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Workaholism among South African professionals: family competence and wellbeing

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Appendix A

10 May 2007

Good Day

My name is Gillian Hulley and I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am currently conducting for the purposes of obtaining a Masters degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research focuses on the concept of workaholism and its relationship to individual wellbeing, and how this relationship may be moderated by an individual's perceived control.

Despite the fact that the word workaholism is commonly used in everyday speech, there is a lack of consensus on the definition of workaholism. And, although workaholism is often defined by the number of hours worked by individuals, it is generally agreed that workaholism should not be associated with the time spent at work *per se* but should encompass individual attitudes and motivations about work, in addition to hours worked. Very little research has been undertaken to further our understanding of workaholism. In fact, up until 1990, the literature on workaholism was anecdotal, atheoretical and non-empirical. Workaholism has been said to contribute to coronary heart disease, job related stress, burnout and secondary addictions. Given this, the present research is designed to provide evidence for the impact of workaholism on individual wellbeing. I would therefore like to invite you to participate in this research study to investigate workaholism in the South African context. Participants in this study are required to hold a professional or management position in an organisation.

Participation in this research will involve completing the attached questionnaire, which relates to yourself and members of your household. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way should you choose to complete the questionnaire or not. Furthermore, whilst some questions are asked about your personal circumstances, no identifying information such as your name, ID number or place of work are required of you, and as such you will remain anonymous. This research is not intended to investigate any individuals but rather to establish general trends. As such, your responses will only be examined in relation to all other responses. In addition, your completed questionnaire will not be seen by anyone but myself and responses will be kept confidential.

If you fulfil the criteria for participation in this study and are willing to participate, please complete the attached questionnaire as honestly and carefully as possible. Completion of the questionnaire, and submission in the prescribed way, will be regarded as consent to participate in the study. Once you have completed the questionnaire, please place it in the envelope provided, seal it and place it in the sealed box placed in your reception area. In doing so, no one will have access to your completed questionnaire but me. Feedback will be made available, by myself, for any participant who requests it, in the form of a one page summary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact either myself, or my supervisor, Fiona Donald.

Yours Sincerely,

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