

The influence of Affects on Workaholism in Teleworking During the COVID-19

Pandemic - A Partial Least Squares Model

Abstract

Human beings need to feel affects and to work, so it is important to balance personal and professional life. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, workers that are unable to disconnect from work and respect rest and leisure hours while teleworking can become workaholics. The present study aims to analyze the levels of workaholism and to study the influence of affects on workaholism in the teleworking context. A quantitative methodology was used, based on data obtained from 365 Portuguese workers who responded to a questionnaire survey that analyzes workaholism levels in workers who were teleworking from home, their affects and some sociodemographic variables. In general, being involved in telecommuting increases levels of workaholism. The results of the application of the structural equation modeling with partial least squares revealed that affects influence workaholism. In teleworking practice, the influence of affects on the workaholism condition is very important and can provide organizational managers with information to help those employees become more productive. On the other hand, it is important to ensure a balance in the use of time between teleworking and everyday life. This study contributes to the scientific knowledge in the teleworking field more specifically, for the relationship between workaholism and the affects when telecommuting. This study is also important for organizations and workers to define strategies to maintain a balance between affects and work.

Keywords: Emotional Labor, Health and Wellness, Workaholism, Positive Affects, Negative Affects, Teleworking.

1. Introduction

Teleworking has shown to be a strong trend in the labor market (Rocha and Amador, 2018), being considered an alternative for flexible work (Tavares, 2017), involving work that can be carried out anywhere, anytime, using technological resources (Charalampous *et al.*, 2018). This trend increased with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, because in several countries, some companies, as a measure of financial survival and prevention to prevent the spread of the virus, adopted the teleworking regime (Lizote *et al.*, 2021). Thus, in addition to companies keeping their activities running, they ensure the health of their employees (Santos *et al.*, 2020).

To perform telework, workers must first have a trial and training period and then must adapt to new terms or clauses of the employment contract and pay special attention to their internet connection and the communication and information technologies (Beauregard *et al.*, 2019). It is evidenced, in this way, the need for the companies to give an all prior and well-defined preparation to ensure their workers' well-being (Tavares *et al.*, 2020). However, given the

sudden situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decisions to move workers to telework from their own homes happened overnight. Many workers had never experienced this type of work before, nor the technologies used in this scope. This lack of skills to work with the sophisticated communication technologies can be a disadvantage in teleworking (Tavares, 2017).

In the COVID-19 pandemic context, teleworking is considered safe, as people in their homes feel protected (Santos *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, the practice of teleworking can provide employees with the flexibility to better manage their private lives and become more productive (Beauregard *et al.*, 2019). Control and balance in the use of time between teleworking and everyday life are vital for the quality of life and social sustainability (Thulin *et al.*, 2019). Family has an important role in respecting privacy and the focus of the family members who are teleworking (Santos *et al.*, 2020).

The sudden changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have made employees intensify and increase the amount of effort to be able to do their work (Avanzi *et al.*, 2020). There is also a risk that, in teleworking, the person is always available, anywhere and at any time, and may be requested by the organization at any time (Thulin *et al.*, 2019). Thus, teleworkers may not be able to disconnect from work, not even during what should be their rest and leisure time, so it is essential to study the levels of workaholism of workers who are teleworking.

Workaholism represents an excessive irrational involvement with work, with potential detriment to the well-being and health of employees (Avanzi *et al.*, 2020). In the Strapasson *et al.* (2020) study, it was found that the more an individual works compulsively, the greater the interference of work in the family, the lesser the interference of the family in the work process and, in both cases, negative affects, which have a negative relationship with life satisfaction, predominate. Therefore, the predominance of positive aspects in the individual's lives is important and can contribute to the sustainability of the exercise of work functions (Strapasson *et al.*, 2020).

The present investigation becomes relevant given the COVID-19 pandemic situation, where negative affects were experienced with greater intensity compared to positive affects (Santos *et al.*, 2021). Such situation also brought a need for greater autonomy at work, which can be related to emotional exhaustion and negative emotions (Spagnoli and Molinaro, 2020). In the Van den Bulck and Custers (2009) study, carried out in the context of the avian pandemic outbreak of the H5N1 virus, it was found that the fear of contracting the disease increases when people watch television. Faced with a new and totally unknown disease, the concern with the situation leads individuals to greater exposure to information and social communication media. Sometimes the information transmitted in the media is contradictory and can even increase the

levels of negative affects. Due to this scenario, some telecommuters take refuge at work as a way of forgetting the situation they are experiencing and end up turning work into an addiction that, in this case, is influenced and reinforced by the context (Molino *et al.*, 2016). However, given all the changes that the pandemic has brought and may still bring to the labor market and how work is carried out, organizations must be attentive to their workers' behavior, both in terms of affects and in terms of the workaholism phenomenon. Bearing these arguments in mind, the present study is pertinent. This article aims to analyze the workaholism levels of a sample of teleworking workers and to study the influence of affects on the workaholism condition during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

As for the structure of the present article, after this introduction, the literature review begins, where the themes of workaholism, affects and the influence of affects on workaholism are approached. In the next section, the method is presented, where the population and the sample are defined, and the data collection instruments and the procedures used throughout the investigation are described. In the results and discussion section, the statistical analysis is carried out and is accompanied by the respective discussion, considering the literature review carried out. Finally, the conclusions of the investigation are presented, as well as their limitations and implications, and suggestions are made for future investigations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Workaholism

The workaholism construct derives from the word "alcoholism", which designates an addiction to alcohol, and was developed to refer to an uncontrollable need to work (Oates, 1968). Generally, the concept of workaholism is understood as a need to work excessively and compulsively (Van Wijhe *et al.*, 2014). The tendency to overwork has to do with the fact that workaholics provide an exceptionally lot of time to their work; they even work more hours than is expected of them to meet organizational and economic demands. The compulsion to work is inherent to workaholics' obsession with their work and to the fact that they often have their minds focused on work (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008). This compulsion to work can be seen not as a stable individual trait, but as an addiction that can, like any other addiction, be influenced and reinforced by the context (Molino *et al.*, 2016). Modern organizational culture is widespread in long working hours, in which the phenomenon of workaholism is reinforced through tangible rewards (e.g., salaries, incentives, promotions) and intangible rewards (e.g., praise) (Balducci *et al.*, 2020). According to Scott *et al.* (1997), workaholism is also seen as a behavioral pattern, with workaholics being individuals who spend many hours of their time on work activities and

abdicate many important aspects of life (family, friends, and leisure). Workaholics persist in thinking frequently about work even when they are not working and work far beyond what is imposed and expected from them, both in terms of their role in the organization and in terms of their economic needs (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008). We emphasize that the amount of worked hours should not be a determining factor in defining a workaholic, even though it is associated with overwork. Thus, besides for addictive issues, people can work a lot because of financial problems, unstable marriages, social pressure, or the desire for career advancement (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2009). It is pertinent to highlight this point, because conceptualizing workaholism solely by the number of working hours and neglecting its addictive nature would not be correct. Workaholics are then motivated by an obsessive internal urge they cannot resist, rather than external factors (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008).

Several definitions of the workaholism concept can be found in the literature that, have been developed over the years, without a consensus on its definition. Some perspectives see this phenomenon as an addiction, while others defend it as a behavioral tendency (Andreassen *et al.*, 2012). More recently, Andreassen *et al.* (2014) characterized workaholism as being overly concerned about work, being driven by an uncontrollable work motivation, and investing a lot of energy and effort into work, damaging personal relationships and free time activities and/or health, a definition adopted in the present study.

The phenomenon of workaholism is, increasingly, a reality in contemporary societies, so companies must assess the impact of the trend of workaholism on their workers, and the knowledge of the factors that influence the decision to work in excess can be a competitive advantage in the implementation of human resources policies (Dospinescu and Dospinescu, 2020). A strong investment in work can be good for both the employer and the employee if it is directed towards enticement for work and for the balanced use of working time, leading to an increase in professional performance by the employee (Tecău *et al.*, 2020). Thus, it is crucial to explore the workaholics' positive psychological mechanism and provide them with the necessary organizational support (Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, workaholism has very few advantages for individuals and organizations, and should be avoided as much as possible, despite of the added difficulty that this avoidance represents in a context of globalized competition (Balducci *et al.*, 2020).

Avanzi *et al.* (2020) consider that workaholics work excessively mainly motivated by internal pressures instead of external factors. Their obsession and internal urge to work and constant thoughts about work (even when they are not working) can have negative effects on their mental

and physical health, and promote high levels of stress, exhaustion, burnout and anxiety, as well as foster depressive states (Andreassen *et al.*, 2018; Tahir and Aziz, 2019; Yang *et al.*, 2020). Some authors (Oates, 1968; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008; Vazquez *et al.*, 2018) consider that workaholism is composed of two dimensions: behavioral and cognitive. The behavioral dimension refers to overwork, and the cognitive dimension refers to the compulsive way of working. Ng *et al.* (2007) propose three dimensions of workaholism: affective, cognitive, and behavioral. The affective dimension is related to the passion for work, the cognitive one addresses the issue of obsession with work and the behavioral one refers to excessive involvement with work, whether related to the number of hours or the non-separation of work from personal life. Other studies also considered three dimensions to measure workaholism, namely: involvement with work, drive to work and pleasure in work (Andreassen *et al.*, 2010; Spence and Robbins, 1992; Tahir and Aziz, 2019). The involvement with work dimension examines the need for individuals to use their time efficiently, whether at work or in personal life. The drive to work dimension provides information on internal motivation and the frequency with which individuals think about work. On the other hand, the pleasure in work dimension evaluates the degree of satisfaction that work provides (Andreassen *et al.*, 2010).

2.2. Afectts

A work context is a privileged place for emotions and, fundamentally, for the realization and construction of personal happiness (Paschoal and Tamayo, 2008). Happiness is closely related to the individual's subjective well-being, revealing how they are or are not satisfied with their jobs and their lives, being a key aspect in improving the productivity of any type of organization (Wesarat *et al.*, 2015).

The affects are the affective dimension of the subjective well-being concept (Diener and Larsen, 1984). This dimension presupposes the occurrence of frequent experiences of positive and infrequent negative affects (Noronha *et al.*, 2014). Positive affects involve fun and satisfaction with life, and negative affects involve feelings such as anger and worry, which can lead to depression (Diener *et al.*, 2017). Of course, people more satisfied with life have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress (Zanon, 2017).

The affect is considered a source of job and life satisfaction (Zhai *et al.*, 2009). More precisely, high levels of positive affect improve job satisfaction (Naragon and Watson, 2009; Satuf *et al.*, 2018), physical health and marital satisfaction (Naragon and Watson, 2009), and allow solutions to be found for problems that occur in organizations (Orita and Hattori, 2019).

Ferreira *et al.* (2008) study showed that positive emotions improve satisfaction with the leadership, salary, colleagues, promotions, and the nature of work, and correlate negatively with emotional exhaustion. Negative affects are negatively correlated with all dimensions of job satisfaction and positively correlated with emotional exhaustion.

At work, it is expected that individuals experience high levels of satisfaction with life and positive affects. On the other hand, it is expected they experience low levels of negative affects (Carvalho *et al.*, 2019).

Galinha *et al.* (2014), in their study of the Portuguese population, concluded that the affects of enthusiasm, inspiration, delight, warmth and determination have greater weight in determining positive affects, and that the affects of scariness, fear, torment, disturbance and nervousness contribute with a greater weight to negative affects. Worry, stress, despair, depression, anxiety, nervousness, and restlessness are aspects that predominate during the COVID-19 pandemic (Sandín *et al.*, 2020).

2.3. Influence of Affects on Workaholism

Studies on the relationship between workaholism and affects have revealed different results (Aziz *et al.*, 2020). According to Avanzi *et al.* (2020), workaholism has a small positive relationship with job satisfaction, even if not significant. For these authors, this relationship does not mean that workaholism fosters positive emotions at work, being, therefore, explained by the fluctuating experiences that characterize workaholics. Clark *et al.* (2010) study showed that both negative and positive affects are significantly related to workaholism. Negative affects showed a positive relationship with the three dimensions of workaholism (impatience, compulsion to work, and polychronic control), and positive affects have a negative relationship with the compulsion to work dimension and a positive relationship with the polychronic control dimension. Strapasson *et al.* (2020) also found a significant relationship between workaholism and positive and negative affects. More specifically, the compulsive work dimension influences positive and negative affects. In the study by Zhang *et al.* (2020), it was found that competence plays a mediating role between workaholism and well-being, where the direct effect of pleasure at work on well-being is more evident than the impulse to work.

On the other hand, investigations by Bovornusvakool *et al.* (2012) and by Mazzetti *et al.* (2016) conclude that only negative affects significantly influence workaholism. Other studies found significant and positive relationships between workaholism and negative affects (e.g., Aziz *et al.*, 2020; Clark *et al.*, 2016).

In further research, the results obtained by Balducci *et al.* (2016) revealed that workaholism is associated with work-related negative affects (e.g., anger, disgust and pessimism) and is not associated with positive affects (e.g., enthusiasm, satisfaction and energy). Similarly, Clark *et al.* (2013) examined the mediating role of positive and negative emotions in the relationship between workaholism, work engagement and work-at-home results. Researchers concluded that negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, and disgust, mediate the relationship between workaholism and work-home conflicts, while positive emotions, such as joviality and self-confidence, mediate the relationship between work engagement and enrichment work-home (Clark *et al.*, 2013).

In short, in some studies, workaholism has played the role of a dependent variable (e.g., Clark *et al.*, 2010; Mazzetti *et al.*, 2016), while in others it assumes the role of an independent variable (e.g., Aziz *et al.*, 2020; Strapasson *et al.*, 2020). Thus, in the present study, it is analyzed the influence of affects on workaholism in the telework context, as to according to Molino *et al.* (2016) workaholism can be influenced and reinforced by the context. In more detail, the hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Positive affects (H1a) and negative affects (H1b) positively influence the work involvement of teleworking individuals.

Hypothesis 2: Positive affects (H2a) and negative affects (H2b) positively influence drive in teleworking individuals.

Hypothesis 3: Positive affects (H3a) positively influence work enjoyment and negative affects (H3b) negatively influence work enjoyment in teleworking individuals.

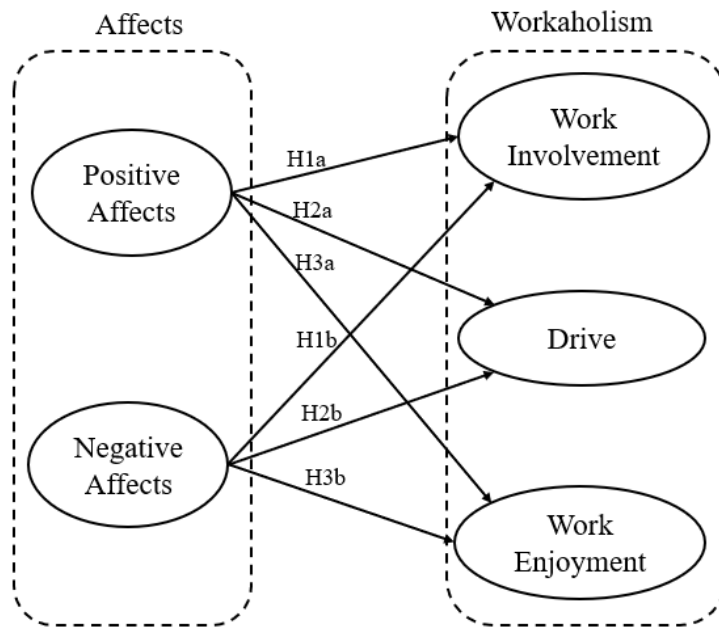


Figure 1. Conceptual model

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

The target population of the present study are Portuguese individuals aged 18 years or over, who were at home, teleworking during the state of emergency caused by the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic. To facilitate the operationalization of the data collection process, the non-probabilistic convenience snowball sampling method was used, to include in the sample, the largest number of individuals who were teleworking. The choice of this sampling method was also motivated by the COVID-19 pandemic situation that the country and the world are experiencing.

3.2. Research Instrument

In the present study, a three-part questionnaire survey was used. The first part analyses the workaholism in telework, the second analyzes the positive and negative affects, and the third characterizes the sociodemographic, namely personal data (gender, age, educational qualifications, marital status, if the participants have children, and the number of household members), and professional data (service time in the organization, public or private sector, number of hours teleworked per day), and two questions directed to telework involvement.

To measure workaholism in telework, an adaptation of the Workaholism Battery (WorkBAT) by Spence and Robbins (1992) to the telework context was made. That is, after the translation of the items into Portuguese, the term *work* was replaced by *telework*. The WorkBAT consists of 25 items assessed on a Likert agreement scale that ranges from 1- *Strongly disagree* to 5- *Strongly agree*. The 25 items (Table 2) were divided into the three dimensions that were originally proposed by Spence and Robbins (1992): Work Involvement (items 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 21 and 24), Drive to Work (items 3, 5, 14, 18, 20, 22 and 25) and Work Enjoyment (items 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19 and 23). Note that items 1, 6, 8 and 11 have inverted punctuation. The affects (Table 3) were measured using the dimensions of positive affect and negative affect of the Well-Being at Work Scale, by Paschoal and Tamayo (2008). Given the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the *scared* item was included, as this item presented the greatest weight in negative affects in the study of Galinha *et al.* (2014). The 22 items of the affects scale were assessed using a 5-point Likert frequency scale (1- *Not a little*, 2- *A little*, 3- *Moderately*, 4- *A lot*, and 5- *Extremely*).

To complete the questionnaire, participants were asked, on a 5-point Likert scale of agreement (1- *Strongly disagree* to 5- *Strongly agree*), if their involvement in teleworking made them forget about the pandemic situation, and if they felt that they work more, at this stage, in telework when comparing with the work they previously performed at the office.

3.3. Procedures

After conducting an extensive literature review and identifying the constructs to be used, the WorkBAT instrument was translated into Portuguese for the teleworking context and some items of affects were changed to Portuguese in Portugal. Then, the questionnaire survey was built with the help of the Google Forms tool and a pre-test was applied to five people who were already teleworking before the COVID-19 pandemic. Note that the questionnaire contained an open question so that the participants in the pre-test were able to share their suggestions. After the pre-test some items were changed in terms of semantics to improve their understanding.

Data statistical treatment was carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 software, and R software version 4.02 (R Core Team, 2020). The descriptive statistics technique was used to characterize the sample. The grouping of the individuals into homogeneous groups regarding their telework involvement was performed through a technical cluster analysis. The clusters' definition used hierarchical analysis with the squared Euclidean distance as a dissimilarity measure, and the Ward method to group individuals with homogeneous characteristics (Marôco, 2018). To investigate if there are differences in the workaholism levels and in the

affects between groups in the telework involvement groups, Student's *t*-test was applied for independent samples comparison (Marôco, 2018). Finally, structural modeling equations with partial least squares (Partial Least Squares SEM - PLS-SEM) were applied to test the proposed model.

According to Henseler *et al.* (2009), to evaluate a model it is necessary to follow a process composed of two stages: 1) validation of the external model, and 2) validation of the internal model. First, it is guaranteed that the measurements of the constructs are reliable, and, for this, the loadings are analyzed. These must have values greater than 0.708 to indicate that the construct explains more than 50% of the variance of the item (Hair *et al.*, 2019). According to Hair *et al.* (2011), if there are items with external loads between 0.40 and 0.70 they should be eliminated only if they increase the composite reliability above the value considered adequate. Reliability was analyzed by calculating Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values, the latter indicator producing higher values than Cronbach's alpha. If these measures have values from 0.7 to 0.9, they are considered satisfactory to good (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

Then, the validity (convergent and discriminant) of the model was evaluated. Convergent validity was assessed by the value of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted), which must have values greater than 0.5. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings. The Fornell-Larcker criterion analyzes whether the correlations between latent variables are less than the square root of the AVE. In cross-loadings between indicators and constructs, the loading of each indicator must be higher than all of its cross-loadings in this case (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

To assess the structural model, five aspects are considered: 1) evaluation of collinearity, 2) evaluation of the signal, magnitude and statistical significance of the path coefficients, 3) evaluation of the determination coefficients (R^2), 4) evaluation of the effect size f^2 , 5) evaluation of predictive relevance (Q^2) and size of the effects q^2 . To assess collinearity, VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values are calculated. These values must be close to 3 or less (Hair *et al.*, 2019). In the analysis of path coefficients, one can study the nature of the relationships between the constructs and test the formulated hypotheses. To analyse R^2 (percentage of variance explained by the dependent variables in the structural model), Cohen's criteria (1988) for the area of social and behavioral sciences are used: 2% small effect, 13% medium effect and 26% large effect. In assessing the quality of the prediction of the adjusted model, Q^2 values greater than zero indicate that the exogenous construct has predictive relevance for the considered endogenous construct, and values of f^2 and q^2 below 0.02 indicate that there is no effect (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Sample Characterization

The sample is composed of 365 Portuguese individuals who were teleworking from their homes. Most participants are female ($n = 214$, 58.6%). Their ages range from 18 to 70 years old, with approximately 39 years old mean ($SD = 11.21$). Regarding education, predominates the university education ($n = 292$, 80%). About the marital status, 57.3% ($n = 209$) of individuals are married or living together in a common-law relationship, 34.5% ($n = 126$) are single and 8.2% ($n = 30$) are divorced, separated, or widowed. The average number of household members is approximately three ($SD = 1.16$) and 44.4% of the respondents have children ($n = 162$).

Regarding professional data, 50.1% ($n = 183$) work in the organization for less than 5 years, 31.2% ($n = 114$) work in the organization for more than 10 years, and the remaining 18.6% ($n = 68$) are working from 5 to 10 years in the organization. Regarding the activity sector, 72.1% ($n = 263$) work in the private sector and 27.9% ($n = 102$) work in the public sector.

The analysis of Table 1 tells us that 36.46% ($n = 144$) of the individuals consider that their telework involvement makes them forget about the current pandemic situation, and 45.06% ($n = 178$) feel that they are working more since telecommuting. Regarding telework, on average, workers dedicate 8.32 hours per day ($SD = 5.18$) to telework, with a tendency to work many hours a day, since the distribution is positively asymmetric ($Sk = 10.25$).

Table 1

Descriptive analysis of the telework involvement

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My telework involvement makes me forget the current situation	57	70	94	100	44
I feel that, at this stage, I work more in telework than I used to work at the office	54	55	78	69	109

Source: Own elaboration

4.2. Analysis of the Levels of Workaholism and Affects

After applying the cluster analysis, with the aim of grouping individuals into homogeneous groups regarding their involvement in telework, that is, regarding the issues presented in Table 1, appears that individuals are divided into two groups. One group is called the Group with

High Telework Involvement and is characterized by considering that their involvement in telework makes them forget about the pandemic situation and, at the same time, they feel that they work more when telecommuting than they used to work before at the office. The other group is called Group with Low Involvement in Telework and has the opposite characteristics to the previous group.

In Table 2, Student's *t*-test was applied to compare the levels of workaholism in the two groups of the telework involvement and it was found that, although the levels of workaholism are higher in almost all items in the group with high telework involvement, there were also statistically significant differences in 15 items, so it can be inferred that, in general, telework involvement increases workaholism levels. It can also be said that the average levels of workaholism only showed higher values in items W12, W15, W16 and W21, and in the remaining items the average levels are not high, so it is considered that teleworking can provide workers with the autonomy and the flexibility during telework, and facilitate their private lives management, increasing productivity, as evidenced by Beauregard *et al.* (2019).

Table 2

Student's t-test results according to the workaholism levels for the two groups of telework involvement

	Low telework involvement group (<i>n</i> = 182)		High telework involvement group (<i>n</i> = 183)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
W1. When I have free time from telecommuting, I like to relax and do nothing important	3.40	1.29	3.69	1.23	-2.18*
W2. I like my telecommuting more than most people do	2.89	1.15	3.13	1.24	-1.88
W3. I feel guilty when I'm not teleworking	2.71	1.28	3.31	1.39	-4.27***
W4. My telecommuting is more like fun than real work	1.54	0.93	1.50	0.92	0.43
W5. I often wish I wasn't so committed to my telecommuting	2.61	1.25	3.33	1.36	-5.24***
W6. I like to relax and have fun whenever possible, doing home chores	3.32	1.21	3.48	1.15	-1.27
W7. My telecommuting is so interesting that it often doesn't feel like work	2.83	1.19	2.89	1.21	-0.44
W8. I'm really looking forward to the weekend, no telework, just rest	2.88	1.25	3.27	1.36	-2.85**
W9. I telecommute more than is expected of me, strictly for the fun of it	2.42	1.03	2.79	1.18	-3.14**
W10. Most of the time, my telecommuting is very cheerful	2.82	1.08	2.85	1.15	-0.24

W11. I rarely find something I appreciate about my telecommuting	2.09	1.04	2.18	1.05	-0.85
W12. Wasting time is just as bad as losing money	3.53	1.28	3.73	1.20	-1.58
W13. I spend my free time on projects and other activities	3.48	1.07	3.71	1.13	-2.02*
W14. I feel obligated to work hard, even when telecommuting is not pleasant	2.93	1.19	3.54	1.21	-4.87***
W15. I like to use my time constructively, both when telecommuting and at home	4.09	0.96	4.28	0.79	-2.01*
W16. I lose track of time when I'm involved in a project	4.01	0.95	4.25	0.87	-2.52*
W17. Sometimes when I get up in the morning, I can't wait to start telecommuting	2.62	0.94	2.72	1.11	-0.93
W18. It's important for me to telework hard, even when I don't like what I'm doing	3.08	1.16	3.52	1.10	-3.73***
W19. When I get involved in an interesting project, I have a hard time describing how excited I feel	3.09	1.11	3.22	1.12	-1.08
W20. I find myself thinking about telecommuting often, even when I want to get away	2.86	1.13	3.54	1.20	-5.59***
W21. Between my telecommuting and other activities I'm involved in, I don't have a lot of free time	3.20	1.21	4.11	1.08	-7.67***
W22. I often feel that there is something inside of me that drives me to telework hard	2.86	1.11	3.57	1.18	-5.88***
W23. Sometimes I enjoy my telecommuting so much that it's hard for me to stop	2.58	1.08	3.01	1.14	-3.68***
W24. I get bored and agitated when I have nothing productive to do	3.51	1.25	3.40	1.32	0.79
W25. I seem to have an inner compulsion to telework hard	2.49	1.12	3.03	1.21	-4.42***

Legend: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ e *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3 reveals the results of the Student's *t*-test application to compare the levels of affects in the two groups of telework involvement. We found that, although the levels of affects in almost all items are higher in the group with high telework involvement, there are only statistically significant differences in the affects cheerful, content, proud and frightened. The highest affects levels occur in the worry and anxiety affects. But, the low levels of positive affects are what is most worrisome.

Table 3

Student's t-test results according to the affects levels for the two groups of telework involvement

	Low telework involvement group (<i>n</i> = 182)		High telework involvement group (<i>n</i> = 183)		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Cheerful	2.66	1.02	2.92	1.06	-2.38*
2. Worried	3.90	0.93	4.05	1.00	-1.52
3. Good-natured	3.26	0.93	3.33	0.96	-0.76
4. Content	2.73	1.01	2.94	1.02	-1.97*
5. Annoyed	2.65	1.17	2.88	1.19	-1.83
6. Depressed	2.26	1.11	2.41	1.24	-1.23
7. With boredom	2.59	1.09	2.59	1.17	0.03
8. Animated	2.74	0.91	2.90	1.00	-1.65
9. Upset	2.46	1.11	2.63	1.17	-1.40
10. Impatient	2.93	1.16	2.98	1.31	-0.42
11. Enthusiastic	2.50	1.00	2.69	1.06	-1.80
12. Anxious	3.12	1.18	3.27	1.22	-1.21
13. Happy	2.75	1.07	2.96	1.03	-1.91
14. Frustrated	2.55	1.14	2.61	1.30	-0.40
15. Troubled	2.87	1.22	2.85	1.23	0.12
16. Nervous	2.63	1.13	2.85	1.22	-1.79
17. Excited	2.34	1.02	2.52	1.00	-1.79
18. Tense	2.76	1.13	2.90	1.25	-1.11
19. Proud	2.39	1.08	2.70	1.14	-2.66**
20. Angry	1.99	1.17	2.10	1.28	-0.85
21. Quiet	2.91	1.02	3.03	1.11	-1.03
22. Frightened	2.60	1.11	2.88	1.27	-2.24*

Source: Own elaboration

4.3. Measurement Model Assessment

Table 4 shows that only the loadings of the observed variables W23 and W25 are less than 0.708, with the remaining loadings above 0.708. The Cronbach's alpha values and composite reliability of the Positive Affects, Negative Affects, Impulse to Work and Work Enjoyment constructs exhibited adequate reliability (Table 4). The Work Involvement dimension obtained a very low Cronbach's alpha (0.5), which is due to the reduced number of items in this dimension. However, the value of the composite reliability is considered adequate (0.8), confirming its consistency. Note that in some studies (e.g., Andreassen *et al.*, 2011; Tahir and Aziz, 2019), the involvement dimension also had low Cronbach's alpha values. Concerning the AVE values, they are greater than 0.5, which indicates adequate convergent validity.

Table 4

Estimation of the measurement model parameters

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Positive Affects	A1	0.843	0.918	0.937	0.712
	A4	0.881			
	A8	0.866			
	A11	0.845			
	A13	0.873			
	A17	0.749			
Negative Affects	A5	0.793	0.933	0.944	0.653
	A6	0.817			
	A9	0.846			
	A10	0.816			
	A12	0.744			
	A14	0.809			
	A15	0.738			
	A16	0.867			
	A18	0.831			
Work Involvement	W12	0.761	0.500	0.800	0.664
	W24	0.865			
Drive	W14	0.852	0.766	0.851	0.562
	W18	0.776			
	W22	0.711			
	W25	0.645			
Work Enjoyment	W7	0.818	0.775	0.856	0.591
	W10	0.815			
	W17	0.751			
	W23	0.684			

Source: Own elaboration

Table 5 shows that the values of the square root of the AVE (diagonal of the matrix in bold) are higher than the correlations between the constructs. Note that when analyzing the model's discriminant validity through cross-loadings, it was found that the loading of each indicator is greater than all of its cross-loadings. Thus, it is concluded that the reliability, convergent validity and discriminating validity of the external model are adequate. Then the proposed model is evaluated.

Table 5

Discriminant validity: Fornell–Larcker criterion test

	PA	NA	WI	D	WE
PA	0.844				
NA	-0.252	0.808			
WI	0.054	0.266	0.815		

D	-0.062	0.281	0.332	0.750	
WE	0.337	-0.181	0.257	0.122	0.769

PA: Positive Affects, NA: Negative Affects, WI: Work Involvement D: Drive, WE: Work Enjoyment

Source: Own elaboration

4.4. Evaluation of the Structural Model

The VIF value was 1.069, that is, less than 3 as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). Concerning the coefficient of determination (R^2) it was found that the affects explain 6.4% of the variance of the work involvement, 7.9% of the variance of the drive and 12.4% of the variance of the work enjoyment, which according to Cohen (1988), are considered small effects. Regarding the values of Q^2 (0.043, 0.045 and 0.073, respectively for work involvement, drive, and work enjoyment), these are higher than zero which shows that the affects have predictive relevance to the model in relation to the three Workaholism dimensions.

Table 6 shows that negative affects have a significant and positive influence on work involvement ($\beta = 0.256$, $t = 4.86$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.065$, $q^2 = 0.042$), which empirically supports the hypothesis H1b. Negative affects has a significant and positive influence on drive ($\beta = 0.284$, $t = 5.45$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.054$, $q^2 = 0.040$), which supports the H2b hypothesis empirically. Positive affects have a significant and positive influence on work enjoyment ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 6.13$, $p < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.097$, $q^2 = 0.055$), which empirically supports the H3a hypothesis. Thus, it can be said that work enjoyment is influenced by positive affects, and it is the only dimension that is not influenced by negative affects.

Table 6

Results of the Structural Model Analysis

Path	Path Coefficients	t-values	p	95% Confidence Intervals	Significance ^a ($p < 0.05$)?
H1a: PA → WI	0.119	2.26	0.024	[-0.015, 0.236]	No
H1b: NA → WI	0.256	4.86	0.000	[0.160, 0.358]	Yes
H2a: PA → D	0.010	0.19	0.848	[-0.110, 0.193]	No
H2b: NA → D	0.284	5.45	0.000	[0.184, 0.387]	Yes
H3a: PA → WE	0.312	6.13	0.000	[0.202, 0.419]	Yes
H3b: NA → WE	-0.103	-2.02	0.044	[-0.212, -0.004]	No

WI: Work Involvement D: Drive, WE: Work Enjoyment, PA: Positive Affects, NA: Negative Affects. ^aThe confidence intervals were obtained with bootstrapping procedure (5000 samples)

Source: Own elaboration

In short, the results show that positive affects influence the work enjoyment dimension, and negative affects influence the work involvement and drive dimensions. Such results agree with those obtained by Clark *et al.* (2010), who showed significant relationships between negative and positive affects and workaholism. The fact that positive affects influence the work enjoyment dimension contradicts Bovornusvakool *et al.* (2012) and Mazzetti *et al.* (2016) studies, who concluded that only negative affects significantly influence workaholism. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, teleworking gave workers more work flexibility. On the other hand, affectivity at work seems to be a source of job satisfaction, with only high levels of positive affects truly improving job satisfaction.

5. Conclusions

The teleworking regime adopted in several countries, in addition to being an important measure for the financial survival of companies, also prevented the spread of the virus, ensuring the health of the workers so that they can continue to exercise their positions in their companies because companies cannot survive without the human strength that workers are.

Workaholism is the excessive and compulsive need to work, not being a stable individual trait, but rather an addiction. Workaholism can also be seen as a behavioral pattern, which is increasingly a reality in contemporary societies. Knowing the factors that lead workers to overwork can be a competitive advantage for the company, in the implementation of its human resources policies. A work context is a privileged place for emotions, achievements and the construction of personal happiness, and affections are the affective dimension of the concept of subjective well-being.

The main objectives of this article were to analyze the workaholism levels and to study the influence of the affects on workaholism in the context of telework. To analyze the levels of workaholism, two groups were analyzed: one considered as a group with high involvement in telework - characterized by individuals who consider their involvement in telework makes them forget about the pandemic situation and, at the same time, feel that they work more in teleworking than previously used to work when at the office -, and the other group, called the group with low involvement in teleworking, with contrary characteristics to the first group. From this analysis, it was possible to infer that, in general, telework involvement increases workaholism levels. It was also concluded that teleworking allows for the workers' autonomy and flexibility, which can facilitate their life management and increase productivity.

The external model showed adequate evidence of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. Regarding the proposed structural model, it is concluded that negative affects have a

significant positive influence on work involvement and work drive. Positive affects, on the other hand, only positively and significantly influence work enjoyment. The group with greater involvement in teleworking, has higher levels of affects such as worry and anxiety and extremely low levels of positive affects.

One of the limitations of this study is because the dimension Work Involvement of the Workaholism Scale consists of only two items and obtained a low Cronbach's alpha value. It should be noted that in other studies in the literature, the Work Involvement dimension was also composed of a reduced number of items and also obtained a low Cronbach's alpha value. On the other hand, it was also necessary to exclude some items from the analysis of the Drive to Work and Work Enjoyment dimensions. Because of these facts, it is recommended that in future studies the items of the Workaholism scale be analyzed, in the sense of a reformulation to improve the scale psychometric qualities.

This study, in academic terms, contributes to the increase of the scientific knowledge workaholism field, affects and teleworking. In the organizational aspect, knowledge on this topic is important as it helps to understand the influence of affects on the workaholism condition during teleworking practice, which can provide information to the organizations' managers and to the human resources managers that can help workers to become more productive and to promote a healthier relationship with work. This study is also of interest to workers in organizations, as it helps them to realize that control and balance in the use of time between teleworking and everyday life is vital for their quality of life and social sustainability. Thus, it is perceived that happiness is closely related to the individual's subjective well-being, revealing how they are or are not satisfied with their work and with their life, being fundamental for the improvement of the productivity of any individual in the organization. It is expected that the results presented here will motivate companies to adopt strategies that optimize their resources and reduce costs, obtaining advantages in terms of competitiveness and productivity that do not affect the health and well-being of their workers.

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