

# Is it all just a myth—does working too much actually affect your relationship?

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Traditionally we have been told that the longer you work, the harder it is to maintain romantic relations. However, a new study from the journal *Human Relations*, published by SAGE in partnership with The Tavistock Institute, has found the opposite: that there is in fact no negative association between the hours worked and relationship satisfaction.

In the study 285 couples took part to determine the effect of working hours on relationships. As the researchers explain:

"Conventional wisdom and research seem to suggest that partners in dual career-couples have to decide whether they would rather risk their careers or their romantic relationship [...] Our research questions the assumption that working longer hours is hazardous for all [romantic relationships](#)."

"Our study attempts to help answer the question of whether dual-career couples [relationships where both partners pursue their careers] should be hesitant to devote many hours to their work when they fear negative relationship consequences", the researchers continue.

By examining the associations between participants [working time](#), [private lives](#) and happiness in their respective relationships, the researchers found that couples compensated for the time lost with their partners by making the most of time they have after work.

The researchers explain how career driven people who are investing long hours into work, crucial in the pursuit of their career goals, are also aware that they can't have everything in their private lives.

As the researchers conclude:

"[...] there was no negative association between working time and [relationship satisfaction](#) [...] Our results challenge the common-sense assumption about a negative association between working time and relationship outcomes."

**More information:** "The longer your work hours, the worse your relationship? The role of selective optimization with compensation in the associations of working time with relationship satisfaction and self-disclosure in dual-career couples" [hum.sagepub.com/content/early/.../571188.full.pdf+html](http://hum.sagepub.com/content/early/.../571188.full.pdf+html)

Provided by SAGE

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