations of O'Connell and Kowal (1995). Each hour of interview data took approximately 10 hours to transcribe.

Data Analysis

Discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) is a process used to explore how people explain, justify, and account for phenomena in their natural, everyday interactions. The aim is not to enlighten an objective reality but to gain insight into lived experience by exploring how people describe their lives. It is a particularly appropriate method to study personal, subjective perspectives on intensive working. A battery of discursive features (D. Edwards & Potter, 1992; Gee, 1999; MacMartin, 2002; MacMillan & Edwards, 1999; Potter & Wetherell, 1987) was compiled to aid the analysis (see Table 1). The analysis met the criteria of trustworthiness (Bowen, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1982) by ensuring data credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability by using the audit trail, coding checks, and peer debriefing. The criterion of soundness (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) was met by our presentation of analyzed texts and demonstration of routes to conclusions. Following G. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006), a codebook was developed by two data analysts using a standard iterative process (MacQueen, McLellan, & Milstein, 1998). Data codes were initially developed based on five interviews and were refined while reading the remaining transcripts to accommodate emerging patterns. These codes were entered into the NVivo software to facilitate analysis. To assess the coding scheme's reliability, in line with Gioia et al. (2013), the coders separately applied the scheme to a selection of data. Coding patterns were compared, and a 96% agreement rating was established, in that there was a 96% agreement between coders as to the code to which data belonged.

Findings

Data from matched dyads of intensive workers (IW1–IW10) and their coworkers (C11–C20) are presented in four sections. The data pertain to two consequences of intensive working style (satisfaction and dissatisfaction) as each was experienced in (a) work and (b) nonwork (life) domains. Commensurate data from moderate workers (M1–M10) are also presented in each section.

Table 1. Discourse Analysis Terminology

Discursive Feature	*Explanation of Discursive Feature*
Binary oppositions	The situated work of making comparisons and contrasts between two concepts (e.g., right and wrong). These are powerful general-purpose discursive devices for constructing the world as such.
Category membership entitlements	Categories represent particular ways of ordering the world, and members of that category arc constructed as being entitled to certain values/actions/traits by virtue of being part of a particular category.
Contrast markers	Highlight a contrast or difference between the previous statement and the next statement (e.g., *but, whereas*).
Extreme ease formulations	The most extreme possible case or scenario is constructed through formulations such as "always" and "never." These can function as effective rhetorical devices, as they may construe convincing arguments. Alternatively, they can assemble arguments as being too extreme. This extremity might be taken to display investment in or stance toward some state of affairs.
Direct speech	Direct quotations from individuals.
Generic terms	Are global, general, vague terms (e.g., *people*).
Hedging	This generally weakens an argument, as it demonstrates uncertainty or hesitancy. The hedging of a claim marks the statement as provisional in some way. Hedging can be done in a variety of ways: through the use of conditionals (e.g., *might, could*); modifiers (e.g., *probably*): the expression of personal viewpoints known as using modals (e.g., *I think*). All of these hedging words suggest that there are alternatives to the claim or the claims being made.
Idioms/ idiomatic expressions	These are figurative or formulaic statements commonly found in everyday speech (e.g., *It's better to be safe than sorry*). Idioms are difficult to challenge because they invoke taken-for-granted cultural knowledge and are general and vague.
Indexicals	Are words that have no meaning except as they refer to another word (e.g., *we, our, it, they*).
Internal focalization	The reporting of subjective details known as internally localized characteristics function to lend authority to an account as the reader watches with the character's eyes.
Particularizing an argument	Achieved through restricting the statement/argument to a specific group or individual.
Pronouns	Use of pronouns demonstrate how close a person is to the noun. For instance, a switch from *I* to *you/one* decreases accountability and increases rhetorical distance between the speaker and their uttering.
Reflexive terms	Reflect the verb action onto the subject of the sentence (e.g., *himself*).
Role talk	Where acting in line with a particular role is discursively deployed as a form of attributional accounting (e.g., *I'm just doing my job*). It positions the actor as being less personally culpable for it.

(Continued)

Discursive Feature	*Explanation of Discursive Feature*
Sense of agency	Where an agent is assigned responsibility, blame, or credit for his actions. First-person pronoun usage can be seen as one way of doing agency. One of the most important devices for obscuring issues of agency is the passive voice and, in particular, the form of the agentless passive.
Temporal markers	Indicate time (e.g., "*now,*" "*at first,*" "*old*").
To construe/ construct/ assemble/work up/build up/ establish/ position	These verbs are used during analysis as they avoid reifying or making "real" any discursive patterns evident in the text, thus ensuring one of the major flaws of discourse analysis studies is avoided.

Work Satisfaction

Intensive workers (IW) cited a range of satisfying consequences they derived from their work including a sense of accomplishment and financial success. Coworkers (C) agreed with these positive outcomes for intensive workers and even professed themselves to be inspired by the working style of their colleagues. Moderate workers (M) reported that the nature of their work and the opportunities it gave them for interpersonal interactions were satisfying consequences of their work patterns.

Intensive Workers and Coworkers The words of IW8 captured a strong sentiment within the IW group:

> I totally love my work—I absolutely love it. [IW8]

IW8 constructed the depth of feeling for his work through the verb *love*. The complete and utter love of his job was assembled through the adjectives *totally* and *absolutely*. This intensive worker's enjoyment of work was also observed by his coworker:

> You know, he just has this immense passion for his work. I think an immense love for his work is what drives him—he has this great passion for his work. [C14]

C14 constructed his coworker's depth of feeling for work through the adjectives *immense* and *great*. Highly emotive terms such as *passion* and *love* were used to explain his relationship with his job and were regarded as being the fuel for his heavy investment in work.

Another IW group member was wholesome in his enthusiasm for his work:

> There's no aspect I don't enjoy—nothing—well, sorry, obviously paperwork and paying the taxman, but that comes with everything else. There's no element of my actual work that I don't enjoy. [IW10]

IW10 used an extreme case formulation *nothing* to answer the question in relation to disliking work. He subsequently backtracked by particularizing his previous statement, making it more complex. This functioned to construe a more credible argument. Like many members of the IW sample, paperwork was also positioned as a disagreeable element of his job. Yet paying tax and administrative duties were positioned as being peripheral to his *actual* work activities. IW2 also expressed satisfaction with his career, concluding that the demands it made on him were worthwhile:

> I'm in at 7 and you could be working until 9, 10, 11 o'clock at night … everyone else is the same. The amount of time you spend at work is an investment in your future and it definitely paid off for me. If you're raking it in, it's not that much of a big deal because you don't have to do that forever. I'm quite happy with my career now. [IW2]

Working 16 hours per day was positioned as a pervasive routine and unproblematic for IW2 due to the similarity of his peers' work patterns. This was worked up through the extreme case formulation *everyone else*. Working long hours was also positioned as a strategic move. It was established as not being a reward in itself but rather as yielding current and future benefits. The success of this investment was established through the term *definitely* and the temporal marker *now.* This construal was further assembled in monetary terms (*investment* and *paid off*). There was a switch from the *I* personal pronoun to the externalizing *you* pronoun, which depersonalized this construction from his situation, positioning it as a general rule (D. Edwards, 1997). C12 recalled some benefits of working with IW2:

> It is great because he has an enthusiasm that can carry other people. I don't think that it was a healthy level of enthusiasm, but his drive and excitement and verve for things—people can exploit that and sort of siphon off it so that they don't have to give their energy so much, so I see lots of that happening, too. [C12]

The positive side of working with IW2 was assembled as the "zest" that he created in the workplace. However, coworkers were positioned as sometimes exploiting this energy to avoid having to invest too much of themselves in work projects.

Particular aspects of work that were identified as satisfying for intensive workers included overcoming difficult challenges and being triumphant in business dealings:

> I love dealing with the really difficult cases—a lot of people don't like that, but I find those things enjoyable and challenging … only two of us beating a very large company to a very large contract would have been one of the most exhilarating things … I kicked their asses. [IW3]

IW3 asserted his uniqueness in enjoying the tasks other people experience as *difficult*. The *challenging* nature of the work was positioned as a subjectively positive attribute. This was worked up further by positioning this element of work as demanding and satisfying. Delighting in this aspect of the job was established as unusual. This was built up through distancing the majority of other people from this stance. IW3 constructed one of the most thrilling events in his work life as competing with a bigger organization for a contract and winning it. The very specific *only two of us* was juxtaposed with the enormous size of their corporate opponent (*very large company*). This explained the magnitude of this success and his excitement. The violent term *beating* was employed to construe when they triumphed over their opponents for the contract (*I kicked their asses*). This power metaphor was also present in the words of IW5, who said:

> … I find a lot of my work very interesting and it gives me a kick—an awful lot of my work gives me a kick. [IW5]

This IW group member construed his work as providing enjoyment that was tactile. This was worked up through the forceful, physical verb *kick*, which positioned this participant as receiving something quite powerful from his job. The majority of his work was built up as providing this *kick*. This was established through the repetition of phrases *an awful lot* and *a lot*. The possessive pronoun *my* constructed job ownership. This functioned to convey a closeness and connectedness with his work.

Members of the IW group also identified factors that yielded extrinsic satisfaction:

> I like making money … I'm very lucky and I'm successful and I'm well paid. [IW1]

IW1 construed himself as being lucky and successful. Success was assembled as being separate from monetary gain. Additionally, his success was constructed as being disconnected from luck, which was built up through the use of the conjunction *and*. The coworker of IW1 endorsed the satisfaction experienced by him:

> [Name] is always on the lookout for ways to earn more money and I have to hand it to him—he has increased the revenue of the business by about 50% since he took over. [C16]

C16 conceded that the focus on financial gain of IW1 produced results by recalling specific quantified achievements. The phrase *I have to hand it to him* suggested a certain amount of reluctance in acknowledging that intensive working produced positive outcomes.

Coworkers also reported on the contagious effects of the satisfaction experienced by intensive workers:

> He is passionate about his work, and when you work with him this kind of rubs off on you as well. [C20]

C20 positioned his coworker (IW10) as an inspirational colleague. This was worked up through the description of him as being passionate with respect to his work. The transferability of his love for his work was constructed as an advantage of working alongside him. This was built up through the verb *rubs*.

Moderate Workers Moderate workers described specific work dimensions that delivered satisfying consequences.

> I quite like working in a team. I prefer teamwork to working on my own. I mean I don't really mind working on my own, but it's nice to have people there and have that interaction, so I much prefer it. [M3]

M3 construed a preference for working with others over working alone. This was established through the repetition of the term *prefer* and the prominence of the *I* personal pronoun. Social interaction was worked up as an attractive element of work. In a similar way, M4 offered:

> I have to say that I like what I do very much. What I find enjoyable is the social interaction with people in my department and around the building. To an extent, they become like family. What makes it rewarding is when I see that the work I do helps others do their job better or helps the company function at its best. [M4]

M4 constructed a sense of connectedness with others, which was attributed to the amount of time spent together. Communicating with colleagues was positioned as an aspect of work that he found enjoyable (*what makes it rewarding*). Improving others' performance at their jobs was also assembled as a satisfying aspect of his work. Similarly, M5 endorsed this aspect of work as satisfying:

> I'm dealing with lots of people every day so I love that part of it. I like dealing with people. I really enjoy the interview-type scenario. I also love training—I'm involved in presenting training courses here and I really like that … in general terms, I love it. [M5]

At the start of the extract, M5 constructed very specific aspects of her job that she loved. Each of these job tasks was followed by a construal of her enjoyment of her work. This was worked up through the positive emotional terms *enjoy*, *love,* and *really like*. This excerpt concluded with a general statement of loving work. In a similar vein, M8 built herself up as enjoying her work overall:

> There's the odd slow Monday morning, but in general I enjoy coming into work every day. I enjoy the camaraderie, I enjoy the varied work and then conversely I enjoy my weekend. I enjoy the things I do with my husband. [M8]

This statement of enjoyment in work was qualified by terms such as *in general* and acknowledging that enjoyment was not constant. She avoided extreme or emotive language and established her leisure time as an equally important source of pleasure. The second phrase construed this extract as more balanced and credible, given the extreme case formulation (*every day*) of the previous sentence (D. Edwards & Potter, 1992). Specific enjoyable aspects of her work were established. This participant also construed herself as enjoying her time spent away from work at the weekends. Activities with her family were positioned as opposite to work tasks through the term *conversely*.

M1 also professed to love her work but refrained from positioning it as paramount in her life:

> My career isn't my life. I love it—I do—I enjoy working, but I think there will be a lot more in my life than just my career. [M1]

M1 positioned her career as one of a number of life activities. This was worked up through the terms *in* and *just*. These constructions were not confined to her particular job role but rather to her long-term working life, through the term *career*. At another point in the interview she established professional and personal fulfilment as opposing priorities:

> I have a career plan made out in my mind, but I don't think I will advance to a role with greater seniority because if I did, I know I would have to compromise on my current work–family balance. You know, I'd have to spend longer hours in the office and work at the weekends, and I really don't want to do that. I'm quite happy with the balance I have. [M1]

Role talk was employed in this segment from M1, who construed an increase in seniority and responsibility in the workplace as requiring a compromise on her work–life balance. This was positioned as working longer hours and on the weekend. This aspect of advancing her career was construed as a necessity through the repetition of *have to*. Instead, she constructed herself as being content with her current work–life balance. This participant described a conscious decision to eschew further career advancement because of the anticipated compromises for *work–family balance*.

Moderate workers also described enjoyable elements of their work in quite rounded, multidimensional ways:

> I think that one's professional success is always related to one's personal success. So, in other words, if your personal life is going well, your professional life will tend to go well and vice versa. [M2]

M2 differentiated between success in personal and professional spheres, yet he also construed an interrelation between the two, positioning success in one area as leading to success in the other. Use of the generic terms *one* and *your* distanced these construals from his own personal situation and constructed them as universal laws (D. Edwards, 2005).

Summary The data presented here illustrate a rich and varied set of career satisfaction consequences for intensive workers that were endorsed directly and indirectly by their coworkers. Intensive workers reported deriving satisfaction from their work in terms of exhilaration, accomplishment, and meaningfulness, despite the demands involved. These outcomes were recognized by their coworkers and at times were inspirational to them. Moderate workers, on the other hand, largely identified the interpersonal aspects of their work to be most satisfying to them. They readily articulated the separate yet entwined nature of their work and nonwork lives, noting the value of balance between these domains as leading to satisfaction in both.

Work Dissatisfaction

The elements pertaining to work dissatisfaction among IW included pressure, working with others, and bureaucracy. Their coworkers also noted disadvantages to IW of their working style, with some perceiving intensive working as incurring professional costs to the intensive workers. Coworkers also commonly articulated negative outcomes for themselves from working with intensive workers. Work dissatisfaction among moderate workers pertained to boredom, missed opportunities, and family demands, which they believed may have compromised their professional advancement.

Intensive Workers and Coworkers IW group members spoke of the negative consequences of their work patterns:

> It's not the hours, it's the intensity of the hours that I find pressurizing. [IW6]

This psychological strain experienced by IW6 is assembled as the cost of intensive working. He distinguished between temporal and psychological investment and argued that the latter caused stress. The coworker of this IW group member also reported on the stress she believed IW6 experienced:

> The way he's working is causing so much distress and illness to him. Some of the work may be joyful work, but he doesn't feel it—you know, it's like you are maybe sitting in a beautiful meadow but there's a flame too close to your skin and the flesh is burning; you don't notice the birds and you don't notice the flowers because you have something else that's taking all of your attention—that's what his intensive working is like." [C13]

C13 assembled that her coworker's enjoyment of work was eclipsed by the demands associated with his work pattern. An inability to perceive the benefits of working was positioned as an integral element of intensive working (*he doesn't feel it*). These statements were elaborated upon by means of a metaphor. Visual descriptions were employed, and the visceral description of burning flesh amplified the pain perceived to be involved in intensive work patterns. The extract then moved from this metaphor to a factual statement about intensive working (*that's what his intensive working is like*). An absence of hedging construed this participant's argument as convincing. This coworker of IW6 went on to describe the effects of his working style in equivocal terms:

> It was both wonderful and frustrating. It was wonderful because he is brilliant, and it was frustrating because he would often say that he would do things and then he wouldn't follow through on them because he overcommitted. He was always late because he had, you know, packed his day so full that he could not possibly—no human being could possibly keep the schedule, and so he would make agreements that he couldn't keep both in tasks and in time." [C13]

C13 construed working with IW6 as being both a positive and negative experience. The detailed descriptions of dissatisfying aspects of his working style set them up as accurate portrayals, and the examples provided suggested that the negative aspects of this working style had a greater impact on IW6 than its positive elements. Lack of punctuality and unfulfilled promises were constructed as the irritating aspects of the work style of IW6. These were attributed by C13 to his work patterns, such as overloading his schedule. This failure to meet deadlines was externalized from IW6 by positioning such deadlines as impossible.

IW2 reiterated the stressful nature of his working life and identified his response to such demands:

> Sometimes the pressure just gets too much; it builds up and builds up and I just have to ring in and say, "I'm taking the day off"—we used to call them mental health days in the States. [IW2]

This participant constructed the stress of work as building to an apex, at which point it became unbearable. At this point, he had no other choice but to take leave from work. By recalling a collective understanding that *mental health days* were necessary, he normalized and justified his withdrawal from work. The reference to *mental health* implied an understanding that his work patterns carried serious psychological risks. The direct speech quotation "I'm taking the day off" enlivened the construction and conveyed notions of fresh, vivid memory (D. Edwards & Potter, 1992). Moreover, this behavior was justified by externalizing it from his personal pattern. This functioned to ensure that he was not presented as being lazy, but rather that dealing with stress was an intrinsic aspect of his work. This was built up by the collective pronoun *we*. The pressure of work was positioned as affecting psychological well-being, as a day off was labeled a *mental health day*.

Other negative aspects of work for IW group members included difficulties with bureaucracy, as reflected in the following sample quote:

> Oh, I hate bookkeeping and accounts—I hate the business administration and all that filing. [IW4]

IW4 positioned himself as despising the administrative aspects of his job. This was built up through the repetition of the emotive phrase *I hate*. The specific tasks that he construed himself as disliking also established this construal (*bookkeeping, accounts, business administration,* and *filing*). IW5 described similar unpalatable aspects of his job:

> … all this red tape is one part of the job that I really despise. [IW5]

IW5 positioned the increasing levels of bureaucracy as one aspect of his work that he disliked. A strong emotive term (*despise*) was employed to construct this participant's contempt of the bureaucratization of the financial services.

The requirement to expand behavioral repertoires was also cited as an unpalatable element of goal accomplishment. For example, IW10 said:

> One of the things is that you have to get more political and try a different tool to influence people. You've to try going for a cup of tea with the person. [IW10]

IW10 established political influence as being an important means of influence. This participant positioned himself as being new to political methods

of influence. The *you* personal pronoun depersonalized this construction from his situation and positioned it as a general rule (D. Edwards, 1997). IW7 also identified political behavior as an aspect of work causing dissatisfaction:

> … the having to go and butter people up and all that—I don't like selling myself in that sense so that's the bit I don't like, but I like everything else. [IW7]

The dislike expressed by IW7 for this element of his work was built up through the extreme case formulation *everything else*. He clearly identified interpersonal interaction as an additional burden that he felt he had to take on. Interestingly, the coworker of IW7 did not appear to regard him as successful in this domain:

> His knowledge of the job is so great, but he isn't great at the political end of things. I remember being in a meeting with [Name] one day and the head honcho was giving a presentation. [Name] stopped him during his presentation and said, "One of your figures there is wrong," and the thing is, it was wrong, but you just don't say that to the boss during one of his presentations, you know. So [Name] wouldn't see that and then he would often wonder why he isn't getting promoted. [C19]

C19 suggested that despite IW7's extensive professional competence, his career progress was sabotaged by his lack of social nous. A supporting example was provided whereby C19 described an event in which IW7 inappropriately corrected his boss in public. IW7 was presented as lacking insight into the career effects of such workplace micropolitics. The working patterns of IW6 were also described in problematic terms by his coworker, C13:

> … the way he works is that he builds complex matrices in such a way that he is the only person that can understand them—he needs that security around him that he is absolutely indispensable … that's a big problem now in the company and I believe it has already affected his career. [C13]

By describing IW6 in this light, some criticism of him was apparent—perhaps even charges of manipulation and obsessive preference for power and control were being leveled here. Such behavior was positioned as being problematic on both organizational and career levels, which were built up through the definitive article *the company* and the pronoun *his career*. IW8 said:

> I'd have to be honest with you, I don't like the human resources side and I don't like the overkill on meeting … meetings to talk about meetings. Very often, I find that particularly comes from senior management [because] they don't want to work and I don't like that. I suppose deep down I'm probably better working on my own. [IW8]

This participant's wholesale rejection of human resources elements of work was subsequently made more particular through a dislike of superfluous meetings. This was worked up through the repetition of the words *talking* and *meetings*. His use of the phrase *deep down* set him up as reluctantly constructing himself as being more suited to working alone and as lacking skills for the human side of working. This reluctance was worked up through the hedging of claims achieved by the use of modifiers such as *suppose* and *probably*. The coworker of IW8 commented on the interpersonal skills of IW8:

> One of the people here who hasn't half the technical competence that [Name] has, has a lot of interpersonal skills—well, he's going to get the top job, you know, because [Name]'s interpersonal skills are too poor. [C14]

Relating to others was construed as a skill that was not mastered by IW8. In contrast, the employee who was positioned as probably getting the promotion was regarded by C14 as having more interpersonal skills but less knowledge of the job. IW9 revealed similar sentiments in relation to the interpersonal element of his job:

> Working with other people is a difficult thing. I'm a very harsh task master—between my perfectionism and my criticism, you know, and my bluntness and, you know, my just trying to control things. [IW9]

IW9 construed dealing with people in the workplace as a major challenge. He positioned himself as a critical, perfectionist, and controlling colleague. Difficulties in working with others were not confined to a specific group of coworkers, but were generalized through the generic term *people*.

Admissions of not being easy to work for were made by IW members but in general they felt their approaches to work were ultimately effective in terms of achieving goals:

> I will drive these managers to deliver or I will drive them out. [IW3]

This participant described a stark working climate—perform or leave. He construed himself as being in control of his employees. This was worked up through the *I* personal pronoun as well as the repetition of the *drive* verb. This established IW3 as directing his coworkers and located them in a passive, powerless position. The coworker of IW3 commented:

> He gets rid of the person that's making a loss for him. He creates this culture of nervousness or anxiety at work and he loves that—he loves people to be dropping things in front of him and fumbling out of fear of him … so he is a terror to work for. [C18]

C18 positioned his colleague as creating a culture of fear in the workplace. This was worked up by describing specific behaviors such as subordinates letting objects fall and trembling in front of him. Thus, he was established as a frightening employer (*a terror*). IW4 also described his working style and its effects:

> "… I'm probably not a particularly strong democrat. I'm not any better at leadership than anybody else but maybe more prone to take the lead … so yeah I'd be very demanding. I probably wouldn't be terribly easy to work for. [IW4]

IW4 was assembled as taking control in the workplace rather than sharing power with coworkers. This was worked up through the use of the political terminology such as *democrat* and *leadership*, although this was further couched in hedging terms such as *probably* and *not a particularly*. He also positioned himself as a difficult boss (*wouldn't be terribly easy to work for*), albeit he was not presented as embracing this approach completely, as further hedging of this claim was established through the modifier *probably*. These hedgings construed alternative interpretations as being possible and thus positioned this argument as extreme (D. Edwards, 2000). The coworker of IW4 commented:

> He demands a lot from his workers. He surrounds himself with people that agree with him or else then you couldn't work for him—and he'd tell you straight out if he thought you were wrong … he wouldn't dress it up or anything. [C15]

C15 positioned IW4 as tough to work with. This was worked up through the construction of job tasks as *demands*. Dissenting voices were assembled as being unacceptable among his staff (*then you couldn't work for him*). IW4 was also established as being harsh with criticisms. These were worked up as being delivered without any diplomatic "dressing." C11 offered an alternative perspective on the working style of IW5:

> He's a workaholic, you know. He's highly impulsive—he immediately jumps to conclusions, gets into all sorts of fights and trouble, and he is not polite at all. He has an opinion about everybody, and usually it's negative. [C11]

> C11 labeled IW5 as an impulsive person and a workaholic with a work style of impulsivity and rushing to conclusions. According to C11, the interpersonal conflicts experienced by IW5 in the workplace were not restricted to any specific type of arguments (*all sorts*). Furthermore, his impoliteness and negative opinion of his coworkers was built up through the phrase *at all* and the extreme case formulation *everybody*.

Moderate Workers Moderate workers described relatively minor career dissatisfaction issues such as boredom:

> It's not really what I expected—the administrative tasks are a bit boring. Actually I'm finding the job really tedious and boring—it may change and develop or else I'll have to move on. [M7]

M7 positioned a specific type of work task as being tedious. This was worked up through the categorization *administrative* and the repetition of the word *boring*. M7 went on to construe their whole job as being disappointing, unappealing, and unexciting. This extract was worked up through the many *I* personal pronouns as well as *me* and *myself*. These functioned to tie the dislike of this job to M7.

M8 positioned herself as possibly missing out on important life opportunities by concentrating on work. This argument was bolstered by M8 perceiving herself as being insignificant in her company. The continuity of the company despite the presence or absence of one particular worker was worked up through the aural description (*little blip*).

> I think I'm letting valuable opportunities slip by. At the end of day, if you fell off the face of the earth, the company would still trudge on. I mean it would still earn its money—you'd be a little blip and that's the end of it. [M8]

M10 referred to experiencing a tension between work and nonwork activities. Returning his concentration to his work was constructed as a necessity for the future. He said:

> My work has suffered because I've allowed my other life commitments take a position ahead of my work, so consequently I need to refocus on my work. [M10]

Moderate workers also suggested intensive work was possible only for people without family responsibilities:

> There are a lot of young, ambitious people here and they don't have partners or kids, so they don't have that pull factor drawing them out of the office at the end of the day. Those who do have pull factors work quite effectively during the day and are very focused to ensure that they get the work done so as to be able to leave the office at six o' clock and go home—I suppose I would fit in to the latter group. [M6]

M6 established a dichotomy between people whose lack of family commitments meant they could invest long hours in work, and the group in

which he situated himself, who strived for efficient completion of their work so they could return quickly to their family. The verb *pull* was used repeatedly, conveying that leaving work for home was not a personal choice but externally determined.

Summary Administrative tasks, marketing, working interdependently, and paying tax were positioned as negative aspects of work by IW group members. They also construed the tiring, pressurizing elements of their work and its menial elements as being adverse facets. While the majority of intensive workers were positioned as being professionally successful, some were perceived by their coworkers to have upper limits to their professional advancement. This was attributed in places to a lack of political astuteness and poor interpersonal skills. Coworkers displayed some ambivalence with respect to working with intensive workers who were established as being both inspiring but difficult colleagues. IW differed from M group members in that the latter were established as engaging in a number of activities outside of work, while the former provided little such evidence. A further difference lay in the benign descriptions of work dissatisfaction moderate workers offered.

Nonwork (Life) Satisfaction

Both IW and M group members reported satisfaction with their nonwork lives. For the former, elements contributing to satisfaction included supportive family members and material benefits they bestowed on their families as a result of their hard work. However, intensive workers exhibited a sense that they could be more productive in their nonwork time to enhance their satisfaction with it. Interestingly, C group members suggested any benefits accruing to IW members were not often consciously registered by them as such due to the intensity of their work patterns. M group members described relaxed and satisfying nonwork lifestyles where they spent time with others and enjoyed their nonwork time.

Intensive Workers and Coworkers When discussing the impact of work patterns on the nonwork domain, IW group members identified a number of positive consequences. For example:

> I think I'm pleased enough with how everything is—I'm probably a little too business focused, but if I were to do it again, I might only do it marginally differently. [IW2]

This participant's work–life balance was constructed as being quite satisfactory. However, a number of hedged claims were created through the modal *I think* and modifiers (*a little*, *might,* and *marginally*), which served to construct a cautious argument (D. Edwards & Potter, 1992). C12, the coworker of IW2, used a comparative technique to identify the different lifestyle choices of himself and his colleague:

> Well, I'd say we are fairly similar, but I probably don't live to work—I work to live, and I think there might be a slight difference there. I'm not as happy to give up my personal life on a regular basis. I try to make sure that I get out as early as I can, within reason—I mean I won't walk out the door in the middle of something. [C12]

The idiomatic phrases *living to work* and *working to live* were employed in this excerpt. The purpose of his work was built up as enabling living. He constructed working long hours in the evening as involving some sacrifice in his personal life. This was established through the use of the possessive pronoun *my* and the adjective *personal*. Other IW group members referred to the support they received from other people in their lives:

> My wife is extremely understanding. [IW4]

Nonwork activities were also described to illustrate the nature of how nonwork time was spent:

> After work I might go for a stroll or watch television or read the paper—be with the family—things like that but really, you know, I could do with organizing some more non-work-type activities to keep me amused, I'm sure. [IW1]

IW1 constructed himself as needing to arrange more activities outside of work. This was worked up through the construal of a dichotomy of activities (i.e., work based and nonwork events). The purpose of these activities was constructed as ensuring that he was kept occupied. Another vehicle for portraying some positive nonwork consequences of intensive working patterns was a rhetorical strategy that justified such practices due to the material benefit IW8 believed his work patterns conferred on his children:

> When you think about it, them [children] missing out on you is less important than you not providing for them in later life education-wise. You only have to look at the situation with third-level fees and the pensions are already disappearing. I mean it's a sacrifice that has certainly influenced my work but in the long term it's worth it. [IW8]

IW8 explicitly weighted financial security as more important than time spent with his children. The broader economic context was invoked to heighten the importance of attending to material considerations. Although he acknowledged that his decision involved *sacrifice*, he was sure that he had made the right choice. A further declamatory device was present in the words of IW6, who sought to minimize the impact of his absence on his family by suggesting it was actually a benefit to them:

> I'm a nuisance when I'm there—she's [his wife] into her routine and I upset the rhythm, you know. When I'm gone, our daughter sleeps with her—they're great buddies. If I arrive in on a Thursday night, it's "ah Jesus, what are you doing here?" [IW6]

Here, IW6 reformulated the discussion to speak of the negative aspects of his *presence* at home. He suggested his family was so accustomed to his absence that his presence disturbed the *rhythm*. His wife and daughter's close dyadic relationship contrasted with their unwelcoming reaction to his unexpected arrival. The coworker of IW6 was the only respondent to acknowledge any potential benefits of an intensive style of working on the nonwork domain, but his articulation of it suggested he felt IW6 failed to derive it:

> Maybe it's actually good work, and maybe he's actually doing good things in the world, but he doesn't notice it and so can't get the benefit from it. [C13]

C13 assembled any enjoyment of work experienced by IW6 as being eclipsed by the fatigue associated with such a work pattern.

Moderate Workers The description of nonwork life from moderate workers included:

> When I get home I do some shopping and have the dinner ready by the time my girlfriend gets in. I don't work late and I would always have my weekends free—there's no "Are you working this weekend? Are you working late?" I work nine to five, five days. [M2]

M2 construed his work pattern as unproblematic. This was built up through a list of possible questions about his working hours (*Are you working this weekend? Are you working late*?), with these questions being positioned as absent from his life because he construed himself as never working beyond his prescribed work hours. M2 established his work pattern as not affecting his partner, as he construed himself as being home from work before her. The lack of impact of work on his life was attributed to his highly structured work schedule. Another member of the moderate worker group described life outside work:

> I go out for drinks with my friends. I go walking at the weekend with a friend of mine. I bring the car down to the front walk and we walk along [name of suburb]. We'd walk say five miles. Generally, I like to meet up with friends or go to somebody's house. I end up in loads of girlie gangs—there's certain girlie groups that like go away for the weekend and then I've a girlie group from my MBA team. [M1]

M1 constructed her leisure activities as being varied and spontaneous. They were also established as being both solitary and sociable (i.e., *out for drinks* and *socializing*). The specific details of her leisure activities (*bring the car down to the front walk*, *we'd walk say five miles*) construed this account as an accurate portrayal. She positioned herself as belonging to a large number of social groups, which was assembled through the repetition of the collective terms *gangs, groups,* and *team*. Moderate workers described their enthusiasm for physically and mentally disengaging from work:

> I like to take my days off and to get away from the business and relax—just get away from it all and get a tan. [M5]

M5 constructed her time away from work as an escape that brought enjoyment. M9 also spoke of the value of "balancing" work and nonwork activities:

> I think I've got a reasonable balance here. My other life commitments—my family, my friends, society at large—they get a fair slice of me; in fact, in the last year or so probably too large a slice. [M9]

M9 constructed himself as dividing himself up for his various life interests. The metaphor of *slice* conveyed his resources as being divided up between his various commitments. Although he worried that his other commitments might be *too large*, he regarded his work–life balance as largely satisfactory. He was positioned as having an agentive stance in relation to his work–life balance by deciding the size of the *slice* of himself he was prepared to give to other domains and ranking them in order of priority. This was also worked up through the prominence of the *I* personal pronoun.

M7 also positioned himself as making certain that he did not work weekends. Family life was constructed as being very significant to him and his spouse. This was assembled through the verb *reserved*. A sense of togetherness and connection with family was worked up through the prominence of collective indexicals (*we, our,* and *us*):

> I ensure that the weekend is reserved for family. We don't have any kids but our extended family is very important to us. [M7]

Summary The data presented here revealed the multiple routes to nonwork satisfaction achieved by respondents. For IW, explanations of satisfaction incorporated refer ences to the satisfaction of oth ers (family), but endorsement of this from C group members was rare. On the other hand, M group members were expressive about common and shared factors in their nonwork lives from which they derived satisfaction.

Nonwork (Life) Dissatisfaction

Common sentiments expressed in this section by IW referred to disappointment with lost family time, poor involvement in family activities, and an inability to take a break from work. Coworkers articulated occasions of witnessing these practices at first hand and expressed sadness that they had occurred. On the other hand, other than a reference to the general struggle of balancing work and nonwork responsibilities, M workers expressed no disappointments with their nonwork lives.

Intensive Workers and Coworkers Factors contributing to nonwork dissatisfaction among IWs related to familial relationships. They described their absorption in work as limiting their attention to family matters. They described specific losses they experienced due to their work investment, particularly regarding missed opportunities for engaging with children:

> I mean, when you get home most nights the kids are in bed. There is a certain amount of remorse when you're sitting at your desk at quarter to seven and you realize that your kids are in bed. [IW5]

IW5 painted a picture of what typically happened when he got home from work. The specific details of this narrative such as time (*a quarter to seven*) and location (*sitting at your desk*) positioned these as an accurate portrayal (Potter, 1996). The frequency of this behavior was worked up through the term *most*. He assembled himself as being sorrowful that as he was working late he did not see his children before they went to bed. The prominence of the *you* pronoun positioned working long hours as a universal behavior that was not specific to his life (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The coworker of IW5, C11, regarded the familial effects of this person's intensive work patterns negatively:

> It was terrible—it was very sad really—those kids almost grew up without a dad because he was always off working. [C11]

C11 constructed the investment of IW5 in work as a tragic situation for his children. The pervasiveness of his absence from the home was worked up through the extreme case formulation *always*, and the lack of hedging constructed this as a statement of fact. This situation positioned IW5 as being neglectful of important family events. This poverty of home life was assembled as being a result of his preoccupation with work.

Intensive workers acknowledged their spouses were often frustrated by their physical absence:

> My wife, she's saying that this is ridiculous, that's her view. You know, when she sees you coming home at half nine and going back into the office at half twelve that night to work through the night. [IW7]

IW7 constructed his wife's interpretation of his work pattern in visual terms. This was worked up through the use of the *seeing* verb and by construing his wife's perspective as a *view*. He said his wife regarded his work pattern as being worthy of ridicule. This was attributed to his long working hours. The coworker of IW7 also commented on the intermingling of family and work:

> I remember calling down to him one Sunday afternoon and he had files spread out all over the living room floor and he had his daughter in helping him. [C19]

C19 constructed IW7 as allowing his work to intrude on his home life both temporally and physically. In turn, his children merged into his work life, both through their physical presence and the *helping* role they adopted. The impact on family life was also mentioned by IW10:

> I'm away all week … I do an awful lot of work at home in my study. On Sunday night my wife goes to bed at 11 o'clock; I'll usually go to bed at half 12—it drives her mad. So, well, Sunday night isn't too bad, but Monday night she goes to bed at 10 o'clock so I've a flash lamp that I use going around the room and I read my book with a flash lamp so I won't upset her—the light drives her mad. [IW10]

This participant construed himself as being absent from home during the week, and that even when he was physically present, he was absorbed in his work. He established himself as a source of annoyance and irritation to his wife. Working late and reading with the light on was built up as an activity that infuriated his wife, through the repetition of the phrase *drives her mad*. The temporal details positioned this construal as an accurate portrayal (*11 o'clock, half 12,* and "*10 o'clock*).

IW1 suggested that his family members' perception of overwork may have changed over the years, saying:

> Well, they would probably think that I spend too much time at work but my daughter is going to university herself and my son is 17, so they wouldn't really think that now. My wife would probably say that I don't spend enough time at home … I think it's common enough for this business you know. [IW1]

This participant's family was construed as viewing his work patterns as intensive. The collective term *they* built this up. Subsequently, the individual family members' attitudes to his work practices were worked up. His daughter's stage of education and son's age were presented to explain why they might not currently think he spent an inadequate amount of time at home.

He positioned his wife as stating that the amount of time he spent at home was insufficient. This spousal dissatisfaction was portrayed as typical of the sector that he works in. This distanced his wife's complaints from him and situated the blame for working long hours within the work context. IW3 also commented on the negative interaction between work and nonwork domains:

> I'm a bit frustrated right now. I'm letting personal commitments slip—I've just found out which school [name of daughter] is going to go to; the Christmas tree only came down last weekend, so it's completely unbalanced, it's difficult. [IW3]

Detailed examples worked up this construal of letting personal commitments slide (e.g., name of daughter's school and not taking down the Christmas tree). The verb *slip* construed him as losing touch with life commitments due to working long hours. The absence of balance between work and life was worked up through the extreme case formulation *completely*. This imbalance was positioned as being frustrating. His co-worker echoed this sentiment:

> I'd say his family life is pretty miserable. [C18]

Members of the IW group also stated that their work-focused lifestyles compromised any opportunity for socializing or nonwork interests. This was construed using the metaphor of *balance*, as indicated in the following example:

> There's no such thing as me going off at lunch for an hour and a half to meet someone or to have a relaxing lunchtime. Yes, I am very, very frustrated because there is no balance—it's completely out of balance. (IW4)

The absence of balance between work and life was worked up through the extreme case formulation *completely*. This participant was explicitly unhappy with the sacrifices in social connection and relaxation imposed by intensive working. He did not attribute his dissatisfaction to the long hours themselves. Rather, his frustration arose from a perceived lack of equilibrium, the severity of which was emphasized. The coworker of IW4 also echoed this sentiment in his description of his coworker:

> In general, I'd say his life is pretty poor because he spends most of his life either off working or doing other things to make money for himself. (C15)

The majority of the life of IW4 was presented as being split between working and other financially beneficial activities. C15 considered his coworker's family life to be profoundly unhappy due to his temporal investment in work and financial gain.

Other IW group members spoke of reduced leisure time, using the concrete example of holidays:

> I'm notorious for canceling a holiday—for cutting it short, postponing it, coming back early. Maybe I'm a little bit afraid to miss an opportunity, you know, if I say I'm going on holidays. I have trouble getting the words out of my mouth. [IW9]

IW9 experienced holidays as uncomfortable primarily due to his fear he would *miss an opportunity*. The statement that he physically had *trouble getting the words out of my mouth* reinforced the intensity of his difficulty with leaving work. The coworker of IW9 endorsed this view of lack of balance in the life of IW9:

> I don't think there is any balance. I think everything is driven out of balance by his level of work—there isn't a balance. [C17]

This coworker clearly regarded IW9 as having a lack of balance between his life and his work. This was attributed to the intensity of his working pattern. Balance emerged as a positively valenced concept, while lack of balance was regarded as intrinsically and inevitably maladaptive.

Moderate Workers Contributions from moderate workers regarding dissatisfaction with nonwork life were notable by their absence. The only comment in this regard came from M5:

> When you have a family you would find it difficult to put in long hours because your family life suffers. When you are busy, your relationships with other people obviously suffer a bit when you don't have all that much time. [M5]

Working long hours was construed as negatively impacting on relationships with others and in particular on family life. This consequence of working long hours was positioned as being caused by the lack of time available to spend with others. The repetition of the *you* pronoun externalized this construction from this participant's own experience and established it as a general law.

Summary IW group members constructed themselves as being overly focused on work issues and neglecting personal commitments. Furthermore, they established themselves as missing out on everyday family life and special occasions because of their intensive work patterns and their lack of engagement with activities outside of work. C group members corroborated these interpretations. Spouses were worked up as voicing dissatisfaction with intensive work patterns, in particular absences from the home due to work. Interestingly, rather than make some changes to their working patterns, IW group members described innovative strategies they deployed to address ongoing problematic

consequences of their non-work life in order to minimize disruption to those affected (e.g., use of a flash lamp). In stark contrast, M group members' work had little to say about nonwork dissatisfaction. Overall, family life was constructed as being adversely affected by excessive working.

Discussion

The current analysis contributes novel insights into how the consequences of intensive working patterns are construed by intensive workers and their coworkers. Set against the construals of moderate workers, our approach has illuminated many intricate details of the backdrop against which people sustain intensive work patterns. Intensive workers clearly articulated both satisfactory and unsatisfactory outcomes of their working styles with both of these outcomes, substantiated by their coworkers. What our study adds to the literature is an insight into the complex nature of how these outcomes are understood by intensive workers and their coworkers, thus extending the boundary conditions of research in this domain.

Intensive workers readily described many satisfactory outcomes of their work practices on both work and life domains. They comfortably described the profound personal enjoyment, stimulation, and satisfaction they derived from their work. These findings are in line with Burke and Mattheisen (2004), who found that workers who enjoyed their work, despite being categorized as "workaholics," exhibited higher levels of flow (Csikszentmihalyi , 1990) than those who did not enjoy their work. Indeed, coworkers endorsed the positive effects of intensive workers as inspirational colleagues. The data thus support previous research suggesting intensive working is not singularly negative, and that its psychological rewards must be considered when evaluating its effects (Andreassen et al., 2007; Burke & Mattheisen, 2009; Shimazu & Schaufeli, 2009). In line with Baruch (2011), our data suggest that researchers should be more open to tracking both positive and negative outcomes of intensive working rather than adhering to the dominant assumption that intensive working delivers solely negative effects.

The academic literature on intensive working largely indicates that intensive working has negative repercussions for psychological and physical health. While intensive workers and their coworkers reported on the stressful nature of their lives, the low attention intensive workers afforded to costs for physical health must be noted. Participants who work intensively did not spontaneously raise or observe any physical repercussions of their work patterns. Despite the difficulty in generalizing from this qualitative study, this absence is interesting because the physical health effects of intensive working are well substantiated in the literature (Kubota et al., 2010; Sparks et al., 1997). Interviewees' failure to acknowledge this may indicate a need for greater awareness raising of the health risks of intensive working. Indeed, research has called for the use of objective registers of data to corroborate reports of ill health among

intensive workers rather than rely solely on self-report measures (Andreassen et al., 2013).

Although intensive workers reported some regret pertaining to family life (Andreassen et al., 2013; Bonebright et al., 2000; Russo & Waters, 2006; Taris, Schaufeli, & Verhoeven, 2005), these were usually framed in terms of specific missed experiences rather than more enduring effects on relationships. This suggests that intensive workers do not always experience or acknowledge the negative long-term relationship effects suggested by some literature (Matsuka, 2010; Robinson, Flowers, & Carroll, 2001). Intensive workers sought to justify or minimize the familial costs, for example, by suggesting their family were accustomed to their absence and that material provisions were sufficiently compensatory. Interestingly, coworkers characterized the familial effects of intensive work patterns as more adverse and profound than intensive workers themselves. The analysis therefore suggests that adverse consequences may be more apparent to those surrounding intensive workers than the individual themselves. This reinforces the importance of contextualized studies of intensive working that look beyond the individual workaholic to their wider social network.

What our findings particularly reveal in this domain, however, is the intricate manner in which intensive workers justified and rationalized their practices. Our study identifies that intensive workers explain and navigate the demands their jobs place on others in a manner that does not require any personal change to preferred work patterns. They not only presented their practices as being manageable due to their astute responses (e.g., reading by flash lamp to avoid disturbing a spouse), but also they cited positive consequences of their work style for their families (e.g., financial security). The pretext invoked by intensive workers regarding their work patterns draws attention for the first time to the role of self-serving bias in this domain (Cronbach, 1955; Heider, 1958; Pettit, Yong, & Spataro, 2010), affording them the opportunity to preserve the enjoyment they derive from such work patterns. While self-serving bias acts as a psychological technique for facilitating one's self-esteem (Greenberg, 1991; Sedikides & Straube, 1997) and self-enhancement (Dunning, 1999), research suggests that ambiguous outcomes are associated with such quests (Baumeister, 2005; Emler, 2001). While data from coworkers did not always support the interpretations invoked by intensive workers, our study draws attention to the presence of such explanatory mechanisms and the role they play in the maintenance of such behavior. Future research should explore this realm in greater detail.

For some intensive workers, the pleasure they derived from work was linked with tangible professional achievements such as securing important contracts and financial gain or security. For others, however, and in line with van Beek, Hu, Schaufeli, Taris, and Schreurs (2012), immersion in work did not always produce professional advancement or a sense of success. More interestingly, it was coworkers who observed that intensive workers' single-mindedness and poor interpersonal skills could hamper their career oppor-

tunities by creating tension with coworkers or by failing to self-monitor in certain situations. This limited self-awareness suggested by the analysis can therefore prevent intensive workers yielding the expected professional return from their investment in work. While self-monitoring has been positioned as an important characteristic for performance at work (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004; Bedeian & Day, 2004), this identification by coworkers of intensive workers' self-monitoring limitations has not been highlighted to date within this literature. While some studies have investigated the role of self-regulation among intensive workers (van Beek et al., 2012), our findings suggest that explorations incorporating studies of self-monitoring (Duval & Wicklund, 1973; Silvia & Duval, 2001), self-control (Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall, & Oaten, 2006; Gailliot, Gitter, Baker, & Baumeister, 2012), and the aligned behavioral repertoire of political skill (Kacmar, Andrews, Harris, & Tepper, 2013), may not only be fruitful avenues of future research but may yield significant practical insights for HRD professionals in their objectives of promoting learning and effectively managing their organization's talent base (Sheehan & Anderson, 2015). These results also highlight the importance of triangulating multiple perspectives in researching the effects of intensive working. If self-awareness is indeed compromised among intensive workers, intensive workers themselves may not be reliable informants regarding the gains that intensive working generates.

Our work makes a number of theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to the literature on intensive working. First, we speak to the theoretical frameworks of Ng et al. (2007) and Snir and Harpaz (2012), highlighting that both satisfaction and dissatisfaction emerge as consequences of intensive work patterns. In particular, our study contributes some much-needed empirical qualitative data to these dominant theoretical perspectives. Our data illuminate the detailed nature of intensive work behaviors, the variety of forms in which they are experienced, and the different interpretations of these experiences by relevant stakeholders in a manner heretofore absent from the literature. These findings suggest that investigations of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as theoretically established may be robustly supported by more fine-grained analysis of the nature of these phenomena. Such studies could be amplified by considering the theoretical lens of Self-Determination Theory in relation to intensive work patterns (Deci, Ryan, & Guay, 2013), as pioneered by Van den Broeck et al. (2011).

Second, building on underexplored elements of the literature (i.e., Machlowitz, 1980; McMillan, O'Driscoll, Marsh & Brady, 2001), our investigation is seminal as a field study of intensive working that adopts a contextualized, qualitative, triangulated approach to the analysis of its consequences. Our findings should now encourage investigators to explore theoretical and practical relationships between intensive work patterns and self-serving bias (Heider, 1958), self-regulation (Burnette, O'Boyle, Van Epps, Pollack, & Finkel, 2013), and political skill (Ferris et al., 2007; Kacmar et al., 2013).

Third, in adopting a social constructionist theoretical slant and an interpretivist ontological approach using discourse analysis, we depart significantly from the positivist slant that has framed much intensive working research to date. In doing so, we avoid the well-cited criticisms of much work in this field (Andreassen et al., 2013; Giannini & Scabia, 2014; Kanai, Wakabayashi & Fling, 1996; McMillan, Brady, O'Driscoll, & Marsh, 2002; Sussman, 2012). Further, our method endorses the value of investigations of this nature into established constructs and encourages greater openness to such avenues as a means of establishing conceptual boundary conditions.

Finally, as well as strengthening the connection between HRD scholarship and practice as advocated by Ruona and Gilley (2009), we offer a number of practical suggestions for HRD professionals who inevitably engage with intensive workers. Intensive workers regarded working with others as difficult, and at times they were considered challenging to work with by coworkers. This signals the need for HRD professionals to be aware of the negative workforce outcomes that may accrue in an organizational culture that tacitly or explicitly supports intensive work practices (Guest, Paauwe, & Wright, 2012; Schaufeli, 2016). These include possible deleterious effects on teamwork and administrative task completion. The preference for solitary work among intensive workers also deserves attention from HRD professionals given the prevalence of team-based working in organizations (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cohen, 2012; West, 2012). HRD professionals should encourage intensive workers to recognize the value of effective teamwork and to appreciate the contribution of diverse team members in the pursuit of organizational goals. Finally, the dislike of more menial aspects of work among intensive workers (form filling and paperwork) along with their distaste for "red tape" should further attract the attention of HRD professionals, alerting them to the possible disregard of these issues among such personnel and the implications of same for organizational learning and performance. Notwithstanding these issues, our findings also suggest that coworkers find intensive workers inspirational and energizing; thus, the approach of HRD professionals should be to draw on their sophisticated, informed, and nuanced techniques of talent management to allow the positive influence of intensive workers to emerge (Collings, 2014; Sheehan & Anderson, 2015).

This study has a number of limitations that should be addressed in future research. The sample is relatively small and so does not easily facilitate generalization across the population. This is not a fundamental problem for qualitative research, within which documentation of depth and nuance outranks generalization (Gioia et al., 2013). More problematic are the sample's sociodemographic imbalances. The average age of intensive workers was 45 years: as reference was made to interpretations of intensive working patterns changing over time, future studies could examine intensive working patterns over the life course to further enlighten the boundary conditions of this domain. Further, all intensive workers were male. This emerged not only from the

sampling strategy, whereby participants self-selected themselves and their coworkers into the study, but also from the social realities of the professional fields targeted, wherein more men progress to time-demanding managerial positions. The sample composition meant gender dynamics of intensive working could not be explored. These are important given the debate surrounding gender differences in this domain (Aziz & Cunningham, 2008; Burgess, Burke, & Oberklaid, 2006; Burke, 1999; Burke & Matthiesen, 2009) and should be considered in future studies. Only one coworker and three moderate workers were female. While these two groups of respondents were not the main focus of the study, and recognizing that their comments on intensive working across the four domains of analysis did not differ noticeably from their male counterparts, given the reported gender differences in attitudes to work (DiDonato, & Strough, 2013; Samnani, Salamon, & Singh, 2014), future studies could explore this arena in more detail. Further, while the influence of a spouse/partner on work patterns emerged in the data from some respondents, future studies could explore this factor more deeply as it relates to sustaining patterns of intensive work. Research designs that consider these factors along with survey timing (Pennings, Irwin & Good, 2002), the sender of a questionnaire (M. L. Edwards, Dillman, & Smyth, 2014), and sponsor prominence (Boulianne, Klofstad & Basson, 2010), along with the use of incentives to participate in the research (Göritz, 2004), may be useful research strategies to deliver a more proportional sample in future studies, thus allowing more representative analyses.

A further limitation relates to the professional fields from which participants were recruited. Research shows that the strains of intensive working are evident across occupational classes (Hämmig, 2014). However, the experience and consequences of intensive working are likely different in occupations involving manual or emotional labor; therefore, future investigations of intensive working in these contexts are desirable. Moreover, research demonstrates that autonomy is important in moderating intensive work's effects on health outcomes (Golden & Altman, 2008; Sparks et al., 1997; van Beek et al., 2012). Long hours alone do not predict health outcomes when they are experienced as personal choice (Wooden, Warren, & Drago, 2009), since a sense of control buffers the negative outcomes of long hours (Brauchli et al., 2015). Lower-level employees and workers in production and service industries typically have less autonomy over their working day than the professional classes, and so intensive working may be more psychologically arduous for workers in these fields. Thus, future studies should occur within a broad range of occupations in order to capture a greater breadth of the experience of intensive work.

These limitations notwithstanding, the current article advances the literature in important ways. Developing policies to ensure healthy work–life balance is currently a key preoccupation of legislators and employers. Accumulating evidence suggests that individuals invest in work with

different mind-sets and motivations (Mazzetti et al., 2016) and acknowledging and responding to these differences is fundamental in determining the psychological and material consequences of intensive working (Langelaan, Bakker, Van Doornen, & Schaufeli 2006). Remaining blind to these nuances will produce uninformed and ineffective policies. Qualitative research that allows people to articulate their subjective experience of working life is critical for informing policies that are responsive to the lived realities of employment.

References

Ahearn, K. K., Ferris, G. R., Hochwarter, W. A., Douglas, C., & Ammeter, A. P. (2004). Leader political skill and team performance. *Journal of Management, 30,* 309–327.

Andreassen, C.S. (2014). Workaholism: An overview and current status of the research. *Journal of Behavioral Addictions, 3,* 1–11.

Andreassen, C. S., Griffiths, M. D., Hetland, J., & Pallesen, S. (2012). Development of a work addiction scale. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 53,* 265–272.

Andreassen, C. S., Hetland, J., & Pallesen, S. (2013). Workaholism and work–family spillover in a cross-occupational sample. *European Journal of Work & Organisational Psychology, 22,* 78–87.

Andreassen, C. S., Ursin, H., & Eriksen, H. R. (2007). The relationship between strong motivation to work, workaholism, and health. *Psychology & Health, 22,* 615–629.

Aziz, S., & Cunningham, J. (2008). Workaholism, work stress, work-life imbalance: Exploring gender's role. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 23,* 553–566.

Balducci, C., Avanzi, L., & Fraccaroli, F. (2016). The individual "costs" of workaholism: An analysis based on multisource and prospective data. *Journal of Management,* DOI: 10.1177/0149206316658348.

Balducci, C., Cecchin, M., Fraccaroli, F., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2012). Exploring the relationship between workaholism and workplace aggressive behaviour: The role of job-related emotion. *Personality & Individual Differences, 53,* 629–634.

Baruch, Y. (2011). The positive wellbeing aspects of workaholism in cross cultural perspective: The chocoholism metaphor. *Career Development International, 16,* 572–591.

Bauer, M. W., & Aarts, B. (2000). Constructing a research corpus. In M. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook for social research* (pp. 19 – 37). London, England: Sage.

Baumeister, R.F. (2005, Winter). Rethinking self-esteem: Why nonprofits should stop pushing self-esteem and start endorsing self-control. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2005,* 34–41.

Baumeister, R. F., Gailliot, M., DeWall, C. N., & Oaten, M. (2006). Self-regulation and personality: How interventions increase regulatory success, and how depletion moderates the effects of traits on behavior. *Journal of Personality, 74,* 1773–1802.

Bedeian, A. G., & Day, D. V. (2004). Can chameleons lead? *Leadership Quarterly, 15,* 687–718.

Bertaux, D. (1981). From the life-history approach to the transformation of sociological practice. *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences, 1981,* 29–45.

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.

Boulianne, S., Klofstad, C. A., & Basson, D. (2010, December). Sponsor prominence and responses patterns to an online survey. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research,* edq026.

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.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Supporting a grounded theory with an audit trail: An illustration. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 12,* 305–316.

Brauchli, R., Bauer, G. F., & Hämmig, O. (2015). Job autonomy buffers the impact of work–life conflict on organisational outcomes. *Swiss Journal of Psychology, 73,* 77–86.
Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, *22*(6), 723.
Burgess, Z., Burke, R. J., & Oberklaid, F. (2006). Workaholism among Australian psychologists: Gender differences. *Equal Opportunities International, 25,* 48–59.
Burke, R. J. (1999). Workaholism in organizations: Gender differences. *Sex Roles, 41,* 333–345.
Burke, R. J. (2000). Workaholism and divorce. *Psychological Reports, 86,* 219–220.
Burke, R. J., & Matthiesen, S. B. (2004). Correlates of flow at work among Norwegian journalists. *Journal of Transnational Management, 10,* 49–58.
Burke, R. J., & Matthiesen, S. B. (2009). Workaholism among Norwegian journalists: Gender differences. *Equal Opportunities International, 28,* 452–464.
Burke, R. J., Matthiesen, S. B., & Pallesen, S. (2006). Personality correlates of workaholism. *Personality and Individual Differences, 40,* 1223–1233.
Burke, R. J., & Ng, E. S. (2007). Workaholic behaviors: Do colleagues agree? *International Journal of Stress Management, 14,* 312–320.
Burnette, J. L., O'Boyle, E., Van Epps, E. M., Pollack, J. M., & Finkel, E. J. (2013). Mind-sets matter: A meta-analytic review of implicit theories and self-regulation. *Psychological Bulletin, 139,* 655–701.
Clark, L. A., Livesley, W. J., Schroeder, M. L., & Irish, S. L. (1996). Convergence of two systems for assessing specific traits of personality disorder. *Psychological Assessment, 8,* 294–303.
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*, DOI: 10.1177/0149206314522301.
Cohen, A. (1995). An examination of the relationships between work commitment and nonwork domains. *Human Relations, 48,* 239–263.
Collings, D. G. (2014). Toward mature talent management: Beyond shareholder value. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 25,* 301–319.
Cronbach, L. J. (1955). Processes affecting scores on understanding of others and assumed similarity. *Psychological Bulletin, 52,* 177–193.
Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal performance.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., & Guay, F. (2013). Self-determination theory and actualization of human potential. In D. M. McInerney, H. W. Marsh, R. G. Craven, & F. Guay (Eds.), *Theory driving research: New wave perspectives on self-processes and human development* (pp. 109–133). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.
DiDonato, L., & Strough, J. (2013). Do college students' gender-typed attitudes about occupations predict their real-world decisions? *Sex Roles, 68,* 536–549.
Doerfler, M. C., & Kammer, P. P. (1986). Workaholism, sex, and sex role stereotyping among female professionals. *Sex Roles, 14,* 551–560.
Dunning, D. (1999). A newer look: Motivated social cognition and the schematic representation of social concepts. *Psychological Inquiry, 10,* 1–11.
Duval, S., & Wicklund, R. A. (1973). Effects of objective self-awareness on attribution of causality. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 9,* 17–31.
Edwards, D. (1997). *Discourse and cognition*. London, England: Sage.
Edwards, D. (2005). Discursive psychology. In K. L. Fitch & R. F. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 257–273). London, England: Erlbaum.
Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992). *Discursive psychology*. London, England: Sage.
Edwards, M. L., Dillman, D. A., & Smyth, J. D. (2014). An experimental test of the effects of survey sponsorship on Internet and mail survey response. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 78,* 734–750.
Emler, N. (2001). *Self-esteem: The costs and consequences of low self-worth*. York, England: York Publishing Services.

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EFILWC). (2015). *Financial services sector: Working conditions and job quality*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Perrewé, P. L., Brouer, R. L., Douglas, C., & Lux, S. (2007). Political skill in organizations. *Journal of Management, 33,* 290–320.

Gailliot, M. T., Gitter, S. A., Baker, M. D., & Baumeister, R. F. (2012). Breaking the rules: Low trait or state self-control increases social norm violations. *Psychology, 3,* 1074–1083.

Gaskell, G. (2000). Individual and group interviewing. In P. Atkinson, M. W. Bauer, & G. Gaskell (Eds.) Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook for social research (pp. 38–56). London, England: Sage.

Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and practice*. London, England: Routledge.

Giannini, M., & Scabia, A. (2014). Workaholism: An addiction or a quality to be appreciated? *Journal of Addiction Research and Therapy, 5,* 1–9.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organisational Research Methods, 16,* 15–31.

Golden, L., & Altman, M. (2008). Why do people overwork? Over-supply of hours of labor, labor market forces and adaptive preferences. In R. Burke & C. Cooper (Eds.) *The long work hours' culture: Causes, consequences and choices* (pp. 61–83.) Bingley, England: Emerald.

Goodwin, J., & Horowitz, R. (2002). Introduction: The methodological strengths and dilemmas of qualitative sociology. *Qualitative Sociology, 25,* 33–47.

Gorgievski, M. J., & Bakker, A. B. (2010). Passion for work: Work engagement versus workaholism. In S. L. Albrecht (Ed.), *Handbook of employee engagement: Perspectives, issues, research and practice.* (pp. 264–271). Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar.

Gorgievski, M. J, Moriano, J. A., & Bakker, A. B. (2014). Relating work engagement and workaholism to entrepreneurial performance. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 29,* 106–121.

Göritz, A. S. (2004). Recruitment for online access panels. *International Journal of Market Research, 46*(4), 411–425.

Greenberg, J. (1991). Motivation to inflate performance ratings: Perceptual bias or response bias? *Motivation and Emotion, 15,* 81–97.

Greenberg, L. S. (2002). *Emotion-focused therapy: Coaching clients to work through their feelings*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1982). Epistemological and methodological bases of naturalistic inquiry. *Educational Communications and Technology Journal, 30,* 233–252.

Guest, D. E., Paauwe, J., & Wright, P. (Eds.). (2012). *HRM and performance: Achievements and challenges*. London, England: Wiley.

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18,* 59–82.

Hämmig, O. (2014). Prevalence and health correlates of work–life conflict among blue-and white-collar workers from different economic sectors. *Frontiers in Public Health, 2,* 1–10.

Harpaz, M., & Snir, L. (2003). Workaholism: Its definition and nature. *Human Relations, 56,* 125–147.

Hauk, M., & Chodkiewicz, J. (2013). The role of general and occupational stress in the relationship between workaholism and work–family/family–work conflicts. *International Journal of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health, 26,* 383–393.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal behaviour*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Holton, E. F. (2002). Defining HRD: Too much of a good thing? *Human Resource Development Review, 1,* 275–276.

Houlfort, N., Philippe, F. L., Vallerand, R. J., & Ménard, J. (2013). On passion and heavy work investment: Personal and organizational outcomes. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 29,* 25–45.

Husserl, E. (1969). *Formal and transcendental logic*. Springer Science and Business Media.

Johnson, R., & Waterfield, J. (2004). Making words count: The value of qualitative research. *Physiotherapy Research International, 9,* 121–131.

Kacmar, K. M., Andrews, M. C., Harris, K. J., & Tepper, B. J. (2013). Ethical leadership and subordinate outcomes: The mediating role of organizational politics and the moderating role of political skill. *Journal of Business Ethics, 115,* 33–44.

Kanai, A., Wakabayashi, M., & Fling, S. (1996). Workaholism among employees in Japanese corporations: An examination based on the Japanese version of the workaholism scales. *Japanese Psychological Research, 38,* 192–203.

Kilburg, R. R. (1986). The distressed professional: The nature of the problem. In R. R. Kilburg, P. E. Nathan, & R. W. Thoreson (Eds.), *Professionals in distress: Issues, syndromes, and solutions in psychology* (pp. 13–26). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Kravina, L., Falco, A., De Carlo, N. A., Andreassen, C. S., & Pallesen, S. (2014). Workaholism and work engagement in the family: The relationship between parents and children as a risk factor. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology, 23,* 875–883.

Kubota, K., Shimazu, A., Kawakami, N., Takahashi, M., Nakata, A., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2010). Association between workaholism and sleep problems among hospital nurses. *Industrial Health, 48,* 864–871.

Langelaan, S., Bakker, A. B., Van Doornen, L. J., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement: Do individual differences make a difference? *Personality and Individual Differences, 40,* 521–532.

Libano, M. D., Llorens, S., Salanova, M., & Schaufeli, W. (2010). Toward the development of a mathematical model of workaholism. In L. Jodar (Ed.), *Modelling for addictive behavior, medicine and engineering* (pp. 60–65).Valencia, Spain: Instituto de Matematica Multidisciplinar, Universidad Politecnica de Valenica.

Machlowitz, M. (1980). *Workaholics: Living with them, working with them.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

MacMartin, C. (2002). (Un) reasonable doubt? The invocation of children's consent in sexual abuse trial judgments. *Discourse and Society, 13,* 9–40.

MacMillan, K., & Edwards, D. (1999). Who killed the princess? Description and blame in the British press. *Discourse Studies, 1,* 151–174.

MacQueen, K. M., McLellan, E., K., & Milstein, B. (1998). Codebook development for team-based qualitative analysis. *Cultural Anthropology Methods, 10,* 31–36.

Mankin, D. (2009). *Human resource development*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Mason, J. (2002). Qualitative interviewing: Asking, listening and interpreting. *Qualitative Research in Action, 6,* 225–241.

Matuska, K. M. (2010). Workaholism, life balance, and well-being: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Occupational Science, 17,* 104–111.

Mazzetti, G., Schaufeli, W. B., & Guglielmi, D. (2016). Are workaholism and work engagement in the eye of the beholder? *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 32,* 1–11.

McMillan, L. H. W., Brady, E. C., O'Driscoll, M. P., & Marsh, N. V. (2002). A multifaceted validation study of Spence and Robbins' (1992) Workaholism Battery. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology, 75,* 357–368.

McMillan, L. H. W., O'Driscoll, M. P., & Brady, E. C. (2004). The impact of workaholism on personal relationships. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 32,* 171–186.

McMillan, L. H. W., O'Driscoll, M. P., & Burke, R. J. (2003). Workaholism: A review of theory, research, and future directions. In C. L. Cooper & I. T. Robertson (Eds.), *International review of industrial and organisational psychology* (Vol. *18*, pp. 167–189). New York, NY: Wiley.

McMillan, L. H., O'Driscoll, M. P., Marsh, N. V., & Brady, E. C. (2001). Understanding workaholism: Data synthesis, theoretical critique, and future design strategies. *International Journal of Stress Management*, *8*(2), 69–91.

Morgan, G., & Smircich, L. (1980). The case for qualitative research. *Academy of Management Review, 5,* 491–500.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. London, England: Sage.

Mudrack, P. E. (2006). Understanding workaholism: The case of behavioral tendencies. In R. J. Burke (Ed.), *Research companion to working time and work addiction,* (pp. 108–128). Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar.

Ng, T. W., 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.
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.
Oates, W. E. (1968). On being a workaholic. *Pastoral Psychology, 19,* 16–20.
O'Connell, D. C., & Kowal, S. (1995). Basic principles of transcription. *Rethinking Methods in Psychology*, *1995,* 93–105.
Patel, A. S., Bowler, M. C., Bowler, J. L., & Methe, S. A. (2012). A meta-analysis of workaholism. *International Journal of Business and Management, 7,* 1–17.
Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health Services Research*, *34*(5 Pt 2), 1189.
Patton, M.Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work, 1,* 261–283.
Patton, M. Q. (2005). *Qualitative research*. London, England: Wiley.
Pennings, J. M., Irwin, S. H., & Good, D. L. (2002). Surveying farmers: A case study. *Review of Agricultural Economics, 24,* 266–277.
Pervin, L. A. (1989). Persons, situations, interactions: The history of a controversy and a discussion of theoretical models. *Academy of Management Review, 14,* 350–360.
Pettit, N. C., Yong, K., & Spataro, S. E. (2010). Holding your place: Reactions to the prospect of status gains and losses. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 46,* 396–401.
Porter, G. (1996). Organisational impact of workaholism: Suggestions for researching the negative outcomes of intensive work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 1,* 70–84.
Potter, J. (1996). *Representing reality: Discourse, rhetoric and social construction.* London, England: Sage.
Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London, England: Sage.
Robinson, B. E. (2013). *Chained to the desk: A guidebook for workaholics, their partners and children, and the clinicians who treat them*. New York, NY: NYU Press.
Robinson, B. E., & Kelley, L. (1998). Adult children of workaholics: Self-concept, anxiety, depression, and locus of control. *American Journal of Family Therapy, 26,* 223–238.
Robinson, B. E., Flowers, C., & Carroll, J. J. (2001). Work stress and marriage: A theoretical model examining the relationships between workaholism and marital cohesion. *International Journal of Stress Management, 8,* 165–175.
Ruona, W. E., & Gilley, J. W. (2009). Practitioners in applied professions: A model applied to human resource development. *Advances in Developing Human Resources, 11,* 438–453.
Russell, L. D. (2012). Reconstructing the work ethic through medicalized discourse on workaholism. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 41,* 275–292
Russell, L. D. (2016). In-the-works of understanding workaholism. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 44,* 96–100.
Russo, J. A., & Waters, L. E. (2006). Workaholic worker type differences in work–family conflict: The moderating role of supervisor support and flexible work scheduling. *Career Development International, 11,* 418–439.
Samnani, A. K., Salamon, S. D., & Singh, P. (2014). Negative affect and counterproductive workplace behavior: The moderating role of moral disengagement and gender. *Journal of Business Ethics, 119,* 235–244.
Schaufeli, W. B. (2016). Heavy work investment, personality and organizational climate. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 31,* 1057–1073.
Schutz, A. (1972). *The phenomenology of the social world*. London, England: Heinemann.
Scott, K. S., Moore, K. S. & Miceli, M. P. (1997). An exploration of the meaning and consequences of workaholism. *Human Relations, 50,* 287–314.
Seale, C. (1999). *The quality of qualitative research*. London, England: Sage.
Sedikides, C., & Straube, M. (1997). Self-evaluation: To thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true, to thine own self be better. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.),

Advances in experimental and social psychology (Vol. 29, pp. 209–269). New York, NY: Academic Press.
Sheehan, M., & Anderson, V. (2015). Talent management and organizational diversity: A call for research. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 26,* 349–358.
Shimazu, A., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Is workaholism good or bad for employee well-being? The distinctiveness of workaholism and work engagement among Japanese employees. *Industrial Health, 47,* 495–502.
Shimazu, A., Schaufeli, W. B., Kamiyama, K., & Kawakami, N. (2015). Workaholism vs. work engagement: The two different predictors of future well-being and performance. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 22,* 18–23.
Shuck, B., Twyford, D., Reio, T. G., & Shuck, A. (2014). Human resource development practices and employee engagement: Examining the connection with employee turnover intentions. *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 25,* 239–270.
Silvia, P. J., & Duval, T. S. (2001). Objective self-awareness theory: Recent progress and enduring problems. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 5,* 230–241.
Snir, R., & Harpaz, I. (2012). Beyond workaholism: Towards a general model of heavy work investment. *Human Resource Management Review, 22,* 232–243.
Sparks, K., Cooper, C., Fried, Y., & Shirom, A. (1997). The effects of hours of work on health: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology, 70,* 391–408.
Spence, J. T., & Robbins, A. S. (1992). Workaholism: Definition, measurement, and preliminary results. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 58,* 160–178.
Stahl, G., Björkman, I., Farndale, E., Morris, S. S., Paauwe, J., Stiles, P., & Wright, P. (2012). Six principles of effective global talent management. *Sloan Management Review, 53,* 25–42.
Sussman, S. (2012). Workaholism: A review. *Journal of Addiction Research and Therapy, 6,* 1–18.
Sussman, S., Lisha, N., & Griffiths, M. D. (2011). Prevalence of the addictions: A problem of the majority or the minority? *Evaluation and the Health Professions, 34,* 3–56.
Swanson, R. A., & Holton, E. F. (2009). *Foundations of human resource development* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
Tannenbaum, S. I., Mathieu, J. E., Salas, E., & Cohen, D. (2012). Teams are changing: Are research and practice evolving fast enough? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 5,* 2–24.
Taris, T. W., Schaufeli, W. B., & Verhoeven, L. C. (2005). Workaholism in the Netherlands: Measurement and implications for job strain and work–nonwork conflict. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 54,* 37–60.
Taris, T. W., Van Beek, I., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2012). Demographic and occupational correlates of workaholism. *Psychological Reports*, *110*(2), 547–554.
van Beek, I., Hu, Q., Schaufeli, W. B., Taris, T. W., & Schreurs, B. H. (2012). For fun, love, or money: What drives workaholic, engaged, and burned-out employees at work? *Applied Psychology, 61,* 30–55.
Van den Broeck, A., Schreurs, B., De Witte, H., Vansteenkiste, M., Germeys, F., & Schaufeli, W. (2011). Understanding workaholics' motivations: A self-determination perspective. *Applied Psychology, 60,* 600–621.
Vodanovich, S. J., Piotrowski, C., & Wallace, J. C. (2007). The relationship between workaholism and health: A report of negative findings. *Organization Development Journal, 25*, 70–75.
Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.
Werner, J. M. (2014). Human resource development ≠ human resource management: So what is it? *Human Resource Development Quarterly, 25,* 127–139.
West, M. A. (2012). *Effective teamwork: Practical lessons from organizational research*. London, England: Wiley.
Wimpenny, P., & Gass, J. (2000). Interviewing in phenomenology and grounded theory: Is there a difference? *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 31,* 1485–1492.
Wojdylo, K., Baumann, N., Buczny, J., Owens, G., & Kuhl, J. (2013). Work craving: A conceptualization and measurement. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 35,* 547–568.
Wooden, M., Warren, D., & Drago, R. (2009). Working time mismatch and subjective well-being. *British Journal of Industrial Relations, 47,* 147–179.

Dr. Melrona Kirrane is a lecturer in Organisational Psychology at Dublin City University Business School.

Dr. Marianne Breen is a research fellow in the Trinity College Dublin School of Nursing & Midwifery.

Dr. Cliodhna O'Connor is a lecturer in Psychology at Maynooth University.

Corresponding author:
Melrona Kirrane can be contacted at melrona.kirrane@dcu.ie