

Achievement Addiction Among Employees

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Abstract: The current study addressed achievement addiction, defined by Robinson (1999) as "a state of excessive preoccupation with achievement and immersion in it, which can lead to harm to the addict's health and relationships. This can also lead to feelings of anxiety and stress when set goals are not achieved, feelings of failure and frustration when not achieving excellence in all aspects, sacrificing human relationships and free time for the sake of work and achieving success, and feelings of confusion and psychological exhaustion as a result of the pressure imposed by the desire to achieve." Accordingly, the current study aimed to:

1. Identify achievement addiction among employees.
2. Identify differences in achievement addiction according to gender (males/females).

In light of previous studies, the researchers prepared (34) items distributed across four domains: feelings of anxiety and stress when not achieving set goals, feelings of failure and frustration when not achieving excellence in all aspects, sacrificing human relationships and free time for the sake of work and achieving success, and feelings of confusion and psychological exhaustion as a result of the pressure imposed by the desire to achieve. The scale was presented to a group of experts. In the psychological and educational sciences, to ensure that the scale's items measured what it was designed for, all items were accepted, thus achieving the apparent validity of the scale. Discriminatory power and internal consistency were calculated after applying it to the discriminatory research sample. The reliability of the scale was extracted using the split-half method and Cronbach's alpha. The reliability of the scale was achieved, with the reliability coefficients using the split-half method reaching 0.88, while the reliability coefficient using the Cronbach's alpha method reached 0.83. These reliability coefficients are considered acceptable. Thus, the scale in its final form consisted of 32 items after deleting two items for discrimination. After applying the scale to the researcher's initial sample, which numbered (250) employees from the Ministry of Planning, the College of Basic Education, and the Ministry of Education, they were distributed according to the gender variable, with the number of females reaching (133), while the number of males reached (117). After applying the scale and conducting statistical analysis according to the objectives, the researchers reached the following results:

1. There is a statistically significant difference in achievement addiction in favor of the sample average.
2. There is no statistically significant difference in achievement addiction between males and females.

Key points: Addiction, achievement, employees.

Chapter One

Introduction to the Research

Research Problem

The pursuit of achievement and goal attainment are essential requirements in modern work environments. However, in some individuals, this pursuit may develop into what is known as

"achievement addiction," a compulsive behavioral pattern that drives a person to work continuously and excessively, accompanied by a constant feeling of self-dissatisfaction and a recurring need to prove their worth and accomplishment (Latham & Pinder, 2005: 485.)

Some researchers have indicated that achievement addiction is closely related to work addiction. However, achievement addiction focuses more on the desire to achieve external goals and gain recognition than on the tasks themselves (Salanova et al., 2014: 163). Loscalzo and Giannini (2017) assert that individuals addicted to achievement often suffer from work-life balance problems and may experience psychological symptoms such as anxiety and chronic stress (Loscalzo & Giannini, 2017: 420–432). Other studies have revealed the role of the workplace environment and culture in fostering this behavioral pattern. Some organizations foster a culture of achievement and constant competition, pushing employees to exceed their psychological and physical limits (Shimazu et al., 2010:184). In the Arab context, research on this phenomenon remains limited, calling for studies to understand the prevalence of achievement addiction in Arab environments, particularly in light of rapid institutional transformations and the growing culture of performance and productivity.

A study by Salanova et al. (2014) also indicated that individuals addicted to achievement face difficulties in achieving work-life balance, and that this behavior is associated with high levels of stress and anxiety (Salanova et al. 2014:631-655). A study by Van Beek et al. (2011) highlighted the differences between "positive work engagement" and "compulsive achievement addiction," with the latter considered an indicator of a psychological and behavioral disorder rather than a functional trait (van Beek et al. 2011:468-482). Studies in this area are still limited. However, in his study on work stress, Al-Zoubi (2022) indicated a positive relationship between an excessive culture of achievement and levels of occupational anxiety among employees in government institutions (Al-Zoubi, 2022: 122). Al-Harbi's study (2020) also found that some private sector work environments exaggerate the glorification of high performance, which contributes to promoting addictive behavior related to achievement among highly motivated employees (Al-Harbi, 2020: 77-102). These studies highlight the urgent need for in-depth research to understand this phenomenon, particularly in Arab environments that have begun to adopt performance- and results-based evaluation criteria. The lack of clear boundaries between positive achievement motivation and addictive behavior poses challenges at both the personal and organizational levels, impacting the psychological and social health of employees.

From the above, the problem of the current research is summarized in answering the following question: Do government employees have an addiction to achievement?

Significance of the Research

The modern workplace is witnessing an ever-increasing pace of performance and a growing culture of productivity and output. This has led to the emergence of a new phenomenon known as "achievement addiction." It refers to an individual's compulsive drive to achieve successive goals without interruption, coupled with a constant feeling of dissatisfaction or anxiety about not achieving them, which places them in a constant state of striving to prove themselves through continuous work (Loscalzo & Giannini, 2017).

The pursuit of achievement may be considered a noble value, but the transformation into addiction occurs when performance becomes a goal in itself without any connection to meaning (Brown, 2010:1-98)

Achievement addiction also refers to an intense and compulsive pursuit of achievement and success. It typically dominates people's behavior and thinking. Those with this behavior maintain a narrow focus on achieving goals in search of external motivation and satisfaction. They are obsessed with indicators of social status, which may include exceptional academic achievement or a prominent leadership role in a profession. Furthermore, they begin to rely on these indicators as a means of defining their existence. In contrast to intrinsic motivation, which stems from the individual's own self-esteem, satisfaction, and genuine enthusiasm for what they are pursuing, achievement addiction derives more from external satisfaction. This creates an unstable foundation for self-esteem, as most

individuals base their sense of worth on their performance. Consequently, they fall into an endless cycle of constantly rising anxiety levels, leading to perfectionism and burnout, as the pressure to achieve becomes relentless. Achievement addiction, also known as "high achievement syndrome," is an excessive desire to achieve, often at the expense of other aspects of our lives, such as relationships or personal health. You may constantly pursue new goals, even after you have already achieved a great deal. You may feel anxious or dissatisfied when you are not pursuing a goal, and you may experience anxiety or low mood if expectations are not met. (Schuler, & Prochaska, 2001:123-124).

One of the reasons why achievement becomes addictive is that it provides a temporary sense of satisfaction or recognition from external sources. When we achieve something, we may feel a rush of endorphins and a sense of pride, which can be addictive. This can drive us to continually pursue this feeling, even if it isn't sustainable or healthy.

We've discussed why having an external source of validation is dangerous, and achievement often deals with these external sources.

A study (Shimazu et al., 2010) found that achievement addiction is associated with burnout and lower levels of job well-being among employees, especially in competitive work environments.

Achievement addiction is associated with a persistent feeling of inadequacy, such that no single achievement is enough to satisfy the person, leading to an endless cycle of work and projects. This type of addiction is often accompanied by chronic anxiety and depression. (Schuler, & Prochaska, 2001:125).

A common cause of achievement addiction is the exaggerated social reinforcement of successes, whereby an individual's esteem is tied to their productive value, leading to an identity based entirely on performance and professional success (Young, 2013: 203).

Achievement addiction causes severe physical and psychological exhaustion, weakens social relationships, and reduces quality of life, as the individual focuses all their energy and time on work, neglecting other aspects of life such as health, family, and personal interests (Robinson, 2014: 235.)

Achievement addiction is linked to existential anxiety, as the individual seeks to prove their existence and value through their achievements, fearing emptiness or meaninglessness (Maddi, 1998: 67).

In societies that value individuals based on their productivity, the culture of achievement becomes a coercive force that produces individuals who feel their value is tied to their achievements (Ehrenberg, 2010: 18).

From the above, the importance of the current research becomes clear in the following:

1. Enriching psychological and organizational literature: Contributing to an understanding of a relatively new phenomenon in industrial and organizational psychology.
2. Distinguishing the concept of achievement addiction from related concepts, such as achievement motivation, ambition, and excessive diligence.
3. Clarifying the psychological dimensions associated with achievement addiction, such as chronic stress, anxiety, and burnout.
4. Assisting management in identifying at-risk employees and developing appropriate support strategies.
5. Providing practical measurement and intervention tools that can be used in training, counseling, and job evaluation.

Research Objectives: The current research aims to:

1. Identify achievement addiction among employees.

2. Identify differences in achievement addiction according to gender (male-female).

Research Limits: The current research community is determined by the employees of the Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Education, Third and Second Karkh, and the employees of the Ministry of Higher Education in the College of Basic Education for the year (2024-2025), males and females.

Definition of Terms: Achievement addiction has been defined in several ways, including:

- Kets de Vries (2001) "It is a psychological strategy used by some individuals to escape anxiety or feelings of inadequacy by achieving repeated successes, leading to psychological dependence on continuous achievement." (Kets de Vries, 2001:13).
- Schuler & Prochaska (2001) "Achievement addiction is defined as a pathological preoccupation with success and superiority, such that achievement is viewed as the sole indicator of self-worth, often coupled with a fear of failure and psychological imbalance." (Schuler & Prochaska, 2001:67).
- Sussman et al. (2011) "It is an addictive pattern manifested in a compulsive and persistent pursuit of achievement, driven by an internal need for esteem or self-affirmation, and can lead to symptoms similar to other behavioral addictions." (Sussman, et al. 2011:3).
- Young (2013) "Achievement addiction is a psychological dependence on repeatedly achieving goals as a means of enhancing self-esteem and avoiding feelings of inadequacy. Achievement becomes an end in itself, not a means of personal growth." (Young, 2013:203).
- Robinson (2014) "A state of excessive preoccupation with achievement and immersion in it, which can harm the achievement addict's health and relationships, as well as feelings of anxiety and stress when set goals are not met, feelings of failure and frustration when they fail to achieve excellence in all aspects, sacrificing human relationships and free time for work and achieving success, and feelings of confusion and psychological exhaustion as a result of the pressure imposed by the desire to achieve." (Robinson, 2014:56).

The researchers adopted Robinson's (2014) definition as a theoretical definition.

Procedural definition: The score obtained by the respondent through their answers to the items of the achievement addiction scale developed in the research.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Theories that Explain Achievement Addiction

Maslow's Theory

Maslow began with the logical premise that human beings are inherently good and that their behavior stems from one fundamental drive: the pursuit of self-actualization. Maslow's particular contribution to human psychology is his concept of a hierarchy of needs, which he theoretically constructed based on the premise that humans must first satisfy their needs at the base of the pyramid, moving up to the top, where the need for self-actualization is located (Saleh and Al-Tariq, 1998: 215). Maslow postulated five levels of needs, each of which must be satisfied to some degree before moving on to the next one above it, as follows:

A - Physiological Needs:

B - Safety Needs:

C - Belongingness and Love Needs:

D - Esteem Needs:

E - Emotional Needs: Self-Actualization Needs:

If an individual is able to satisfy the four needs in a reasonable manner, they will eventually reach the ultimate goal of self-actualization, which lies at the top of the pyramid. This is the ultimate goal. Maslow defines self-actualization as the continuous process of realizing one's abilities, potentials, and talents. It is the complete knowledge and acceptance of one's essential nature, and it is the person's ever-growing drive toward unity and integration. (Gobel, 1970: 41).

Maslow's theory of human needs explains that humans strive to satisfy a set of needs, ranging from the basic to the more complex. Needs begin with physiological needs such as food and water, followed by safety, belonging, and esteem, and finally, self-actualization. When basic needs (such as security or belonging) are not met, a person may become obsessed with satisfying higher needs such as appreciation, esteem, or even self-actualization, believing this is the only way to compensate for deficiencies in other areas of their life. Achievement addiction appears here as an attempt to compensate for an inner emptiness or deficiency in a fundamental aspect of their life. For example, if a person feels insecure or does not belong to a certain group, they may strive to achieve accomplishments to prove themselves or feel socially accepted. If a person has not received appreciation or recognition in their personal or professional life, they may constantly seek success and excellence as a means of seeking validation from others. In this case, achievement addiction becomes an attempt to compensate for an internal deficiency or to overcome a persistent anxiety about feeling inadequate or unworthy. This idea is reinforced by the fact that a person may not feel truly happy or satisfied despite their accomplishments because the basic needs that should be satisfied first have not been met (Maslow, 1943:370). **Psychoanalytic Theory (Freud).**

Freud believed that a large portion of human behavior is driven by unconscious motives, particularly those for acceptance and love, linked to early psychological conflicts, particularly in childhood, which lead to compensatory behaviors such as overachievement. Achievement here is not simply a desire for success; it is a means of controlling and compensating for feelings of helplessness and anxiety, or the desire to outdo others. A person is driven by unconscious motives, and achievement addiction may arise from an unconscious desire to compensate for an emotional deficiency suffered in childhood (such as parental disapproval) (Freud, 1920:189)..

In some cases, the superego is excessively strict, demanding perfection and excellence in order to feel satisfied. This moral pressure generates a constant sense of guilt if the "perfect achievement" is not achieved, which drives the person to excessively strive for it. (Freud, 1923:101) Achievement addiction is used as a defense mechanism against unacceptable inner feelings: such as repression, repressing feelings of inadequacy or rejection from childhood and compensating for these feelings with constant achievement, or justifying excessive work as "ambition," when in fact it is an escape from confronting the self (Cramer, 2000:638). If the Oedipus complex is not properly resolved during childhood, the individual may become stuck in a state of striving to please the "ideal parent" (or authority figure). Thus, the individual seeks excessive achievements to prove their worth to an imagined "inner authority" (Freud, 1905:210).

Adler's Theory of Individual Psychology

Adler pointed out that the struggle for superiority is the ultimate goal pursued by all people. By this, he means the struggle for perfection, for ascension, and progress from negative to positive. It is an essential part of life. Everything we do follows the momentum and direction of this ongoing struggle, which is indispensable to life, because life itself is characterized by this struggle. Based on Darwin's concept of evolution, Adler explained that life expresses itself as a continuous movement toward the goal of preserving the individual and the species, and this goal is achieved through adaptation to and control of the environment. Various species of organisms, including humans, have risen to their present level through this ongoing adaptation. The need for better adaptation is ever-present and cannot cease. The struggle for better adaptation, which is meant to be perfection, is innate and must be innate; otherwise, no life form can survive and continue (Schultz, 1983: 72). Adler began his theoretical work by focusing on the feeling of inferiority resulting from organic deficiency, which refers to the deficiency of an organ due to its stunted or stunted growth, its weak anatomical or functional sufficiency, or its inability to function after birth. Some people are born

with a disability or defect in one of their external organs, some with weakness or defects in one of their internal organs, some with speech, hearing, or sight defects, some suffer from frailty and weak constitutions, and some have a high predisposition to disease. The presence of these deficient organs and congenital defects affects the individual's psychological life, humiliating them and making them feel inadequate. On the other hand, they ignite a struggle to assert their identity and motivate them to struggle to overcome their deficiency through a process of compensation. Adler based this on what happens in the organic world, where the body's basic organs grow or improve, and their function improves when a part of it or one of the other related organs is injured. For example, when a lung or kidney is injured and stops functioning, the other system takes over. There are other cases in which some body systems clearly compensate for the weakness of others, preserving the organism's life and enhancing its ability to work and struggle. Thus, the psyche, under the pressure of feelings of inferiority or the torment of the idea of its own weakness, works hard to overcome and triumph over this feeling of inferiority and weakness (Ramzi, 1981: 71-91). Adler focuses on what is known as the "inferiority complex." He believes that humans naturally feel inferior, especially in childhood. Achievement is a means of compensating for this deficiency. A person who feels inferior to others (due to their appearance, social status, childhood weaknesses, etc.) strives to achieve success and accomplishment to prove to themselves and others their worth and strength. A child who has suffered ridicule due to their physical weakness may later strive to become a professional athlete or a successful leader, and may exaggerate these feelings of compensation and become addicted to this achievement (Mosak & Maniaci, 1999: 165).

Robinson's Theory

Robinson's theory of achievement addiction is not as well known as classical theories, such as McClelland's "Need for Achievement Theory" or Atkinson's "Achievement Motivation Theory." However, it is sometimes used to refer to researcher Nick Robinson's ideas or concepts developed in the fields of leadership and professional motivation, particularly regarding the phenomenon of "workaholism" and its association with a constant need for achievement. Nick Robinson is a leadership and organizational development consultant who has written about achievement addiction, particularly in the context of senior leadership and personal development. He did not develop a "clinical psychological theory" in the traditional sense, but rather presented a behavioral and cognitive analytic model that explains the behavior of individuals who are "achievement addicts." Robinson argues that some individuals suffer from what is known as achievement addiction, a compulsive psychological drive that drives a person to constantly strive for success and achievement, regardless of negative side effects, such as physical exhaustion, deteriorating social relationships, or feelings of psychological emptiness. Achievement is a means of self-affirmation and internal recognition. Individuals feel their value is based on what they achieve, not on who they are. When they achieve success, they receive the appreciation of others, which permanently reinforces this behavior. Individuals associate their self-worth with their accomplishments. Recognition from others (rewards, praise, positions) becomes a motivating factor. Once an accomplishment is achieved, anxiety about the next accomplishment begins, creating a vicious cycle. (Robinson, 2013:56).

The more a person accomplishes, the more they feel the need to achieve more. A compulsive pattern of achievement and anxiety forms that is difficult to break. Achievement becomes an individual's "identity," not just a goal. Motivation shifts from a love of work or achievement to a desire for recognition or escape from feelings of failure.

The individual tends to take on roles and responsibilities beyond their capabilities. They believe they must accomplish everything themselves to prove their worth. This leads to professional burnout, poor relationships, and mental health problems.

Robinson links achievement addiction to workaholism, where the individual works unnecessarily long hours. They experience anxiety when not engaged in productive work and feel guilty when resting (Killinger, 2006:79).

Behavioral Theory

Behavioral theory explains achievement addiction as a learned behavior that is reinforced and strengthened by positive and/or negative reinforcements the individual receives as a result of their constant pursuit of achievement and goal attainment. According to the basic tenets of this theory, human behavior is shaped and sustained by the association between responses and consequences (reinforcement and punishment). That is, achievement-seeking behavior becomes an addictive habit because it is associated with desired outcomes.

When an individual achieves a certain accomplishment, they receive either extrinsic rewards (such as praise, recognition, financial rewards, or promotions) or intrinsic rewards (such as satisfaction and pride). This positive reinforcement motivates the individual to repeat the achievement behavior over and over again.

The individual may relieve feelings of anxiety, inadequacy, or failure through excessive work and achievement. In this case, achievement becomes a means of avoiding uncomfortable feelings or situations, which reinforces the behavior. According to Skinner, actions that lead to desired outcomes are more likely to be repeated. If achievement leads to consistent praise and appreciation, achievement behavior is strongly reinforced. Habitual reinforcement over time leads to an individual's addiction to achievement because they become accustomed to the resulting reinforcements. Achievement behavior is not reinforced all the time, but rather at intermittent intervals (such as seasonal or annual appreciation). This pattern of reinforcement makes the behavior more resistant to extinction, according to Skinner. Gradual neglect of other aspects of life: Because the reinforcements associated with achievement are stronger than those associated with relationships or psychological comfort, the individual begins to neglect other aspects of life in favor of achievement (Lundberg & Cooper, 2011:67).

Discussion of the Theories

According to Freudian psychoanalytic theory, achievement addiction stems from unconscious drives related to childhood psychological conflicts, particularly the need for love and acceptance. Individuals seek to compensate for emotional deficiencies through mastery and achievement, and achievement is used as a defense mechanism against feelings of inadequacy. The superego plays an important role by imposing strict ideal standards that motivate the individual to continually achieve. This is often associated with feelings of guilt or internalized inadequacy. Maslow's theory of human needs explains achievement addiction as the result of an imbalance in the hierarchy of needs, whereby an individual attempts to compensate for a lack of basic needs (such as belonging or safety) through self-actualization and self-esteem. Achievement is a means of filling an inner void, not a result of normal development. Individuals seek achievement to compensate for a lack of love, acceptance, or security.

Adler's individual psychology argues that individuals strive for excellence as a result of internal feelings of inadequacy, particularly in childhood. Achievement is a compensation for feelings of weakness or inadequacy, whether real or imagined. An achievement addict may be someone who has been ridiculed or feels inferior and is trying to prove their competence to the world. This theory emphasizes the role of the struggle for competence and adaptation as part of an individual's psychological makeup.

Robinson describes achievement addiction as a cognitive-behavioral pattern driven by the need to prove oneself and gain recognition. Achievement becomes central to self-identity, and the individual experiences persistent anxiety after each achievement. The behavior is repeated compulsively, and self-worth is tied to what has been achieved, not to the individual's identity. This creates a continuous cycle of anxiety, achievement, and exhaustion. Behavioral theory explains achievement addiction as a learned behavior supported by external reinforcers (such as rewards and praise) and internal reinforcers (such as satisfaction). According to Skinner, rewarded behavior is repeated, and if achievement is paired with continuous or intermittent rewards, it becomes a habit that is difficult

to break. The behavior is consolidated through positive reinforcement or escape from anxiety (negative reinforcement).

Previous Studies

Robinson (2018)

This study aimed to analyze the phenomenon of achievement addiction through a cognitive-behavioral model, linking it to self-esteem and societal attitudes toward productivity. The study was conducted on 320 employees in multinational companies in the United States. A descriptive analytical approach was used, including the Achievement Addiction Scale (developed by the researcher), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Burnout Scale. The results showed a higher level of achievement addiction among individuals with low self-esteem associated with success. A positive relationship was also found between achievement addiction and burnout (Robinson, 2018:145-163).

Stoeber & Damian (2016)

This study aimed to examine the relationship between achievement addiction, perfectionism, and pathological work engagement. The study was conducted on 450 employees in various professional sectors in the United Kingdom. A quantitative correlational approach was used, including the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, the Work Addiction Scale, and the Achievement Motivation Scale. The results showed that high levels of achievement addiction were associated with increased levels of perfectionism. Perfectionism is closely linked to achievement addiction, and achievement addiction contributes to long working hours and reduced psychological well-being. There is significant overlap between achievement addiction and work addiction. (Stoeber & Damian, 2016: 1–20)

A study by Al-Mutairi (2021)

aimed to examine the relationship between addiction and success among university students. The study included 270 male and female students at Gulf universities. A descriptive approach was used to correlate the Achievement Addiction Scale (developed by the researchers) with the Internal Competencies Scale for University Students (COPASA). The results showed an inverse relationship between performance addiction and success addiction. High levels of addiction indicated that students achieve successful results under the influence of external motivational pressures. (Al-Mutairi, 2021: 88–102).

A study by Kim, S. & Park, J. (2019) aimed to examine achievement addiction as an indicator of mental health problems (anxiety, depression, isolation). The study was conducted on 380 young men and women in South Korea. The causal-predictive approach was used, along with the Achievement Addiction Scale and the Depression Anxiety Scale (DASS-21). The results showed that achievement addiction significantly predicted higher levels of anxiety and depression, and that females were more likely than males to be psychologically affected by achievement stress. (Kim, & Park, 2019:112-128).

Discussion of Studies

Objective: Robinson (2018) focused on explaining achievement addiction through a cognitive-behavioral model, linking it to self-esteem and occupational burnout. Stoeber and Damian (2016) sought to analyze the relationship between achievement addiction, perfectionism, and pathological workaholism. Al-Mutairi (2021) examined achievement addiction from an academic-student perspective, focusing on the relationship between addiction and success. Kim and Park (2019) studied achievement addiction as a causal factor for psychological problems, such as depression and anxiety. Despite the diversity of objectives, they all indicate that achievement addiction is not simply an external behavior seeking success, but rather a complex phenomenon involving intertwined personal, social, and psychological factors.

Sample: The samples were diverse, encompassing multiple professional, educational, and cultural contexts: employees from multinational companies (Robinson, 320 individuals), employees from various sectors in the United Kingdom (Stoeber and Damian, 450 individuals), university students in a Gulf environment (Al-Mutairi, 270 students), and young men and women from South Korea (Kim and Park, 380 participants). This diversity in samples allowed for a comprehensive view of the phenomenon across different age groups (students, employees) and diverse cultural contexts (America, Europe, the Gulf, East Asia), enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Tools: Despite the diversity of tools, all used standardized and developed quantitative measures. All studies relied on scales to measure achievement addiction, either developed by the researchers (Robinson and Al-Mutairi) or inspired by them. Other studies used supporting scales, such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Occupational Burnout Scale, the DASS-21 Anxiety and Depression Scale, the Perfectionism Scale, and the Achievement Motivation Scale. These instruments reflect an interest in measuring multiple dimensions of addiction: motivation, psychological impact, occupational impact, and self-efficacy, demonstrating that achievement addiction is a multidimensional phenomenon.

Results: Taken together, the results indicate that achievement addiction is not an indicator of mental health or true success, but rather is associated with several negative effects. Robinson showed that low self-esteem is associated with high achievement addiction, with a positive relationship with occupational burnout. Stoeber and Damian revealed that perfectionism fuels achievement addiction and leads to a decline in quality of life. Al-Mutairi explained that success associated with addiction is driven by external pressures rather than self-efficacy, which constitutes a fragile success. Kim and Park explained that this type of addiction predicts higher levels of anxiety and depression, especially in women.

Chapter Three

Research Procedures

This chapter includes a review of the steps followed in this research to achieve its objectives, in terms of identifying the target group and selecting a representative sample, designing a measurement tool characterized by accuracy and consistency, procedures for applying it to sample members, and identifying appropriate statistical methods for data analysis, as follows:

First: Research Community: The current research community was defined as employees of the Ministry of Education/General Directorate of Education, Third and Second Karkh, and employees of the Ministry of Higher Education in the College of Basic Education for the academic year (2024-2025). Their number reached (35,608) male and female employees, comprising (17,848) males and (17,760) females. Table (1) illustrates this.

Table (1) Distribution of research community members by ministry and gender variable

Ministry	Number of employees		Total
	Males	females	
Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Education, Karkh II	67	88	155
Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Education, Karkh III	92	77	169
Ministry of Higher Education, College of Basic Education	89	99	188
Total	248	264	512

Second: Research Sample: The researchers used a random sample to select the study sample, after identifying the ministries. The researchers then randomly selected employees from each ministry, and a random sample was taken from each ministry. (250) male and female employees were selected, comprising (117) male employees and (133) female employees. Table (2) illustrates this.

Table (2) Distribution of the sample members of the primary application by ministry, gender variable, and gender variable

Ministry	Number of employees		Total
	Males	females	
Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Education, Karkh II	39	37	79
Ministry of Education / General Directorate of Education, Karkh III	41	52	93
Ministry of Higher Education, College of Basic Education	37	44	81
Total	117	133	250

Third: Research Tool: Due to the lack of a ready-made measurement tool for this study's variable, the researchers constructed an achievement addiction scale. To construct the achievement addiction scale, the researchers first identified the theoretical and operational definitions of this variable, then followed the following steps:

Defining the scale domains: The researcher reviewed a large body of literature addressing achievement addiction. In light of Robinson's (1999) definition, the researchers also prepared (34) items distributed across four domains, as follows:

1. Feeling anxious and tense when not achieving set goals.
2. Feelings of failure and frustration when not achieving excellence in all aspects.
3. Sacrificing human relationships and free time for the sake of work and achieving success.
4. Feeling confused and psychologically exhausted as a result of the pressure imposed by the desire to achieve.

Presenting the instrument to experts: To ensure the validity of the scale, its items were presented to a group of experts to judge their suitability for measuring the characteristic for which it was designed. This type of validity was achieved when the scale, with its (34) items, was presented to (10) experts specializing in education and psychology. Its items achieved an agreement rate ranging between (80-100%), as Table (3) illustrates.

Table (3) Judges' opinions on the validity of the items of the achievement addiction scale.

Sequence	Paragraph numbers	Agree		Oppose	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	,1,2,3,6,9,10,11,13,15,16,18,19,20,22,23,25,26,28,29,30,31,33,34	10	%100	-	-
2	4,5,7,8,12,14,17,21,24,27,32	8	%80	2	%20

Statistical analysis of the scale: Using a sample of (170) male and female employees, we estimated the discriminating power of the scale. We calculated the highest scores at (27%) and the lowest scores at (27%) based on (92) questionnaires, with (46) questionnaires for each group. Then we applied a t-test for two independent samples to determine the significance of the differences in each paragraph between these two groups. The "t" values showed that paragraphs (24, 26) are not discriminating, at a degree of freedom of (90) and a significance level of (0.05), and the value of the table was (1.987) as shown in Table (4.)

Table (4) T-values for the items of the achievement addiction scale using the two extreme samples method

Sequence	Groups Arithmetic	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated T-Value
1.	Upper group	2.9130	.41237	14.477
	Lower group	1.9783	.14744	
2.	Upper group	2.8696	.49927	11.358
	Lower group	1.9348	.24964	

3.	Upper group	2.8261	.56977	9.204
	Lower group	1.9348	.32675	
4.	Upper group	2.9783	.14744	20.265
	Lower group	1.8696	.34050	
5.	Upper group	2.9565	.20618	18.006
	Lower group	1.8478	.36316	
6.	Upper group	2.9348	.24964	16.229
	Lower group	1.8043	.40109	
7.	Upper group	2.8913	.31470	14.393
	Lower group	1.7826	.41703	
8.	Upper group	2.8696	.34050	13.685
	Lower group	1.7609	.43127	
9.	Upper group	2.8478	.36316	13.166
	Lower group	1.7174	.45524	
10.	Upper group	2.8261	.38322	12.720
	Lower group	1.6957	.46522	
11.	Upper group	2.8043	.40109	12.469
	Lower group	1.6522	.48154	
12.	Upper group	2.7609	.43127	11.772
	Lower group	1.6304	.48802	
13.	Upper group	2.7391	.44396	11.551
	Lower group	1.6087	.49344	
14.	Upper group	2.6957	.46522	12.258
	Lower group	1.4565	.50361	
15.	Upper group	2.6739	.47396	10.901
	Lower group	1.5652	.50121	
16.	Upper group	2.6522	.48154	12.688
	Lower group	1.3696	.48802	
17.	Upper group	2.6087	.49344	12.110
	Lower group	1.3696	.48802	
18.	Upper group	2.6304	.48802	11.353
	Lower group	1.4565	.50361	
19.	Upper group	2.5870	.49782	11.062
	Lower group	1.4348	.50121	
20.	Upper group	2.5435	.50361	10.827
	Lower group	1.4130	.49782	
21.	Upper group	2.5217	.50505	11.127
	Lower group	1.3696	.48802	
22.	Upper group	2.5000	.50553	11.193
	Lower group	1.3478	.48154	
23.	Upper group	2.4783	.50505	11.283
	Lower group	1.3261	.47396	
24.	Upper group	2.4348	.50121	1.833
	Lower group	2.1739	.82474	
25.	Upper group	2.4130	.49782	11.365
	Lower group	1.2826	.45524	
26.	Upper group	2.3696	.48802	1.352
	Lower group	2.1739	.85126	
27.	Upper group	2.3478	.48154	10.570
	Lower group	1.3043	.46522	
28.	Upper group	2.3261	.47396	11.125

	Lower group	1.2609	.44396	
29.	Upper group	2.3043	.46522	10.646
	Lower group	1.2826	.45524	
30.	Upper group	2.2609	.44396	12.075
	Lower group	1.1957	.40109	
31.	Upper group	2.2391	.43127	9.056
	Lower group	1.3696	.48802	
32.	Upper group	2.2174	.41703	13.065
	Lower group	1.1522	.36316	
33.	Upper group	2.1739	.38322	14.569
	Lower group	1.1087	.31470	
34.	Upper group	2.1304	.34050	15.941
	Lower group	1.0870	.28488	

Item Relationship with Total Scores: The discrimination coefficients of the items related to achievement addiction were calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient between the score of each item and the total score on the achievement addiction scale. All correlation coefficients were found to be discriminant according to Allen's criterion, with the exception of two items. An item is considered acceptable if its correlation with the total score is equal to or greater than 0.30, and rejected if it is less than that (Allen & Yen, 1979, 124), as shown in Table (5.)

Table (5) Correlation coefficients between each item on the achievement addiction scale and its total score

Sequence	Its correlation coefficient	Sequence	Its correlation coefficient	Sequence	Its correlation coefficient
1	0.36	12	0.32	23	0.35
2	0.40	13	0.33	24	0.05
3	0.31	14	0.36	25	0.35
4	0.32	15	0.45	26	0.06
5	0.52	16	0.34	27	0.40
6	0.40	17	0.35	28	0.30
7	0.45	18	0.55	29	0.52
8	0.68	19	0.48	30	0.40
9	0.25	20	0.44	31	0.45
10	0.25	21	0.52	23	0.45
11	0.30	22	0.36	33	0.58
				34	0.35

Validity of the Scale: The apparent validity of any measurement instrument is achieved by presenting it to a group of experts before use. These experts are able to assess the suitability of the instrument's items for the trait it aims to measure, allowing the researcher to be reassured by their views and rely on the judgments agreed upon by the majority (Aiken, 1979: 7). Accordingly, the researchers achieved this type of validity for the Achievement Addiction Scale by presenting its items and instructions to a group of judges specialized in psychology, who approved the validity of the scale's items, instructions, alternatives, and scoring method.

Reliability of the Scale: Reliability was obtained for the Achievement Addiction Scale using two methods:

A-Retest: To calculate the reliability coefficient, a random sample of (60) male and female employees from the College of Basic Education was selected. The scale was re-administered to them two weeks after the first application. According to studies, the time period between applications ranges from one to two weeks. The relationship between the results of the two

applications was then calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient, and the result was (0.83). This value is considered appropriate for scientific research purposes.

B. Cronbach's alpha method: This mechanism is based on estimating the relationship between the scores of each item on the instrument, considering that each item represents an independent scale. The reliability coefficient affects the consistency of individual performance—that is, the similarity between the items on the scale. This mechanism provides the maximum value that the reliability coefficient can reach. To determine the level of reliability of the instrument, reliability was calculated using this mechanism on a reliability sample of (60) male and female employees affiliated with the College of Basic Education. The reliability coefficient reached (0.85), which is a good correlation coefficient for the reliability of the entire instrument. Scale Correction: The items of the achievement addiction scale were formulated in a way that measures the disorder. Response options for the item content were (I suffer greatly from it, I suffer moderately from it, I do not suffer from it), and scores (1, 2, 3) were assigned for each response applicable to the item.

Fourth: Final Application: After confirming the validity of the current research tool (Appendix 3), it was applied to the selected research sample of (250) male and female employees by directly applying the scale to the employees.

Fifth: Statistical Methods: To process the data for this research, the researchers used the following statistical methods: 1. T-test for a single sample

1. T-test for two independent samples
2. Pearson's correlation coefficient
3. Cronbach's alpha equation to determine reliability.

Chapter Four

Research Results

This chapter presents the results reached by the current research in accordance with its stated objectives. These results are discussed in light of the theoretical framework and previous studies, as follows:

1. Identifying achievement addiction among employees.

This objective was achieved by the researchers applying the achievement addiction scale to a sample of (250) male and female employees. The researchers extracted the arithmetic mean for the research sample members (75.6080), which is higher than the hypothetical mean for the scale of (64), with a standard deviation of (8.06639). After using a single-sample t-test, it was found that the calculated t-value (22.754) is higher than the tabulated value of (1.996), and is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.05) and a degree of freedom of (249), as shown in Table (6). This indicates that the employees have an addiction to achievement.

Table (6) T-test for the significance of the differences between the mean scores of achievement addiction and the hypothetical mean

Sample	Number	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Calculated T-value	Tabular T-value	Significance Level
موظفين	250	75.6080	8.06639	64	22.754	1.996	0.05

The current finding can be explained in light of Robinson's theory that employees develop higher levels of achievement addiction because the work environment supports it through reward systems, professional recognition, and pressure to achieve specific goals. Achievement is also a primary criterion for evaluating job performance, which drives individuals to become overly immersed in work and productive.

In Robinson's book "Chained to the Desk," he describes achievement addiction as a response to competitive work contexts that drive individuals to become pathologically attached to task

performance and strive for perfection. This is consistent with the results of the current research (Robinson, 1996:13)

2. Identify differences in achievement addiction according to gender (male-female.)

The arithmetic mean for the male sample of employees on the achievement addiction scale was (76.5470) and the standard deviation was (7.77540), while the arithmetic mean for the female sample on the same scale was (74.7820) and the standard deviation was (8.25479). After applying the t-test for two independent samples, the calculated t-value was (1.733), which is significant at the level of (0.05) and the degree of freedom (248), indicating that there are no differences between males and females in achievement addiction, as Table (7) illustrates.

Table (7) T-test for the significance of differences between the averages of achievement addiction scores according to the gender variable

مستوى الدلالة 0.05	القيمة التائية الجدولية	القيمة التائية المحسوبة	الانحراف المعياري	الوسط الحسابي	العدد	الجنس
غير ذات دلالة 0.05	1.996	1.733	7.77540	76.5470	117	ذكور
			8.25479	74.7820	133	اناث

The results in Table (7) showed no significant difference in achievement addiction between males and females.

The current result can be interpreted in light of Robinson's theory, which states that achievement addiction is not necessarily related to a specific gender, but rather to personality traits, beliefs about self-worth and success, and achievement-motivating work conditions. With women increasingly entering competitive work environments and rising social and professional expectations, achievement-related motivational patterns have become more similar between the sexes (Robinson, 1996:13).

Burke's study (2000) indicates that work or achievement addiction is not a phenomenon that distinguishes between males and females, but is influenced by factors such as work commitment, organizational expectations, and personal traits (such as perfectionism and intrinsic motivation).

First: Conclusions

1. Employees demonstrate a higher level of achievement addiction, which indicates that the work environment may foster achievement addiction, whether due to pressure, a culture of achievement, or incentives.
2. The drive or need for achievement is not affected by gender, meaning that both males and females experience similar levels of this behavior.

Second: Recommendations

1. Benefit positively from employees' addiction to achievement by designing motivational and development programs that help direct this behavior toward sustainable productivity.
2. Monitor the effects of this addiction on employees' mental and physical health through work-life balance programs.
3. Provide training courses on time and stress management to avoid the negative effects of achievement addiction.
4. Promote a culture of balanced achievement, rather than overachievement, which can lead to job burnout.
5. Conduct further studies to understand the factors that lead to increased achievement addiction among employees, such as the type of tasks, the work environment, or the organizational culture.

Third: Suggestions:

1. Study the relationship between achievement addiction and job satisfaction or burnout.

2. Study the impact of the work environment (public sector vs. private sector) on achievement addiction behavior.
3. Conduct qualitative studies to understand the psychological motivations behind this behavior among employees.

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