

The Relationship between Recruiter Burnout, Work Engagement and Turnover Intention: Evidence from Serbia

Tatjana Ivanovic, Sonja Ivancevic, Milica Maricic

University of Belgrade

Jove Ilica 154, Belgrade, Serbia

E-mail. tatjana.ivanovic@fon.bg.ac.rs; sonja.ivancevic@fon.bg.ac.rs; milica.maricic@fon.bg.ac.rs

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Contemporary research on disorders in modern-day work environment marks burnout among employees in different professions as an important disorder with serious consequences. Practice has shown that recruiters are one of the professions frequently facing burnout. The relationship between burnout, work engagement and turnover intention has often been investigated in the literature. However, even though scholars are increasingly interested in these relationships in other professions, there is a growing need for studies evaluating the relationship between the three concepts among human resource (HR) professionals, particularly recruiters. Having this in mind, the aim of this study is to identify, understand and examine the relationship between burnout, engagement and turnover intention of recruiters in Serbia. The data was collected using an online questionnaire within a sample of 100 recruiters in Serbia. Copenhagen Burnout Inventory was used for measuring burnout, UWES-9 for measuring work engagement and TIS-6 for measuring turnover intention. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used for evaluating the relationships between burnout, turnover intention and work engagement. The results of the research showed that work engagement has a negative impact on burnout and that burnout has a positive impact on turnover intention, while the relationship between work engagement and turnover intention was not confirmed. The correlation analysis confirmed all three examined relationships. The results largely support the findings from the literature for other professions confirming that employees who suffer from a high degree of burnout are more likely to have a turnover intention. Finally, the implications of these results and recommendations for organizations and recruiters themselves to prevent and decrease burnout are discussed. The findings of this study can make a contribution to the specific academic literature on burnout among recruiters and initiate further research on this topic of high interest.

Keywords: *Recruiter; Burnout; Engagement; Turnover Intention; Copenhagen Burnout Inventory; UWES.*

Introduction

Research on burnout in the workplace has become increasingly important as employers have begun to realize that numerous employees in different professions around the world suffer from burnout syndrome as one of the most serious disorders in contemporary work environment. Although the syndrome was originally examined among “service workers” (including helping professions, such as health care, teaching and social services) (Brackett *et al.*, 2010; Lee & Ok, 2012; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2009), research has proved that burnout syndrome is applicable to professionals from a variety of work contexts regardless of their job (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2011) thus expanding the concept of burnout to all jobs and professions (Llorens-Gumbau & Salanova-Soria, 2014).

Practice has shown that recruiters are one of the professions often facing burnout (e.g. De Angelis, 2012; Savage, 2013; Zoromski, 2007; Weeks, 2018), primarily because of the very nature of their job and the duties it includes. A recruiter’s job starts with receiving a request to fill in a vacancy and includes preparing a job advertisement, deciding on appropriate recruiting channel, informing the potential candidates, gathering the applications (Maier *et al.*, 2013), conducting interviews etc. often with strict deadlines and limited cost per hire. This is accompanied with daily contacts with different groups of people which

lead to emotional drains of recruiters. With all the challenges involved in the hiring process, it makes sense that the recruiters in organizations experience work pressure on a regular basis, which can put a lot of stress on them. Job stress can often leave recruiters feeling overwhelmed and burned-out (Sorgaard *et al.*, 2007) which can eventually lead to turnover of recruiters who cannot bear the pressure anymore.

The relationship between burnout, turnover intentions and work engagement has been empirically recognized (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) and often investigated in the literature (e.g. Lee & Shin, 2005; Plooy & Roodt, 2010). Nevertheless, despite an extensive body of the scientific literature about burnout in other professions, there is a lack of research dealing with recruiter burnout as well as its relationship with work engagement and turnover intention among recruiters. To our knowledge there are only few studies investigating burnout among HR professionals (e.g. Santos *et al.*, 2015; Santos *et al.*, 2016; Mustafa *et al.*, 2016; Mustafa *et al.*, 2014), but only one focusing on recruiters (Prusik & Szulawski, 2019). The majority of burnout literature that include HR professionals deals with their practices used for preventing and reducing burnout of other employees (e.g. Castanheira & Chambel, 2010), reducing turnover intention or increasing work engagement.

Even though the existence of work related disorders is slowly gaining the awareness of general public through

education, international health reports that include the Republic of Serbia provide alarming data. Namely, this year's Stada Group Health Report (2019) presented a research which was conducted from November until December 2018, and which included 18,010 respondents from nine European countries (approximately 2,000 people per country) including Serbia. The research found the highest rates of burnout in Eastern European countries, where Serbia was ranked the 2nd among all surveyed countries, with 66 percent of respondents who have already had a burnout or the feeling of being on the verge of it, while in other countries the numbers were not quite as extreme (Stada, 2019). Nevertheless, the results showed that the rising number of burnout cases is a real alarm signal for almost 70 percent of Europeans surveyed. For 41 percent, this trend shows that there is something wrong in today's working world. This applies particularly often in Serbia (57 percent), which has the highest percentage in this respect. From this data, it may be concluded that not only do the majority of the Serbs perceive that they have already experienced burnout or consider themselves to be in the risk of experiencing it soon, but also more than a half of them perceive that there is something wrong with the working world today. This reason is more than sufficient to investigate burnout more thoroughly and with the appropriate instruments among working professionals of this nation.

Having all this in mind, the present study attempts to address this gap, aiming at identifying, understanding and examining the relationship among burnout, engagement and turnover intention of recruiters, while the findings of this study can make a contribution to the specific and scarce academic literature in this field. In order to achieve these aims the paper firstly explains the recruiters' exposure to stress and burnout, then analyzes the three explored constructs and their mutual relationships, and finally presents the methodology and the results of empirical research.

Recruiters' Work-Related Stress and Burnout

All helping professions are at increased risk of experiencing burnout (Iwanicki & Schwab, 1981). Since human resource professionals' jobs, according to Niehouse (1981), primarily involve taking care of people and their problems, he concludes that they are prime candidates for suffering from burnout. Recruitment specialists have a particularly challenging job in comparison to other HR professionals since their daily duties require satisfaction of the different expectations of various groups of people, including clients/managers and candidates (Prusik & Szulawski, 2019). Their emotional investments into numerous contacts, for example through interviews, may lead to emotional exhaustion and make them susceptible to burnout syndrome (Prusik & Szulawski, 2019; Ratcliff, 1988). In addition, "as the point of entry for employees, the recruitment function plays a critical role in enhancing organizational survival and success in the extremely competitive and turbulent business environment" (Singh & Finn, 2003, p.395). This pressure is also increased with the ongoing transformation of HR sector role from an administrative expert to a strategic partner (Wright, 2008).

Moreover, this transformation is accompanied with another one that includes technological innovations that are being introduced in the process of recruiting - „the recruitment function has been undergoing dramatic changes as a result of information technology (IT)" (Singh & Finn, 2003, p.395), which simultaneously require acquiring new skills, which, as a result, intensifies recruiters' stress and increases their turnover intention (Panayotopoulou *et al.*, 2007; Lukaszewski *et al.*, 2008;). Another source of job stress related to this is such employees' potential perception of job losses that will follow the implementation of IT (Singh & Finn, 2003). Last but not least, it is important so emphasize that, regardless of their specific nature, organizational changes themselves are considered to be one of the key work-related stressor areas (Cousins *et al.*, 2004) and they can contribute to workers' burnout occurrence and even make them leave companies (Maier *et al.*, 2013). In this regard, Maier *et al.* (2013) are asking two questions - the first being if HR professionals will accept these changes (Wiblen *et al.*, 2010) and the second, whether there will be unintended consequences. Thus, burnout among HR professionals, as one of the potential consequences should be addressed.

However, there is an evident literature gap relating to the occurrence of burnout syndrome among HR workers and recruiters in particular. To our knowledge, the only study dealing with recruiters burnout is "The Relationship Between the Dark Triad Personality Traits, Motivation at Work, and Burnout Among HR Recruitment Workers" (Prusik & Szulawski, 2019), published in June, 2019, and conducted in Germany - a country which, according to the authors belongs in a group of so-called "WEIRD" countries (Western, Educated, Industrial, Rich, and Democratic) - an acronym that serves as a descriptor for the participants' setting (Haidt, 2012). Prusik & Szulawski (2019) comment that pan-cultural aspects of such settings of their study cannot be denied and are worthy of being investigated in the future. From this, we might infer that this very setting may provide some of the explanations of Germany's lower burnout rates in comparison to Serbia's in this year's Stada health report. Firstly, developed countries underwent technological transformation of the workplace before this change has transformed the work processes in developing countries (Kamel, 2005), and the ongoing transformation in the latter still might be a potential stressor. Secondly, a great number of intervention programs for burnout prevention on organizational level were implemented in Germany since the beginning of the 21st century (Awa *et al.*, 2010) so that they can decrease employee burnout levels. Thus, it would be significant to investigate more closely and compare the recruiters' burnout risk in a developing country, such as Serbia, and a developed one, such as Germany.

Taking all of the above into account, it is our opinion that recruiters' burnout risk should be tested and that the measures of preventions to this group of Serbian human resources professionals should be proposed if the burnout risk is proven to exist. Combating stressors at work can consequently contribute to employee retention (Griffeth *et al.*, 2000).

Linkage between Burnout and Work Engagement

The term “burnout” was introduced in the 1970s and has remained a challenging research focus across a wide range of academic and professional disciplines since. Burnout is usually considered to be a state of complete physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that is the result of prolonged involvement in emotionally demanding and stressful situations (Pines & Aronson, 1988). It is often emphasized that the crucial component dwells in the ascription of exhaustion and fatigue to specific areas or domains in individual’s life, such as work and client work. It represents “a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job” (Maslach et al., 2001, p.397). The constant stress and anxiety that an individual experiences at the workplace is gradually transferred to their personal life, seriously damaging their health and causing profound psychological problems in the long run. Burnout syndrome was given a code in classification of WHO - 373.0: Burn-out –State of vital exhaustion¹).

Burnout syndrome is predominantly defined by its three dimensions - exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy, i.e. high level of exhaustion and cynicism, and low level of professional inefficacy (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being overextended and depleted of individual’s emotional and physical resources. Workers feel “spent”, drained and used up, being left with no source to replenish their energy and face another challenge or help another person in need. Emotional exhaustion makes an essential element of burnout and presents the main individual stress dimension of burnout, frequently followed by physical exhaustion, illness and psychosomatic symptoms (Maslach, 1978). Cynicism, interpersonal dimension of burnout, denotes a negative, antagonistic, or an overly detached reaction to the job, frequently containing a loss of idealism, and often occurring as a response to the developing emotional exhaustion. In the beginning it serves as a self-protection mechanism; however, over time, this kind of detachment can have a dehumanizing effect. Professional inefficacy, the self-evaluation dimension of burnout, refers to a sense of low efficacy at work, often felt as a decline of productivity and competence at work. People develop a growing feeling of inadequacy related to their capability to perform the job well, which can eventually lead them to believe that the only possible outcome of their professional endeavors is failure.

According to Robinson et al. (2004) employee engagement has become a popular and frequently used term which has received much attention in the past two decades, while an increasing literature on the concept can be found in the academic literature. There are many definitions of employee engagement, mostly explaining employee engagement as intellectual and emotional commitment to the company (Richman, 2006; Shaw, 2005). Engagement refers to being psychologically present when occupying and performing a role within an organization (Kahn, 1990, 1992). Rothbard (2001, p. 656) defines engagement as psychological presence which involves attention and

absorption, whereby attention refers to “cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role”, while absorption “means being engrossed in a role and refers to the intensity of one’s focus on a role.” Generally, engagement can be defined as a positive affective relationship with the individual’s work (Alarcon & Edwards, 2010). Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) define engagement “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”. In their opinion, vigor is a positive emotional state which refers to high levels of energy, mental resilience and persistence in one’s work. Dedication is experienced when the individual recognizes his/her work as inspiring and important, feels enthusiastic and takes pride of it. Absorption refers to being entirely focused, deeply immersed and happily occupied in one’s work, through which the individual finds it difficult to detach of what he/she is working.

Both burnout and work engagement are related significantly with employee health and organizational performance (e.g. Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Taris, 2006). Researchers have been paying a lot of attention to the burnout - work engagement continuum. According to Schaufeli et al. (2002) the construct of engagement was created having burnout in mind. However, having in mind that these two concepts are highly correlated (Halbesleben, 2010), the relationship between burnout and work engagement has generated debates in the academic literature.

Initially, burnout researchers defined work engagement as the opposing or positive antipode of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Maslach *et al.*, 2001). According to Maslach and Leiter (1997), burnout occurs when work engagement declines, while dedication, vigor and absorption transform into dimensions of burnout as defined by Maslach (1986) - exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy, respectively. Burnout is claimed to be the erosion of these constructs, while engagement refers to their strengthening. Work engagement is ‘characterized by a high level of energy and strong identification with one’s work’, while burnout is ‘characterized by the opposite: a low level of energy combined with poor identification with one’s work’ (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003, p. 5). According to this standpoint, Gonzalez-Roma et al. (2006) and Schaufeli & Salanova, (2007) have found that the core dimensions of burnout and work engagement represent opposites of each other. Having this in mind, burnout and work engagement can be treated as co-dependent and inseparable constructs that are to a certain extent negatively correlated (e.g. Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

However, subsequent research demonstrated that burnout and work engagement are different concepts that describe related but distinct forms of employee well-being (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014). For instance, when an individual does not suffer from burnout, it does not necessarily mean that they are engaged in their work (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011). Some employees may experience engagement and feel burned-out simultaneously

¹ *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10)-WHO*, <https://icd.who.int/>

or within a short span of time (Timms *et al.*, 2012). For example, if a person's work make them feel emotionally depleted once a week, it does not automatically mean that they will not burst with energy in the same week (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Seen from this perspective, engagement and burnout are autonomous states which, in view of their opposed nature, are considered to be negatively correlated (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Moreover, research has confirmed that burnout and work engagement are separate constructs (Denton, Newton, & Bower, 2008; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002; Schaufeli, Taris, & van Rhenen, 2008; Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012; Langelaan *et al.*, 2006; Duran, Extremera, & Rey, 2004), greatly interrelated, but essentially different and, for that reason, not just two antipodal ends of one continuum. To conclude, instead of seeing them as two opposing poles, engagement and burnout should be treated as independent, but negatively related constructs. (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In this paper we take this perspective by using different instruments for measuring burnout and engagement. Considering this, the following hypothesis was defined:

H₁: Burnout and work engagement are negatively related among recruiters.

Linkage between Burnout and Turnover Intention

The predecessors and outcomes of work burnout have been thoroughly examined (Demerouti *et al.*, 2001; Kim, Shin, & Swanger, 2009) and burnout has been associated with different negative responses to the job (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998) including different forms of job withdrawal. Job withdrawal may have different forms including turnover intention, actual turnover and absenteeism (Leiter & Maslach, 2009).

Employee turnover describes the phenomena of employees leaving organizations on a voluntary basis (Shaw *et al.*, 2005). By definition, it represents the termination of a person's employment with an organization (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). Employee turnover entails superfluous financial and non-financial costs that may cause a detrimental effect on the organization's performance, especially when competent and experienced employees leave an organization voluntarily (Lingard, 2003). Although all employees' turnover intentions to leave the organization may not always lead to turnover behaviour, research has shown that employees' intention to leave the current job is the best predictor of actual turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000); Mobley, Horner & Hollingsworth, 1978; Firth *et al.*, 2004; Tett & Meyer 1993; Chang *et al.*, 2013).

The issue of turnover intention is a popular topic of research in the field of human resource management, primarily having in mind that an employee's turnover is costly for both individuals and organizations (Lee *et al.*, 2004; Dess & Shaw, 2001; Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012). Turnover intention refers to an employee's thinking of leaving the organization in the future (Tett & Meyer, 1993) or the probability that the employee will stay within the organization (Ciftcioglu, 2011). Blau (2007) defines it as individuals' intent to withdrawn from their occupation/organization and look for other job or other career alternatives.

A number of studies have suggested that burnout causes considerable costs for both employees and companies because of different factors, including high employee turnover (e.g., Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Leiter, 1988). A number of empirical studies have demonstrated the positive correlation between turnover and job burnout (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Lee & Shin 2005; Maslach *et al.*, 2001; Jung & Kim, 2012).

Increased turnover intention is likely to appear as a consequence of burnout (Kahill, 1988). Numerous studies have found a positive relationship between job burnout and employees' turnover intentions in diverse settings and occupations (Babakus, Yavas, & Ashill, 2010; Zhang & Feng, 2011; Scanlan & Still, 2013; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010; Choi *et al.*, 2012; Laschinger & Fida, 2014; Leiter & Maslach, 2009; Geurts, Schaufeli, & De Jonge, 1998; Fogarty *et al.*, 2000; Lu & Gursoy, 2013; Oyeleye *et al.*, 2013; Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Singh *et al.*, 1994; Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Jones, Norman, & Weir, 2010; Lingard, 2003). These studies showed that the intention to leave the job is more likely to occur for the individuals that have a high degree of burnout syndrome in a large number of professions (Huang, Chuang, & Lin, 2003; Shimizu, Feng, & Nagata, 2005). There is only a small number of research showing that the relation between turnover and burnout is weak, but they imply the negative consequences for both the remained burned-out employees and their organizations (e.g. Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003). Therefore, the following hypothesis was defined:

H₂: Burnout is positively related to turnover intention among recruiters.

Linkage between Work Engagement and Turnover Intention

A turnover intention, thinking of resigning and intending to look for another job, is a job-related consequence of burnout and engagement (Alarcon & Edwards, 2010). Engagement, related to employees' positive experiences and emotions, is supposed to enhance positive work-related behavior, including increased job satisfaction (Saks, 2006), better job performance (Sonntag, 2003), greater attachment to organization and lower tendency to leave the organization (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Engaged employees often find it difficult to separate from their jobs for they have made great investment in their organization, which may lead to decreased turnover intentions (Alarcon & Edwards, 2010). Having this in mind, we set the following hypothesis:

H₃: Work engagement is negatively related to turnover intention among recruiters.

Methodology

To accept or reject the hypotheses, we opted to use structural equation modelling (SEM). The SEM analysis gained in popularity as it lies on principles of factor analysis and regression or path analysis (Stein, Morris, & Nock, 2012). On one side, it can reduce the dimensionality of the observed phenomenon, while at the same time, it provides information on the relationship between the newly formed,

latent, variables or constructs. The analysis invokes a measurement model that defines latent variables using one or more observed, measured variables, and a structural model that imputes relationships between latent variables. Due to the above-stated benefits, the SEM analysis became a commonly used statistical analysis for the evaluation of the plausibility of a hypothesized model (Guarino, 2004).

The question which arises when conducting the SEM analysis is how to determine whether the data fit the proposed model. To do so, here we used the Chi-square statistics, Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), Comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). The Chi-square statistics measured the magnitude of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariances matrices (Li-tze Hu & Bentler, 1998). A model which has a good fit to the collected data should provide an insignificant result on the 0.05 level. Nevertheless, this rarely occurs as the Chi-square statistics is sensitive to sample size (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). The RMSEA indicates how well the model fits the population's covariance matrix (Kline, 1998). Hooper et al. (2008) state that a model has good fit if RMSEA is below 0.06. The CFI compares the fit of the proposed model to the fit of the model in which the constructs are uncorrelated (Bentler, 1990). Values of CFI range from 0 to 1 and values above 0.9 are observed as good model fit (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). The TLI observes the discrepancy between the chi-squared value of the hypothesized model and the chi-squared value of the null model. Values of TLI above 0.9 are interpreted as good model fit (Li-tze Hu & Bentler, 1999).

So far, SEM analysis has been used with much success in exploring the relation between burnout, turnover intention and work engagement in different professions. For example, Chong and Monroe (2015) observed the impact of the antecedents and consequences of job burnout on junior accountants' turnover intentions. Van Bogaert et al. (2009) analyzed the same, but among nurses, while Kim and Lee (2009) studied burnout, turnover intention and supervisory communication among social workers. In a more recent study, Mansour and Tremblay (2018) set out to analyze job stress, burnout and intention to leave within the hotel industry. Led by the good results in the studies mentioned above, we also used the SEM analysis in our research.

Measures

Burnout. Even though the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach and Jackson, 1986) remains the most widely used instrument to measure burnout in the scientific literature, the present study utilizes a the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI) developed by Kristensen et al. (2005) for several reasons: CBI is freely accessible instrument that is psychometrically robust and extensively applicable to a large scope of professions including various types of client work (Santos *et al.*, 2015).

The CBI has three subscales to evaluate each dimension of burnout, including *Personal burnout*, *Work-related*

burnout, and *Client-related burnout*. Being the nucleus of the burnout construct, *Personal burnout* indicates the state of prolonged psychological and physical exhaustion. *Work-related burnout* refers to the state of prolonged psychological and physical exhaustion that is recognized by the individual as connected to his/her work. *Client-related burnout* refers to the state of prolonged psychological and physical exhaustion that is observed by the individual as connected to his/her work or clients.

Work engagement. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale UWES-9 (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006) was used to measure work engagement in this study. According to Mills et al. (2012) UWES-9 is probably a better to use measure of Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) original longer UWES-17. It has been validated in several countries (e.g., Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Storm & Rothmann, 2003; Yi-Wen & Yi-Qun, 2005). UWES-9 consists of three subscales: *Dedication*, *Vigor*, and *Absorption* (Schaufeli, et al., 2006). All items were scored on a seven-point rating scale from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

Turnover intention. Turnover intention was measured with TIS-6 which was found by Bothma & Roodt (2013) to be a reliable and a valid scale for measuring turnover intention. It consists of five items, and all items are scored on a five-point rating scale from 1 to 5.

Sample

The online survey was created and distributed in February and March 2019 as a part of more comprehensive research that included the influence of demographic variables on recruiter burnout. The potential respondents were contacted via e-mail. The completed surveys were analyzed using statistical software SPSS 22 and AMOS 22. The survey contained four major sections: *Demographic information*, *Copenhagen Burnout Inventory*, *Work engagement scale*, and *Turnover intention scale*. The first section aimed to measure the basic demographic information such as gender, age, country of residence, and work years as a recruiter. Values of specific burnout and work engagement dimensions were measured as mean values of the items which consist include them.

We decided to send our questionnaire to 315 recruiters that we contacted via e-mail. In total, we received 100 responses (response rate was 31.75 %). Having in mind that the relevant sample for all HR professionals (not only recruiters) in Cranet² research (CRANET, 2015), as the largest one conducted in this country in the field of HRM, was 874 (from 158 private and public sector organizations analyzed), as well as the fact that there are less than 3000 recruiters present on LinkedIn working in Serbia (including recruiters, sourcers, talent acquisition specialists and freelance recruiters), we concluded that the sample of 100 recruiters or professionals involved in the process of recruiting would be appropriate and relevant for this research. We observed gender discrepancy as we had 77 female and 23 male recruiters. The mean age of the covered

² Cranet is an international network of over 40 universities and business schools coordinated by Cranfield School of Management, which conducts a regular international comparative survey of organizational policies and practices in comparative Human Resource Management (HRM). Serbia

has been a Cranet member since 2007, and the latest report was published in 2015.

recruiters is 33.41 with the standard deviation of 6.997, while the age range is from 22 to 53. The respondents have a mean experience of 6.040 years in recruiting with a standard deviation of 4.726. It can be concluded that our sample covered predominantly young recruiters who already have previous experience in the field.

One of the suggested pre-tests of the SEM analysis is the inspection of the reliability of the proposed scales. Namely, the internal consistency, the level up to which the proposed items (questions) measure the same concept, should be measured (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The most commonly used metric for internal consistency is the Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) which takes values from 0 to 1. The lower bound of 0 indicates that there is no internal consistency, while 1 indicates the opposite. There

has been debate on the acceptable values of the Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), values between 0.70 and 0.95 are acceptable.

We obtained the Cronbach's alpha in two levels: per scale and latent construct (Table 1). On the level of scales, the internal consistency ranges from 0.711 (*Turnover intention*) to 0.969 (*Dedication*). All alphas are above the 0.7 threshold, indicating that all scales are consistent. We can observe that the internal consistency of the scales is high although some scales consist of just three items. In the next step, we obtained Cronbach's alpha per latent construct. On the level of constructs, the internal consistency is 0.928 (*Work engagement*) and 0.910 (*Burnout*). The conclusion of the analysis is that the data is suitable for the SEM analysis.

Table 1

Cronbach's Alfa per Scale and Latent Construct with the Number of Items per Scale

	<i>Burnout</i>			<i>Work engagement</i>			<i>Turnover intention</i>
	<i>Personal</i>	<i>Work</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Dedication</i>	<i>Vigor</i>	<i>Absorption</i>	/
Items	5	7	6	3	3	3	6
α (scale)	0.926	0.869	0.957	0.969	0.907	0.920	0.711
α (construct)	0.910			0.928			/

Results

Our initial model aimed to inspect how *Work engagement* impacts *Burnout* and *Turnover intention*, and

how *Burnout* influences *Turnover intention*. The proposed model and the hypotheses are presented in Figure 1.

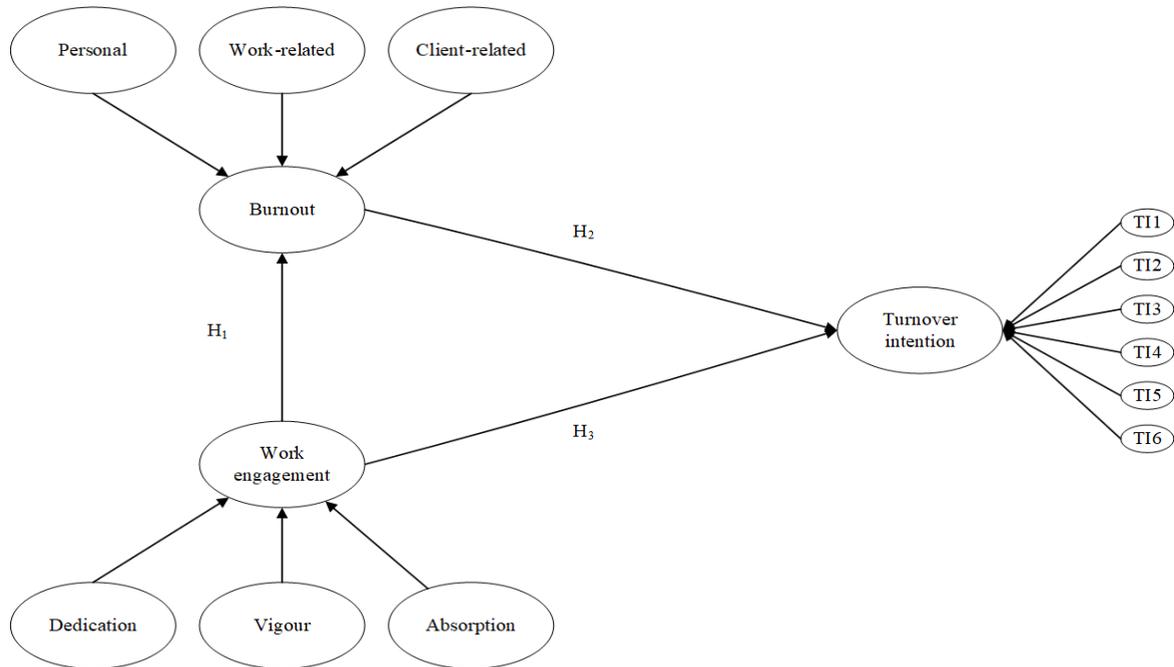


Figure 1. Proposed Model

The initial model had relatively poor fit to the data (Chi-square=164.415, df=51, p<0.000, RMSEA=0.150, CFI=0.855, TLI=0.779). Therefore, in order to modify our model, we removed the insignificant paths and variables from the model and used modification indices. The significance of paths was measured using the critical ratio (C.R), whereas C.R. above 1.96 in absolute values indicates a statistically significant path. Only one variable proved to

be insignificant, "How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level, should it be offered to you?" with C.R. of 0.261. Also, we found no statistically significant impact of *Work engagement* on *Turnover intention* (C.R.=0.620). The final model had a better fit to the data (Chi-square=69.878, df=38, p<0.000, RMSEA=0.092, CFI=0.958, TLI=0.926). The assessment of the outer model is given in Table 2.

Taking a closer look at the model of *Burnout*, it can be concluded that *Work engagement* has a statistically significant negative impact on *Burnout*. The value of the standardized regression coefficient is 0.442 in absolute value indicating a moderate effect. *Work engagement* explains 19.5% of the variability of *Burnout*. Having in

mind that *Burnout* has just one predictor, we can say that the obtained model is of satisfactory quality. The model of *Turnover intention* is of similar quality as 20.5 % of its variability can be explained through *Burnout*. *Burnout* has a positive impact on *Turnover intention*, indicating that increased burnout increases turnover intention.

Table 2

Assessment of the Outer Model

Latent construct	Determinant(s)	Standardized regression coefficient	C.R.
<i>Burnout</i> (R ² =0.195)	<i>Work engagement</i>	-0.442**	-4.533
<i>Turnover intention</i> (R ² =0.205)	<i>Burnout</i>	0.453**	4.167

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, C.R. – critical ratio

To additionally explore the created model, we inspected the inner models; each latent variable. The assessment of the inner models is given in Table 3. Within latent variables, the regression coefficient of one variable must be fixed and therefore, it is not tested for statistical significance. Accordingly, the C.R. cannot be obtained. Within *Burnout*, all three types of burnout have positive standardized coefficients and are statistically significant. As expected, the relationship is such that if each type of burnout increases, the burnout increases. The standardized regression coefficients within burnout range from 0.823 to 0.969, indicating that there is a balance in the impact of different

types of burnout on the overall burnout. Analyzing the latent construct *Work engagement*, again, all coefficients are positive and statistically significant, meaning that the rise of each dimension will increase the overall work engagement. Finally, in the model of *Turnover intention*, contrary to the previous two latent constructs, imbalance in the importance of items is detected. Namely, the coefficients vary from 0.433 (*TI5*) to 0.906 (*TI3*). An overall assessment of the inner model indicates that all coefficients are statistically significant and positive, with high loadings. This indicates that the latent constructs are well constructed (Allen et al., 2019).

Table 3

Assessment of the Inner Models

Latent construct	Determinant(s)	Standardized regression coefficient	C.R.
<i>Burnout</i>	<i>Personal burnout</i>	0.909	/
	<i>Work-related burnout</i>	0.969**	15.333
	<i>Client-related burnout</i>	0.823**	8.570
<i>Work engagement</i>	<i>Dedication</i>	0.986	/
	<i>Vigor</i>	0.799**	12.039
	<i>Absorption</i>	0.922**	18.162
<i>Turnover intention</i>	<i>How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs? (TI1)</i>	0.769	/
	<i>How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals? (TI2)</i>	0.720**	7.096
	<i>How often have you considered leaving your job? (TI3)</i>	0.906**	8.585
	<i>To what extent is your current job satisfying your personal needs? (reversed) (TI5)</i>	0.433**	4.654
	<i>How often do you look forward to another day at work? (TI6)</i>	0.634**	6.162

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, C.R. – critical ratio

To additionally scrutinize the model, we obtained the correlation coefficients between the latent variables (Table 4). The correlation coefficients between *Work engagement* and *Burnout* and *Turnover intention* and *Burnout* are equal to regression coefficients already analyzed previously.

However, it is of interest to observe the correlation coefficient between *Turnover intention* and *Engagement*. Namely, the relationship is weak but negative, showing that high work engagement decreases the level of turnover intention.

Table 4

Correlation between Latent Constructs

	<i>Burnout</i>	<i>Work engagement</i>	<i>Turnover intention</i>
<i>Burnout</i>	1		
<i>Work engagement</i>	-0.442**	1	
<i>Turnover intention</i>	0.453**	-0.200**	1

Note: ** $p < 0.01$

Discussion and Conclusion

This study provides a valuable contribution to the literature regarding the relationship of recruiter burnout, work engagement and intention to leave.

The SEM analysis confirmed Hypothesis 1 indicating that work engagement has a statistically significant negative impact on burnout. The obtained result is in line with the previous research of (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Timms et

al., 2012; Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008). The results of our analysis confirm the Hypothesis 2, which presumed that burnout has a positive impact on turnover intention. According to the various research, employees who suffer from a high-degree of burnout in different professions are more likely to have a turnover intention. Some of the authors who came to the same conclusion are (Babakus, Yavas & Ashill, 2010; Zhang & Feng, 2011; Huang *et al.*, 2003; Shimizu *et al.*, 2005; Cropanzano *et al.*, 2003; Jones *et al.*, 2010; Leiter & Maslach, 2009; Lu & Gursoy, 2013). Hypothesis 3, which explored the relationship between work engagement and turnover intention, was not confirmed using SEM analysis. Namely, the obtained coefficient is positive and not statistically significant. To additionally explore the hypotheses, we conducted the correlation analysis. The results of the correlation analysis confirm all three hypotheses. Therefore, we can conclude that the Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are confirmed and that the results related to Hypothesis 3 are inconclusive as SEM analysis rejected it, while the correlation analysis accepted it. Our results are partly inconsistent with Du Plooy & Roodt (2010) whose study confirmed that burnout was significantly positively related to turnover intention of employees in an ICT company, and work engagement was significantly negatively related to turnover intention.

Research has consistently demonstrated that employee burnout has substantial negative consequences both for individuals and organizations (e.g. Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Taris & Schreurs, 2009). Having in mind the strategic importance of recruitment for an organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2003) and the growing competition in the labor market, the crucial role of recruiters in the overall recruitment process has been recognized by researchers and practitioners (Carless & Wintle, 2007).

The recruitment industry requires resilience and mental toughness because it has so many variables that cannot be controlled nor predicted. Emotional drains related to recruiters' job make recruiting a tough and stressful job and cause burnout for many recruiters. Once a recruitment professional feels emotionally "spent" and hits the burnout phase, the individual, the organization and the client greatly suffer. Therefore, a lot of attention should be paid to recruiter's well-being.

At the national level, one of the measures that we strongly recommend is that national HR associations (for example, Association of HR professionals of Serbia -

AHRP) implement policies which require recruiters (or professionals involved in recruiting) to be tested once or twice a year using a CBI (or another burnout measuring instrument) in order to measure their burnout level or the risk of its occurrence. Also, recruiters should undergo burnout prevention trainings and develop appropriate mechanisms for burnout prevention.

Comprehending the burnout role may provide management with the guidelines of how to reduce its damaging effects (Elci *et al.*, 2018). For example, companies can provide more frequent shorter holidays as well as more breaks for recruiters during the working days. Allowing recruiters to have more flexible work arrangements, such as flexible working hours or the possibility for telecommuting, as well as creating more positive and fun working environment is always a good way to reduce stress. Companies should also attempt to create such an organizational culture that promotes support, problem sharing and mutual assistance. Providing possibilities for physical activity to the recruiters during the workweek can also increase work engagement and reduce burnout risk. Recruiters themselves should be encouraged to developed coping mechanisms to handle all the negativity that comes with that much failure, huge variation in emotions and disappointment caused by rejections of job candidates faced in their everyday work.

As a consequence, all of these can lead to decrease in recruiters' turnover intention, and help to reduce their actual turnover and related costs.

One of the limitations of this study is the response rate. In this regard we recommend that this research should be expanded with the help of the national HR association that can take part in conducting the study and potentially increase the response rate and the number of participants. Another limitation of the study can refer to the unequal number of male and female respondents.

Possible future directions of the study may involve extending the research to other HR professionals and also to carry out a similar research in other developing countries and compare the results. We also suggest conducting the same research with the use of Maslach Burnout Inventory – MBI, in which different burnout dimensions are tested, and thus indicate the most problematic areas identified by both instruments and create an integrated burnout prevention strategy.

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