

## **Abstract**

Work and study are among the most important activities in human life and definitively have a positive impact on it. However, in the case of a small group of people, involvement in these activities may lead to the development of addiction, which leads to a general deterioration of the individual's functioning. Despite numerous studies, the etiology of work addiction and its early form, study addiction, is still not fully understood. In this dissertation, I have sought to contribute to a better understanding of this etiology by using the network theory of mental disorders to conceptualize work addiction and study addiction as dynamic systems of symptoms. The network theory of mental disorders is based on the assumption that there may be direct relationships between symptoms that are responsible for the development and maintenance of disorders, and their identification is necessary to plan effective therapeutic and

preventive interventions. Moreover, direct relationships between the symptoms of the disorder and other phenomena may also be important elements of these interventions. This doctoral dissertation examined the direct relationships between the symptoms of work addiction, the dimensions of work engagement, the dimensions of burnout, and the dimension of perceived stress, as well as the direct relationships between the symptoms of study addiction and the dimensions of work engagement. For this purpose, secondary data sets from three previously conducted studies were used to estimate 12 Gaussian graphical models, in which the total number of people examined equaled  $N = 19,028$ . The obtained results indicate that the patterns

of direct relationships between the symptoms of work addiction and the symptoms of study addiction were almost identical. In both cases, two clusters of symptoms were identified, resembling a division into more (tolerance, relapse, conflict, and problems) and less (salience, mood modification, and withdrawal) pathological symptoms of addiction. Moreover, in both cases, mood modification (a symptom of addiction) and absorption (a dimension of *Sieciowe podejście do uzależnienia od pracy oraz uzależnienia od nauki* mgr Piotr Bereznowski

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engagement) played a key role in connecting addiction and engagement. Based on the model, which, in addition to the symptoms of work addiction and work engagement dimensions, also included the dimensions of burnout and the dimension of perceived stress, direct relationships between work addiction and other psychological phenomena were limited to four. These were the associations between (1) mood modification and absorption, (2) mood modification and stress, (3) withdrawal and stress, and (4) problems and exhaustion. Consequently, this doctoral

dissertation proposes three preventive and therapeutic interventions which, in accordance with the network theory of mental disorders, can effectively inhibit the process responsible for addiction. Firstly, it seems crucial to make individuals aware that positive absorption by work or study may co-occur with addiction, and that effectively identifying the latter requires focusing on the emerging negative consequences of work or study. Secondly, individuals should be educated that instead of escaping from problems into work or study, they can use adaptive strategies to cope with stress. Finally, individuals should be made aware that regular overwork or overstudying not only impairs their performance but may also lead to very serious health consequences.

**Keywords:** work addiction, workaholism, study addiction, network analysis, network approach to psychology, network theory of mental disorders, Gaussian graphical model