

WORK INTENSITY AND LONG WORK HOURS: CONSEQUENCES ON EMPLOYEE WORK OUTCOMES AND WELL-BEING

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ABSTRACT

This study empirically investigates how working hard can impact employee work outcomes and well-being by examining how two job demands (i.e., work intensity and work hours) can influence a number of work outcomes, work engagement, and psychological well-being. Drawing upon the job demands-resources model, we hypothesized that these job demands would be negatively related to job satisfaction, career satisfaction, work engagement, and life satisfaction; and, positively related to job stress, intent to quit, exhaustion, and psychosomatic symptoms. We also predicted that the effects on employee well-being would be stronger for work intensity than for work hours. These hypotheses were tested among a sample of 290 hospital-based nurses in Canada. The results show that work intensity and work hours are significantly correlated, but weakly. Furthermore, in contrast to hours worked, work intensity was more strongly and consistently related to the outcomes. In particular, work intensity was generally negatively related to work outcomes and psychological well-being.