This book deals with the concept of Heavy Work Investment (HWI) recently initiated by Snir and Harpaz. Since its introduction the interest in the general HWI model has increased considerably. The book illustrates the development of HWI conceptualization, theory, and research. It deals with the foremost HWI subtype of workaholism. However, it also compares workaholism as a “negative” HWI subtype with work devotion/passion/engagement, as a “positive” HWI subtype. Most importantly, it addresses HWI in general, including its possible situational subtypes. In view of Snir and Harpaz’s claim that the study of situational heavy work investors is relatively scarce, this certainly constitutes a promising step in the right direction. Finally, it deals with timely and important topics examined by prominent international researchers on Heavy Work Investment and such issues as personality factors of workaholism, work–life balance, cross-cultural similarities and differences in HWI, work addiction and technology, HWI and retirement, and intergenerational similarity in work investment.

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The goal of the Applied Psychology series is to create books that exemplify the use of scientific research, theory, and findings to help solve real problems in organizations and society. Drs. Harpaz and Snir’s Heavy Work Investment brings together a distinguished group of scholars to help us understand and deal constructively with the growing phenomenon of unusually strong levels of involvement in work. As this book shows, heavy levels of involvement in work can have a complex mix of positive and negative effects on workers, their families, and communities and organizations.

Heavy Work Investment is divided into four sections. The first two sections challenge the common assumption that heavy involvement in work is necessarily dysfunctional (e.g., workaholism). Rather, substantial and sustained involvement in work can be the result of passion and engagement, or can reflect temporary adjustments to a variety of economic, career, or life-stage challenges. The ten chapters in the first two sections of this book discuss the nature, assessment, and outcomes of heavy work investment.

The third section of this book examines a range of special issues in heavy work investment (HWI), including its implications for work-life balance, its relationship to work transitions and retirement, and the way heavy work investment colors workers’ assessments of company policies (such as providing workers with cell phones). The fourth section of this book considers future directions in HWI research and practice, including cross-cultural and intergenerational issues in HWI.

Taken together, the chapters in this volume provide an in-depth examination of an increasingly important set of issues that are defined by the relationships between people and work. They outline the complexities of HWI and the ways individuals, families, and organizations can respond to the challenges posed by heavy involvement in work. We are happy to add Heavy Work Investment to the Applied Psychology series.

Jeanette N. Cleveland
Kevin R. Murphy
Introduction

WORKAHOLISM, HWI SUBTYPES, AND BEYOND
Towards a General Model of Work Investment

Raphael Snir

Some people put a lot of time and energy into their work. By the term workaholics, Oates (1971) refers to people whose need to work has become so excessive that it may constitute a danger to their health, personal happiness, interpersonal relations, and social functioning. Since 1995, the number of publications on the topic of workaholism appears to have been increasing exponentially (Sussman, 2012). There is also considerable interest in related concepts, such as work engagement (e.g., Bakken & Torp, 2012), working long hours (e.g., Nakata, 2011), and overwork (e.g., Golden, 2009).

Snir and Harpaz (2009, 2010, 2012, 2013), who introduced the concept of Heavy Work Investment (HWI), maintain that both long hours and heavy effort are its core dimensions, and consider workaholism as only one of its subtypes. Using Weiner’s (1985) attributional framework, Snir and Harpaz (2012) differentiate two major types of HWI, situational and dispositional, each with its own subtypes, as based on the predictors of such an investment. The first major type of HWI is situational, stemming from external (to the person) predictors. In the short term, external predictors, such as basic financial needs (food, accommodation, etc.), job demands, employer/supervisor demands, or organizational culture (e.g., the overtime culture in high-tech organizations and among hospital physicians), are uncontrollable and stable. Accordingly, these authors distinguish common subtypes of situational heavy work investors, such as the needy and the employer-directed.

According to Snir and Harpaz (2012), the second major type of HWI is dispositional, stemming from internal (to the person) predictors. They also further distinguish common subtypes of dispositional HWI. Examples are workaholism, as based on an addiction to work (an internal, uncontrollable, and stable predictor), and work devotion as an expression
of a passion for work (an internal, controllable, and stable predictor). Work devotion is similar to Spence and Robbins’ (1992) concept of work enthusiasm, as well as to the concept of work engagement, which refers to a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Shimazu, & Taris, 2009; Schaufeli, Taris, & Bakker, 2006). Snir and Harpaz (2012), however, note that not all possible subtypes of dispositional HWI necessarily revolve around work: they may also stem from non-work avoidance. Examples may be fear of intimacy (an internal, uncontrollable, and stable predictor) and a low preference for leisure (an internal, controllable, and stable predictor).

In sum, an estimated 22 percent of the global workforce, or 614.2 million workers, work more than 48 hours per week (Lee, McCann, & Messenger, 2007). As work assumes greater importance in people’s lives, a better perception of the heavy work investment phenomenon is essential. However, the existing literature deals mainly with workaholics and (to a lesser extent) work-devoted investors.

This book of readings systematically explores and sheds new light on the HWI phenomenon. It is intended for several types of people who are interested in this subject. These in particular are researchers and students in this area, as well as practitioners and professionals associated with HRM, OB, and management in general. The book has four parts: (1) the nature, sources, and measurement of HWI, (2) HWI subtypes and outcomes, (3) special issues in the study of HWI, and (4) future directions in the conceptualization and research of HWI. Its content is the work of most of the world-class researchers in this domain. Authors come from Canada, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, and the USA. This spectrum of writers attests to the global nature of the HWI. Seventeen of the eighteen contributions in the book were written especially for it and have never been published previously.

The first part of the book has five contributions. Chapter 1, which is an updated version of Snir and Harpaz’s (2012) paper, elaborates the general model of heavy work investment. In Chapter 2, Aziz and Burke discuss the relation of personality traits to workaholism and to HWI in general. They maintain that there is general support for the association of stable personality characteristics (e.g., perfectionism, obsessive-compulsive personality, Type A behavior pattern, and conscientiousness) with both workaholism (measured in various ways) and HWI. They also assert that our understanding of personality characteristics (personality traits as well as attitudes) of workaholics and heavy work investors may be enhanced not only by our focusing on one or two measures of workaholism in future studies, but also by our replicating earlier work by including the same personality measures.

In Chapter 3, Houlfort, Vallerand, and Ménard present passion as a driver of HWI, and research confirming that the type of the individual’s
passion will determine the effects one encounters. They claim that generally, the outcome of harmonious passion will be positive and that of obsessive passion will be negative. Hence, while both types of passion ensure a heavy investment in work, apparently only a HWI fueled by a harmonious passion can be beneficial. Certain environmental factors (e.g., adopting a transformational leadership style, and endorsing an organizational culture that supports autonomy) can be put in place to promote the development of harmonious passion, hence a more positive HWI. Workers with high levels of emotional intelligence and capable of using their signature strengths are also more apt to develop and maintain a harmonious passion for their work. Accordingly, they should be able to experience HWI more positively.

The fourth and the fifth chapters are methodological in nature. In Chapter 4, Andreassen provides a narrative overview of workaholism in terms of its definitions and assessments. She maintains that although the workaholism concept has been difficult to define, several measurements have been developed since the late 1980s. These include the Workaholism Battery (WorkBAT), the Work Addiction Risk Test (WART), the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS), and the Bergen Work Addiction Scale (BWAS). These measures have been validated only to a limited extent against each other or against already existing potentially overlapping constructs. Andreassen asserts that only when validation is done properly will it be possible to establish accurate classifications (by using valid and reliable instruments), hence to facilitate effective treatment of affected individuals in the long run.

In Chapter 5, Nimon expands the field by focusing on two subtypes of dispositional HWI (workaholism and work-devotion) and reviews instrumentation purported to measure related constructs. Based on his analysis of assessments related to workaholism and work devotion, Nimon concludes that two instruments appear to have scales that may be useful in distinguishing addiction to from passion for work. They are the 14-item version of the Passion Scale (Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau et al., 2003) and appropriate versions of the drive and enjoyment scales of the WorkBAT (Ersoy-Kart, 2005; Kanai, Wakabayashi, & Fling, 1996; McMillan, Brady, O’Driscoll, & Marsh, 2002; Spence & Robbins, 1992). He concludes that data from these scales have demonstrated accepted levels of construct and concurrent validity and contain items that appear to distinguish work passion as a controllable predictor of HWI from addiction to work as an uncontrollable predictor.

The second part of this book also contains five contributions. The first two deal with HWI subtypes, the last three with HWI outcomes. In Chapter 6, van Beek, Taris, and Schaufeli explore the motivational antecedents of two subtypes of heavy work investment: workaholism (as a “bad” HWI subtype) and work engagement (as a “good” HWI subtype). They discuss
theory and research on this issue from two perspectives: personality-based, in which the motivation for heavy work investment is sought in stable individual differences in personality, and a situational-based, in which the motivation for heavy work investment is examined as a function of differences in the work context. They conclude that workaholism is primarily associated with an extrinsic motivation and a prevention focus, whereas work engagement is mainly linked to intrinsic motivation and a promotion focus.

In Chapter 7, Golden contributes to the discussion on HWI subtypes by distinguishing the concepts of overemployment, overwork, and workaholism from each other and from overtime or long work hours—each with similar and dissimilar consequences for worker current well-being. The last emanates mainly from the individual, the first from the employer or labor market conditions, while the middle one may be a mix of both. Golden also briefly distinguishes among various non-work-time activities that may feed back into returns from work. Focusing on overemployment, he primarily explores its sources and its distribution among workers, finding it most prevalent among certain occupations and longer work-weeks.

In Chapter 8, Shimazu, Kubota, and Bakker describe several characteristics of workaholic employees, and provide a general overview of the negative consequences of workaholism, such as psychological and physical ill-health, family and marital dissatisfaction, unhappiness, job dissatisfaction, and poor job performance. Next they go into deeper detail on the psychological mechanisms involved in the relation between workaholism and individual well-being, and discuss the underlying psychological mechanisms involved in the relation between workaholism and family members’ (especially partner’s) well-being. Finally, they refer to possible strategies to reduce the adverse effects of workaholism.

In Chapter 9, Clark, Michel, and Stevens maintain that both workaholics and engaged workers are heavily invested in their work, but due to different internal motives. They suggest a theoretical framework that outlines different work and non-work behaviors and consequences for each of these HWI subtypes. Central to their model is the idea that workaholics are driven to work by introjected motivation (i.e., an inner compulsion to work), while engaged workers are driven to work by intrinsic motivation (i.e., they find it fun). These authors state that due to these different motivational factors, workaholics and engaged workers are likely to experience very different state-based affective reactions, which differentially influence job attitudes and perceptions, and in turn different work and non-work behaviors and consequences.

In Chapter 10, Shamai explores the relation of work investment to employees’ global happiness, in all its components: affective (both positive and negative affects) and cognitive (life satisfaction). She maintains
INTRODUCTION

that as against ordinary workers, heavy work investors exhibit higher levels of positive affect and life satisfaction, and lower levels of negative affect. Shamai also claims that both dispositional and situational heavy work investors exhibit higher levels of global happiness than ordinary workers.

The third part of the book has four contributions. In Chapter 11, Stier and Sella-Dotan assert that work intensification has multiplied the debates and concerns surrounding the work–life balance. Focusing particularly on the complex relations of work and family, they discuss the problems associated with balancing heavy work demands and family life, and the strategies employed by individual workers and their organizations to enhance the fit between these two life domains. Heavy work investment has the potential to undermine the work–life balance, further negatively affecting individuals, their families, their social life, and their work performance. Workers employ a variety of strategies to enhance the work-life balance, yet these strategies highlight the primacy of the workplace in affecting individual lives, as most workers would rather adjust to work demands than try to change them. Organizations also make efforts to resolve the inevitable conflict over work and non-work time, although the implemented policies are not always efficient, especially for workers in demanding positions. Stier and Sella-Dotan conclude that a combination of different coping strategies—on the personal, family, and organizational levels—are needed to achieve balance.

In Chapter 12, Aziz, Chaney, and Raines maintain that the rising number of hours in a typical work week, coupled with the expanding use of technology in organizations, have made workaholism a progressively relevant problem. Additionally, the modern workforce is becoming more diverse, so it might be difficult for employers to understand the sectors of the workforce that are at greater risk of developing workaholism. They expand on current research by describing how generation membership and career stage might affect workaholism. These authors also claim that certain professions are underrepresented in this area of study. Accordingly they describe the role of workaholism in regard to people in artistic occupations.

In Chapter 13, Shultz and Olson discuss the changing nature of mid- and late careers, as well as the changing nature of retirement, with particular emphasis on the emerging phenomenon of bridge employment. Next they integrate Snir and Harpaz’s model of Heavy Work Investment (Snir & Harpaz, 2012) with the concept of worker retirement, in order to better understand workers’ transition from full-time work to retirement at the end of their careers. How HWI influences the retirement process is also thoroughly examined. Both situational and dispositional types of HWI are explored in terms of how they impact the retirement transition
process, as well as retirement adjustment and related outcomes. Several prominent theories and models of retirement are juxtaposed with the HWI concept, along with related theories and models such as the selective optimization with compensation (SOC) model of aging and the emphasis on the use of one’s talents from the individual and leadership development literature. They conclude their chapter with several recommendations for future research in this area.

One decision facing many companies is whether it would be advantageous to supply smart phones to employees for use of this technology in their work. In Chapter 14, as a part of a larger study on smart phone usage, Porter explores the views of individuals across a range of companies and industries as to why their own company did or did not supply this type of technology. Her measures also include a perfectionism scale, as a proxy for workaholism. She reports the following: first, perfectionists seemingly gravitate to companies that are less likely to offer company-supplied smart phones. Second, only a handful of people said a “not-supply” decision was to the employees’ benefit, but nearly all of them were high-perfectionists and at a high organizational level. Third, perfectionists/workaholics may be slightly harsher in expressing cost restraints as a reason for not supplying smart phones; or, at least those harsher in their comments fell into the perfectionist classification.

The fourth part of this book consists of three contributions. In Chapter 15, Porter asks whether work addiction is the proper label for certain high work investment habits. She considers historical views of addiction, along with contemporary approaches, from the perspective of how this knowledge is related to potential organizational actions to alleviate the negative side of heavy work investment. Her overall conclusion is, yes, work addiction is a proper label, but much would be gained from expanding our knowledge of research on other addictions, both substance-based and behavioral to support this stand.

Astakhova and Hogue (2013) used the bio-psychosocial framework (BPS) to distinguish Workaholic HWI, Situational HWI, and Pseudo HWI, arguing that HWI varies according to the relative influence of diverse biological, psychological, and social factors. In Chapter 16 they explore how the bio-psychosocial influences on HWI can be examined through the lens of national culture. In particular, they demonstrate how the cultural dimension of individualism/collectivism may have a contingent impact on Workaholic HWI, Situational HWI, Pseudo HWI and their associated outcomes. Astakhova and Hogue maintain that the application of the bio-psychosocial model to understand cultural influences on HWI provides a useful framework that fosters a systematic and theoretically guided approach to synthesizing existing and future research on cross-cultural HWI.
In Chapter 17, Snir explores intergenerational similarity in personality traits, values, attitudes, and behavior in general, and the two-dimensional parental role in this respect. He goes on to address specifically intergenerational similarity in work investment with the emphasis on heavy work investment subtypes, and discusses its possible implications for job-candidate selection, organizational policy on work hours, and breaking the workaholic vicious cycle. Snir also describes research dilemmas such as which parent is the more influential? What is the relative weight of social and biological parental influences?

Finally, Snir suggests future research directions concerning intergenerational similarity in work investment. An example is a longitudinal study in which the parent’s work investment in his/her child’s formative years is assessed at Time 1, and the adult child’s work investment at Time 2.

In the epilogue, Harpaz provides a fresh and insightful view of the current state of the literature on HWI and outlines future research needs.

Since the early introduction of the general model of HWI (Snir & Harpaz, 2010, 2012), interest in this topic has increased. For example, a recent special issue of the Journal of Managerial Psychology (January 2014, Volume 29, Issue 1) deals empirically with types of heavy work investment. Snir and Harpaz (2013) describe the challenge that the phenomenon of HWI poses for individuals, their families, workplaces, and society alike. The present book of readings further illustrates the development of HWI conceptualization, theory, and research. Only five of the 18 contributions to the book focus primarily on the well-known HWI subtype of workaholism: Chapters 4, 8, 12, 14, and 15. Four other contributions deal with workaholism (as a “bad” HWI subtype) and work devotion/passion/engagement (as a “good” HWI subtype): Chapters 3, 5, 6, and 9.

Six additional contributions focus on HWI in general, including its possible situational subtypes: Chapters 7, 10, 13, 16, 17, and the epilogue. In view of Snir and Harpaz’s (2012) claim that the study of situational heavy work investors, regardless of the specific terminology used to name them (e.g., reluctant hard workers: Buelens & Poelmans, 2004; conscripts: Drago, Wooden, & Black, 2006; unhappy workaholics: Friedman & Lobel, 2003; and the over-employed: Golden, 2006), is relatively scarce, this certainly constitutes a promising step in the right direction.

Finally, six contributions deal with timely and important topics: personality factors of workaholism and HWI (Chapter 2), HWI and work–life balance (Chapter 11), cross-cultural similarities and differences in HWI (Chapter 16), work addiction and technology (Chapter 14), HWI and retirement (Chapter 13), and intergenerational similarity in work investment (Chapter 17); the last four of these have scarcely been addressed previously.
Nevertheless, writing on HWI still needs additional development in its model building, conceptualization, empirical research, and practical implications. Specifically, the following are recommended:

1. As Porter (Chapter 15) claims, viewing workaholism in the larger picture of HWI bypasses the arguments over “good” versus “bad” workaholism, and places it clearly on the side of a behavior with negative connotation. However, greater agreement among researchers is needed concerning the differentiation between the various HWI subtypes to facilitate future research of their possible outcomes.

2. Currently there are four main workaholism (as a “bad” HWI subtype) measures: the Workaholism Battery (WorkBAT), the Work Addiction Risk Test (WART), the Dutch Work Addiction Scale (DUWAS), and the Bergen Work Addiction Scale (BWAS)—and even these measures have been validated only to a limited extent against each other (Andreason, Chapter 4). Work engagement (as a “good” HWI subtype) is measured by a different measure, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES: see Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Viewing HWI as an overall concept with two core dimensions (time and effort) calls for its uniform measurement, with the use of different measures for its various predictors (e.g., work addiction, passion for work). Such a measurement approach is taken by Snir (work in progress).

3. The two least explored dispositional subtypes of heavy work investors that are driven by non-work avoidance (i.e., the intimacy-avoiders and the leisure-low-interested: see Snir & Harpaz, 2012) clearly deserve more research attention in future studies.

4. According to Snir and Harpaz (2012), the needy are a group that constitutes one of the two situational subtypes of heavy work investors: those who have to support a large family, pay debt, etc. Note however that there is a different subtype of economically oriented heavy work investors—the materialists, those who strive for a high standard of living (Burke, 2006) and therefore should be regarded as a dispositional subtype. If indeed the younger generation is even more materialistic than past generations (Burke, 2013), this subtype of economically oriented heavy work investors should also enjoy more research attention in future studies.

5. Although some progress has been made (e.g., Astakhova & Hogue, Chapter 16; Baruch, 2011; Snir & Harpaz, 2006, 2009), the issue of cross-cultural/international comparison of HWI is still inadequately studied. More research is needed on differences as well as similarities between nations, in the scope, predictors, types, and outcomes of HWI, with a special emphasis on Asian nations which tend to work the longest hours and also have the highest proportion of workers who work more than 48 hours a week (Stephenson, 2012). It is important to note in this respect that according to OECD data, a negative relation
exists between annual working hours per person and productivity measured as GDP per hour worked. For instance, the Greeks put in over 2,000 hours a year on average. Germans, on the other hand, work about 1,400 hours each year. However, German productivity is about 70 percent higher than Greek (The Economist, 2013). Since HWI is an input measure after all, our attention should be focused on the possible different outcomes of its subtypes, for workplaces (e.g., productivity), individuals and their families (e.g., well-being) alike.

6. Stier and Sella-Dotan argue (Chapter 11) that due to pressure to devote more time to work activities gender inequality within the family and in the labor market is increasing, as women are often those who have to make concessions (e.g., women who have care responsibilities often scale back, harming their careers and income). In this light, Snir and Harpaz’s (2013) recommendation that work-effort-based rewards and promotion should be considered, at least as regards mothers with a career, seems highly relevant.

7. Using Weiner’s (1985) attributional framework, Snir and Harpaz (2012) presented the general model of HWI. This model can be further developed into a general model of work investment, which also includes average, light, and non-work investors, in addition to heavy work investors. An initial form of such model, which includes main subtypes of work investors, is presented in Table 0.1 (the updated

**Table 0.1 The Two Major Types of Heavy Work Investors, Their Common Subtypes, and Their Causes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Heavy Work Investors</th>
<th>Dispositional Heavy Work Investors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The needy: Those who have to support a large family, pay debts, etc. External, and in the short term uncontrollable and stable cause</td>
<td>Workaholics: Those who are addicted to their work. Internal, uncontrollable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employer-directed: High-tech workers, hospital physicians, etc. External, and in the short term uncontrollable and stable cause</td>
<td>The work-devoted: Those with a high passion for their work. Internal, controllable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The intimacy-avoiders: Those who see work as an escape from intimacy/close relationships. Internal, uncontrollable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The leisure-low-interested: Those who see work as an alternative to tedious leisure time. Internal, controllable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The materialists: Those who strive for a high standard of living. Internal, controllable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The employer-directed: High-tech workers, hospital physicians, etc. External, and in the short term uncontrollable and stable cause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...
Table 0.2 The Three Major Types of Non-Heavy Work Investors, Their Common Subtypes, and Their Causes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Non-Heavy Work Investors</th>
<th>Dispositional Non-Heavy Work Investors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The unemployed/labor market forced part-timers: Those who can’t find a job at all/full-time job due to labor market conditions. External, and in the short term uncontrollable and stable cause</td>
<td>The disabled: Those who can’t work due to poor (mental and/or physical) health condition. Internal, uncontrollable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The voluntary unemployed: Those who prioritize non-work activates due to cultural preferences (e.g., some ultra-orthodox Jewish men) and are willing to live in poverty. Internal, controllable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The voluntary part-timers: Those who seek an improved work–life balance due to a high leisure/family centrality. Internal, controllable, and stable cause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-Heavy Work Investors due to Both External and Internal Causes

Common full-time workers: Those who work due to both financial needs (external, and in the short term uncontrollable and stable cause) and non-financial employment commitment (internal, controllable, and stable cause)

The leisure-oriented very rich: Those who endorse the leisure ethic (internal, controllable, and stable cause) and can afford not to work themselves (external, partially controllable, and relatively stable cause)

In sum, there is still much to be done in the exploration of HWI subtypes and their possible outcomes, as well as work investment in general. Nevertheless, this book of readings constitutes an important step forward.

References

INTRODUCTION


Part 1

NATURE, SOURCES, AND MEASUREMENT OF HEAVY WORK INVESTMENT (HWI)
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By the term workaholics, Oates (1971) refers to people whose need to work has become so exaggerated that it may constitute a danger to their health, personal happiness, interpersonal relations, and social functioning. Since 1995, the number of publications on the topic of workaholism appears to be increasing exponentially (Sussman, 2012). Studies of workaholism resulted initially in a large volume of clinical and anecdotal data (e.g., Killinger, 1991; Machlowitz, 1980; Waddell, 1993), causing scholars to lament the lack of conceptual and methodological rigor (e.g., Scott, Moore, & Miceli, 1997). Recent studies have adopted better procedures, resulting in quantitative data that are amenable to statistical analysis (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, & Burke, 2009; Chamberlin & Zhang, 2009; Harpaz & Snir, 2003; Russo & Waters, 2006; Schaufeli, Taris, & van Rhenen, 2008; Shimazu, Schaufeli, & Taris, 2010; Stoeber, Davis, & Townley, 2013). Yet despite the common use of the term “workaholism,” little agreement exists as to its meaning beyond its core element: heavy work investment.

This chapter, which constitutes an updated version of Snir and Harpaz’s (2012) paper, serves two main objectives. The first is to stress that workaholism is only one of the subtypes of heavy work investment. Namely, every workaholic is a heavy work investor, but not every heavy work investor is a workaholic. The second is to propose a model in which, using Weiner’s (1985) attributional framework, we differentiate situational from dispositional types of heavy work investment, each with its own subtypes, as based on the predictors of such an investment.

Several writers have focused on the negative aspects of workaholism (e.g., Killinger, 1991; Porter, 1996; Robinson, 1989, 2007; Schaufeli, Shimazu, & Taris, 2009; Taris, Schaufeli, & Verhoeven, 2005). For instance, Robinson (1989) defines workaholism as a progressive, potentially fatal disorder of
work addiction, leading to family disintegration and an increased inability to manage work habits and life domains. Rooted in the addiction paradigm, one of the earliest measures of workaholism is the Work Addiction Risk Test (WART; Robinson, 1989). Workaholism, as measured by WART, includes five dimensions: Compulsive Tendencies, Control, Impaired Communication/Self-Absorption, Inability to Delegate, and Self-Worth (Flowers & Robinson, 2002). Nevertheless, despite Robinson’s quite extensive use of the WART, its external validity needs additional examination. With few exceptions (e.g., Taris, Schaufeli, & Verhoeven, 2005), most samples have included students (that are typically young and do not necessarily work), members of Workaholics Anonymous (which constitute a biased/range-restricted sample), or psychotherapists as expert observers (e.g., Flowers & Robinson, 2002; Robinson, 1996, 1999).

According to Schaufeli, Shimazu, and Taris (2009), workaholism is negatively conceptualized as working excessively and working compulsively. Based on this conceptualization, they propose a two-scale, ten-item workaholism measure, dubbed the Dutch Workaholism Scale (DUWAS). Satisfactory psychometric properties of the DUWAS are indicated (e.g., Del Libano, Llorens, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2010; Schaufeli, Shimazu, & Taris, 2009).

On the other hand, some writers view workaholism positively, as involving a pleasurable engagement at work (Machlowitz, 1980; Sprankle & Ebel, 1987). For example, Machlowitz (1980:16) found that “as a group, workaholics are surprisingly happy. They are doing exactly what they love—work—and they can’t seem to get enough of it.” Likewise, Snir and Zohar (2008) found that workaholics experience more positive affect during work than during leisure activity, by comparison to non-workaholics. Moreover, they found no significant differences between workaholics and non-workaholics regarding the likelihood of performing work-related activities during leisure activity, or in the levels of physical discomfort and negative affect during the weekend. This suggests no indications of work addiction, such as the inability to stop working, and withdrawal symptoms.

Other writers differentiate negative from positive workaholism types. For example, Scott, Moore, and Miceli (1997) identify three types of workaholism patterns: compulsive dependent, perfectionist, and achievement oriented, and signify the first two as negative types, the third positive. Spence and Robbins (1992) based their characterization of workaholism on three attitudinal work-related properties: involvement, drive (due to inner pressure), and enjoyment. They define a workaholic as a person with high scores in work involvement and drive, and low scores in work enjoyment. They contrast this profile with work enthusiasm, defined as high involvement and enjoyment and low drive. Hence,