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An Investigation into the Causes and Potential Moderators of Burnout and Labour Turnover of Frontline Employees in the Hospitality Industry – a Case Study of Five-star Hotels in Budapest

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Abstract

Burnout and labour turnover are one of the most often occurring negative issues in five-star hotels, as they are not just time consuming, but also costly and give bad reputation to the hotel, especially in the eyes of potential future employees. The aim of this research is to find the most significant common cause/-s of burnout and labour turnover of frontline employees in the hospitality industry, by way of a case study of ten five- star hotels in Budapest. It is going to be achieved by analysing the most significant contributors of burnout and labour turnover. The method of this research is quantitative, as it is going to objectively analyse all of the 300 targeted front-line employee surveys from ten five-star hotels in Budapest. The findings clearly show the main causes of the above- mentioned issues and also the relationship chain between some of them. For the research findings primary research is used by the researcher: two main models about the causes of burnout and labour turnover and four different case studies from Turkey and Egypt were used. The recommendation of this study contributes to the hotel industry, highlighting within five-star hotels. It reviews all aspects in relation to the findings, which hotels should pay attention to and spend more time to prevent those moderators in the future.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background Information

In recent years, the hospitality industry has come to assume increasing significance in national economies across the world, accounting for 10% of global GDP in 2019, with the number of hospitality employees growing from 6% to 7% annually despite the fact that this sector has the most reported cases of employee burnout (Global Hospitality Portal, 2019). However, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in November 2019, and the seismic effect it has had on every aspect of human activity, this industry has been one of the most severely impacted. The aim of this paper is not to examine the consequences of the pandemic on the hospitality industry, which is deservedly well-documented, but to study the influence of burnout and exhaustion in the industry with regard to labour turnover and the significant common cause/-s of them. Tourism may have experienced a collapse, but burnout was a serious issue before the advent of COVID and will doubtless be one after the industry, hopefully, recovers. Hence, it will continue to demand our attention. The hospitality industry has contributed significantly to ameliorating the unemployment rate in the European Union, as more than 16 million job opportunities were, prior to COVID, to be found in the hospitality sector. In Budapest, this industry provided notable employment opportunities for the so-called millennial generation (24-39 years old) as

well as for the so-called generation X (40-55 years old) (Kansasa,2020). However, pursuing a career in hospitality is not appealing for several individuals due to the excessive level of stress, and the risk of exhaustion and burnout, which cause significant labour turnover (Mohan, 2017, cited by Kansasa, 2020). This is particularly the case in Budapest, where the level of frontline employee burnout and labour turnover in the hospitality sector, especially in five-star hotels, is reported to have had the highest figure compared to other industries (Lederer, 2017). In Hungary, hospitality employees are often kept in one position for several years and cannot progress in their career, with negligible increase in salary and limited scope for their future, besides which, they are likely to experience considerable stress on a daily basis (Compson, 2015).

Burnout and labour turnover are occupational hazards occurring in hotels around the world, particularly in Hungary (Maslach and Leiter, 2008; Ineson, Benke and László, 2013). The hotel staff is required to be in consistently good physical and mental condition. It is therefore unsurprising that hotel employees are often at risk of losing their composure. Furthermore, high expectations, competition among colleagues and working conditions generate stress at various levels (Albattat, 2013). It is reported in a case study in Budapest that frontline employees were continually confronted by the following challenges: impatient guests, persistent occupational stress and excessive working hours (Lederer, Van Niekerk and Okumus, 2017). It is extremely important for the hotel management to decrease this pressure on their employees, as it is they who, ultimately, are responsible for the negative effects. The wellbeing of employees has a great impact on a hotel's reputation and revenue, and the lack of this wellbeing leads to greater problems, such as a decrease in guest satisfaction and guest loyalty (O'Neill, 2011, cited by Lederer et al., 2017). Thus, hotels have tried to find a solution by generating new rules and regulations aimed at meeting the needs of employees (Lu and Gursoy, 2016). Nonetheless, despite great efforts having been made to reduce stress levels and the rate of employee turnover, these dilemmas still appear to have been accelerated (Albattat, 2013).

1.2 Rationale

Several studies have been conducted on employee burnout, exhaustion and labour turnover in the hospitality industry. However, the question of what could be the most significant common causes of burnout and labour turnover has not been addressed to any great extent (Crotts, Everett, Ledgerwood, 1999; Civilidag, 2014; Hoang, 2018; Lu, 2016). Only a few studies

conducted by Wen et al. (2020) have focused on the possible moderators of labour turnover, or burnout (Wen et al.,2020), but not their common causes. Zopiatis (2014) claims that burnout appears to be a potential moderator of labour turnover, but due to thecomplexity of the problem it is difficult to draw a clear conclusion as to whether burnout is the one and only moderator of labour turnover, or whether there are other major influencing factors. However, there seem to be common moderators between them as well, which are connecting them in a way, so that they can be seen as two different issues (Skanlan, Still, 2019; Wen, Zhou, Hu, Zhang, 2020). In order to understand the significant common causes of these two hazards, it is necessary to analyse the connections between the factors that lead to them (Albattat, 2013). Crotts et al. (2018) studied the effect of an individual's personality on job burnout and employee turnover.

Furthermore, other studies identify connections between management and leadership style and job burnout, employee turnover and exhaustion (Burke and Deszca, 1986; Demir et al., 2003; Lee and Ashforth, 1993; cited by Burke and Greenglass, 2001). However, these studies have only focused on senior managers or employees with higher positions and have not examined those working in the frontline.

Moreover, the majority of the research on burnout and labour turnover in the hospitality industry has been conducted in countries such as Sri Lanka or Turkey (Kuruüzüm, 2008; Civilidag, 2014; Tepeci, 2016).

There is a lack of research regarding this topic in Europe, especially in Hungary. Furthermore, there is no study of five-star hotels in Budapest that analyses the connections and common causes between burnout and employee turnover (Pienaar and Willemse, 2008). Therefore, this paper is intended to examine the different moderators between labour turnover and burnout and help hospitality employers in Budapest identify their significant commonalities. It is hoped that this will complement the studies conducted by Crotts et al. (1999) on the various aspects related to the connection between burnout and labour turnover, and thereby suggest ways of ameliorating burnout issues for frontline employees.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to find the most significant common cause/-s of burnout and labour turnover of frontline employees in the hospitality industry, by way of a case study of ten

five-star hotels in Budapest. To achieve this aim, the following objectives have been set:

-identification of the external and internal reasons for burnout

-critical analyses of the factors that lead to labour turnover

-evaluation of the connection between contributors to burnout and labour turnover, highlighting commonalities and ranking their significance

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, that of the Literature Review, the external and internal factors of burnout will be investigated by introducing Compson's Theoretical Model of Burnout (2015). Moreover, the potential moderators of labour turnover and the various connections between role stress, burnout and turnover intentions will be identified and analysed. To this end, the "Role Stress and Turnover Intention" Model (Wen et al., 2020) will be used. In Section 2.3, that of empirical research, background information will be supplied about the models that were applied in the case studies. Both the positive and the negative aspects of the used theories and models will be introduced, and the study will indicate how they have been disputed or confirmed by other researchers.

2.2 Conceptual and theoretical background

2.2.1 The Theoretical Model of Burnout

In her Theoretical Model of Burnout (Figure 1), Compson (2015) presents the possible causes of the issue of burnout related to the world of work, and highlights the most important factors for individuals to avoid emotional disorders. The model (Figure 1) consists of three parts. The first part starts from the outside with external factors, which may be potential influencers of the second part, which is described as the presence of the following internal factors: exhaustion, cynicism and powerlessness. Finally, in the centre of the model, there is the third part, that of burnout. According to Maslach (1982, cited by Demerouti, 2001), "burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment, that can occur among people who do "people work" of some kind". By the term "people work", the researcher means those employees who perform physical work and serve other people face to face, with social interaction (Demerouti, 2001). The creator of this model claimed that many factors can lead to burnout, as it can have "internal and external"

causes (Compson, 2015). These causes may be based on emotions, on the individual's surroundings and on his or her intelligence (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; McGrath, 1976, cited by Compson, 2015).
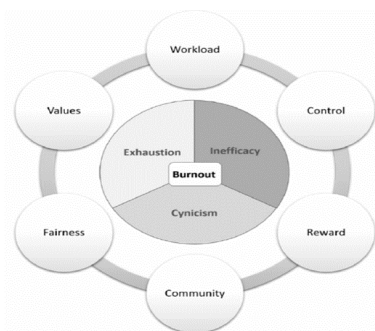

Figure 1: The Theoretical Model of Burnout (Compson, 2015)

Some researchers who agree with the structure of the model claimed that there was only one basic question regarding the model that had to be answered in order to overcome these issues: "What keeps people healthy even if they encounter high degrees of workload?" (Richter, Hacker, 1998, cited by Compson,2015). There are many ways of approaching this question: "in a cognitive way, an emotional way, and a social way", among others (Richter, Hacker, 1998, cited by Compson,2015). The answer lies in health protecting factors, in other words, resources (Demerouti, Nachreiner, Bakker, Schaufeli, 2001). It is important for individuals to have a goal in their career that is encouraged by someone, and to develop during the time they spend in their position, besides reducing the psychological costs of their job (Richter and Hacker, 1998). Other researchers assume that if the workload is high, it will positively influence the increase in workers' being fatigued, which will have a negative impact on work performance. Over time, poor work performance will lead to dissatisfaction in the workplace and finally it will lead to burnout (Smith and Smith, 2017). Comparing these two statements, the first analyses and approaches the issue from three aspects (in a cognitive way, an emotional way, and a social way) and suggests that employees should have a goal in their career in order to positively overcome any occurring problems, whereas the second draws a straight line leading from high workload to burnout. As the second statement does not take other influencing factors into account and states that from "high workloadthere is no way back to burnout", it could have some limitations (Smith and Smith, 2017).

With regard to this model, not only Schaufeli (2001) but also Compson (2015) agrees, asserting

that employees sometimes become so exhausted or disillusioned due to a certain incident or bad experience that they cannot overcome it, especially is the workload is high, despite the possibility that these incidents may previously have been favourable for them. As a solution, Compson (2015) suggests robust burnout, which will help the individual overcome these external issues. Furthermore, Schaufeli (2001) advises a self-protection mechanism. Both recommendations concentrate on "emotional based strategies", the attitudes that employees should adopt in these situations in order to minimise stress, although Schaufeli (2001) does not address this idea in depth. However, as Compson (2015) stated "employees should not keep an emotional distance between their surroundings in the workplace", for example their colleagues, and themselves. If they are open to each other, it will be easier to overcome stressful situations (Compson, 2015). In contrast to Compson, Aronowitz (1973) stated that "if employees keep an emotional distance from their job", the risk of suffering from burnout would be less than if they did not do so. Both statements may apply to certain situations, depending on the personality and preferences of an employee. Humanity has always been characterised by its diversity, which is why we cannot draw a clear conclusion about these statements made by Compson (2015) and Aronowitz (1973, cited by Compson,2015).

In addition, contrary to Compson (2015), Demerouti and Nachreiner (2001) identified the three main dimensions of the internal issues as exhaustion, powerlessness and mental fatigue, rather than cynicism, and that these three are related to each other. The researchers asserted that the best way to avoid these problems is if individuals apply for jobs that they truly want to do. While several people intend to do this, due to circumstances, they come to experience burnout or want to leave their job (Smith et al., 2017). This model also shows, besides the internal factors of exhaustion, cynicism and powerlessness, the following six external factors, which an employer should not ignore: "workload, control, reward, community, fairness and values" (Compson,2015). According to Compson (2015), these external factors depend on various conditions, such as the "environment in the hotel, other employers and employees, and the hotel's philosophy, purposes and goals". It is difficult to organise all the affairs of a hotel according to a perfect plan, but if the management pay due regard to these factors, they can create a loyal, motivated community with low levels of employee turnover or burnout.

2.2.2 The Theoretical Model of Role Stress and Turnover Intention

The "Role Stress and Turnover Intention" model (Figure 2) describes various potential moderators by frontline employees in the hospitality industry that can lead to labour turnover or / and burnout, and shows the potential connections between each factor (Wen, Zhou, Hu and Zhang, 2020). The main causes or labour turnover can be role stress (where workload plays the biggest role for its development), service climate, exhaustion or even burnout.
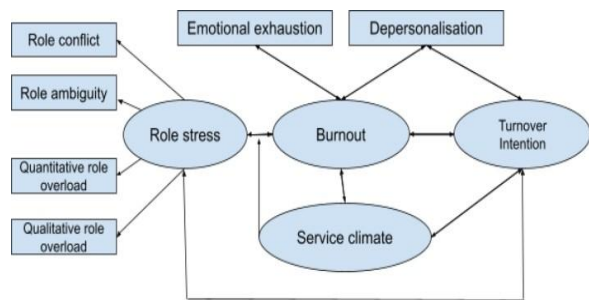

Figure 2: The Theoretical Model of Role Stress and Turnover Intention (Wen, 2020; modified by Busa, 2021)

According to Khan (1964), role stress is "the result of communication and interaction between role senders and receivers". This definition is based on the classical organisation theory, according to which every single person in a workplace should focus on their own particular tasks, and thus become aware of their responsibilities (Wen et al., 2020). In contrast to this theory, which Wen (2020) suggested for application in real life, most five-star hotels demand considerably more from their frontline employees, exceeding real job requirements, as a result of which role stress can occur. Cavanaugh (2000, cited by Wen,2020) describes role stress as a challenge that can have not only negative, but also positive and inspiring effects on frontline employees. In contrast to this theory, other researchers believe that role stress has a negative effect, rather than a positive one, on employees. Rizzo (1970, cited by Wen,2020) contended that chaos will ensue as turnover intention rises, due to a lack of detailed knowledge about the employees' tasks, as employers make demands of their staff that exceed reasonable expectations. Sometimes employers fail to recognise that this additional knowledge is needed for employees to perform their tasks successfully with a low level of stress (Rizzo, 1970, cited by Wen, 2020). In practice, there are some employees who relish the challenge of "being thrown in at the deep end" but the majority would prefer to know what they can expect from their workplace (Compson, 2015). From Wen's perspective, role stress has a "three- dimensional structure", which comprises

role conflict, role ambiguity, and quantitative and qualitative role overload, in other words, high workload (Wen et al., 2020). In the first dimension, that of role conflict, the hopes and expectations of frontline employees do not correspond with reality. Role ambiguity is defined as the lack of necessary information given to employees (Wen et al., 2020). The last dimension of Wen's theory is that of the combination of both quantitative and qualitative role overload. Quantitative role overload appears when employees are not given sufficient time to complete their tasks professionally. In contrast, qualitative role overload occurs when an organisation does not consider the working limits of their employees, and their demands and expectations are excessive (Kerry and Barrett, 2011, cited by Wen, 2020). According to Wen's model (2020), workload has the highest influence on Role stress. Role stress, due to the high workload, may affect the outcome of labour turnover, however there is one further moderator that can have an impact, namely, the service climate. Schneider (1998, cited by Wen, 2020) described service climate as the "perceptions of the events, practices, procedures and behaviours that are rewarded, supported and expected in a customer service setting". As Wen (2020) agreed, Schneider (1998) maintained that the service climate should have a positive impact on the employees, in order for them to develop a better working performance. To this end, researchers have applied the person-environment fit theory, which describes the way workers interpret the structure of the workplace, and how it strongly impacts the individual's personal thoughts and actions (Cable and Parsons, 2001, cited by Wen, 2020). The following potential main cause for labour turnover is burnout. This is a complex issue, considering that it may include behavioural (difficulty in controlling one's feelings) as well as physical (feeling weak and fatigued) symptoms (Freudenberger, 1974; Zhang, 2020, cited by Wen, 2020). The above-mentioned model shows that burnout may be influenced mainly by two factors, namely, emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. Some researchers have agreed with this statement, although many have claimed that burnout is also dependent on the absence of self-efficacy and high workload (Demerouti, Densten, 2001; Smith et al., 2017). Consequently, based on studies that evaluate the connection between these factors, this would indicate that the lack of self-efficacy is not a factor of burnout, but rather refers to the dimension of role ambiguity in the spectrum of role stress. As Teoh (2019, cited by Wen, 2020) observes, burnout frequently appears among frontline employees, who work together face to face with customers. He explained the reasons as being the years of individuals restraining their emotions and having communication problems. Based on the

"transactional theory of stress" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) the experience of unfavourable work environments and frustration in one's work are potential moderators of labour turnover (Jung, 2012, cited by Wen, 2020).

Employees are sometimes unable to overcome negative experiences in the workplace, causing them to feel anxiety and stress, and although they may acknowledge that they cannot change the past, they are nonetheless unable to overcome these issues. This results in job dissatisfaction and it leads to turnover intention (Magnano, 2017, cited by Wen, 2020).

2.3 Review of existing Empirical Research

Mustafa Tepeci (2016) conducted a study on the connections between employee exhaustion, role stress, burnout, and turnover at the Mersin University in Turkey, interviewing 236 hospitality management students (who had previous experience in four- and five-star hotels) on the topics of emotional labour, exhaustion and role stress. The students admitted that in the hospitality industry, almost everywhere, the main requirement is to display positive attitudes and happiness on a continuous basis. According to this study, constant smiling and friendliness, besides showing attentiveness in order to satisfy the guests, causes frustration among employees. From the beginning until the end of their shift they are required to wear a metaphorical mask, to conceal their true feelings and their tiredness, and they also need to control their emotions, displaying false ones. Moreover, the degree of contact with the guests and the high expectations, the enormous amount of hard work, overburdens the staff in a five-star hotel (Tepeci, 2016). The results of this study showed that the majority of the employees experienced depersonalisation and high workload, which resulted in the development of role stress and burnout. In time, those employees who suffered from them, came to wonder if they should leave their jobs rather than continuing to work at their hotel. However, according to Tepeci (2016) "some of the students experienced personal accomplishments". The limitation of this study is the number of students questioned, and that the survey was conducted in one given place and one community. It does not mention the amount of experience that these students had, and hence any conclusions drawn may be unreliable.

Another study, which applied Compson's Theoretical Model (2015), was conducted in order to investigate "the effects and the causes of burnout syndrome in five-star hotels" (Acar and Erkan, 2018). The study was conducted in Turkey by Asegül Acar and Mehmet Erkan in 2018. The research is based on the responses of 410

employees working in different four- and five-star hotels, which are members of the Hotel Association of Turkey. 55% of the participants were female. 61.5 % of them were single and the majority did not have a child or a family. Most of the women were qualified employees and almost 30% were working in the front office, while the others were employed in the housekeeping or in the F&B departments in chain hotels and four-star hotels. The participants of the survey (2016) claimed that this industry did not represent a good opportunity for their families, and that they were not satisfied with the salary they received. They also reported that their working hours sometimes exceeded 10 or more hours a day with highly productive and intense work all the time, and, due to this fact, they had little free time outside work. The majority of the employees claimed that their job enhanced their creativity and that they learned new skills on a daily basis, but that they felt usually exhausted after their working day. The survey also reveals that it is very difficult to attend to the guests every day. Out of 410 employees, 53 agreed that when they rose in the morning, they felt that they could not do it anymore, and that they were not motivated to continue working in this industry. This was confirmed by 90 other employees, while others disagreed. They also stated, that too high performing expectations and over hours were one of the main reasons that gave them a feeling of burnout. This study had similar limitations, although almost twice the number of real employees were questioned. They were members of the Hotel Association of Turkey and they did not hire staff from around the world.

A different study was conducted by Islam Salem and Hanan Kattara (2018) at Alexandria University, in Egypt. They divided the participants, both managers and employees, into two groups: the first comprised those who had contact with the guests (155 participants), and the other comprised those who did not (172 participants). The study revealed that those employees who had contact with the guests experienced more work-related stress, role stress and more dilemmas due to guests' complaints and work overload, as well as a lack of reward, appreciation, decision-making and fair treatment. Those participants who had no contact with the guests were more satisfied with their job. Burnout for managers seemed to be a negative issue, since they associated the costs with replacement of employees. According to them, it was very important that the employee never felt that the workplace had "nothing more to offer" (Islam Salem, 2018). One of the limitations of this study was the lack of involvement of other departments, such as the kitchen or service staff. What is more, only privately owned hotels could be selected for the survey due to government regulations. The fourth study, conducted by Murat Aksu and Erdem Temeloglu (2015), also examines the question of burnout in three-, four- and five-star hotels in the city centre of Canakkale, in Turkey. For the analyses, 184 questionnaires of employees working in 10 different hotels were used. As stated in these questionnaires, the level of exhaustion was low, while the levels of depersonalisation and of personal accomplishment were high. As reported by the authors, in the research of Salic and Celik (2011, cited by Temeloglu and Aksu, 2015) the level of exhaustion was found to be high, so the results of the two studies do not correspond. Temeloglu and Aksu (2015) drew the conclusion that there is a relation between age, education, experience, and working hours with burnout, although they did not find any association between gender and burnout, which other studies did. The limitations of this study could be that employees did not fill out the survey honestly and that out of 250 questionnaires only 184 were usable. To compare and contrast these studies the researcher found that the similarities which occur in each of the studies is high workload which may lead to mainly role stress, sometimes even depersonalisation and exhaustion over time. These issues led in many cases to employee burnout and labour turnover by the participants. As also stated at the Theoretical Model of Role Stress and Turnover Intention model of Wen (2020) these studies support the Hypothesis 1 (H3) that the main factor which is the most responsible factor for burnout is the high workload. Of course, later on many more things can develop due to this main problem, such as role stress and exhaustion. When the high workload is already present for a long period of time, due to the developed role stress and exhaustion, in many cases they lead to labour turnover.

This empirical research has also proven that just as in Compson's Theoretical Model of Burnout (2015) factors like the lack of reward, high workload, and fairness less plays also a huge role in the development of burnout. Regarding the contrasts the researcher discovered that except these above-mentioned issues, there are some other factors as well -which are not mentioned in any of the theories – which led to burnout and a few cases even labour turnover, for example the lack of salary, lack of motivation and to face the guests every single day with constant positive attitudes.

2.4 Background to the primary research context

The main purpose of this study is to understand the relations between the main causes of burnout and labour turnover in order to determine whether there are similarities, with the purpose to highlight their significant common cause/-s. Before the pandemic of the corona virus (2019)

labour turnover was present in every five-star hotel, mostly by the departments of frontline employees. However, the question why burnout and labour turnover could occur was not investigated that deeply, especially not in the hotels of Budapest. Due to this not "up taken" and not analysed topic, in the capital city of Hungary the turnover rate and mental burnouts are quite high. To understand the "why" of these happenings in depth, the researcher is using some models about these potential moderators like role stress, service climate, exhaustion and workload. They are helping to understand the relations of the potential hypothesis 1 and 2 (the main factor which leads to burnout (H1) and to labour turnover (H2)). As well, they are supported and proven by the different surveys from the front line employees of the five-star hotels. The researcher had chosen 10 different hotels, mentioned in the Methodology chapter, 3.4 Data collection. The reason why these specific hotels were chosen for investigating the aim of this paper is because of the various connections they have. One of the connections they have, is the five-star rating which creates automatically high expectations among the guests.

Besides that, there is also for instance the similar working environment they have, or their big number of the front-line employees. Last but not least they are all located in the capital city of Hungary. This means, that the hotels are going to have similar kind of guests. They can be local, Hungarian people, who want to experience the home countries' hotel's luxury life and in order to fulfil this dream, they stay in some of these five-star hotels in Budapest, and they can also be foreigners. Also, there is the same target market across the city, so in case there are tourists visiting the capital and they come to stay in these five-star hotels, they will have similar characteristics and interests. These above-mentioned similar characteristics and styles of the hotels will allow the researcherto identify potential causes of burnout and labour turnover, to analyse them, and to evaluate the connection between the two main subjects. If this information is investigated, the researcher can conclude whether there is only one common cause, or more, so that all five star hotels in Hungary and similar countries should be aware of in order to avoid these problems.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter two theoretical models (Figure 1 and Figure 2) were mentioned by the author in order to have a deeper understanding for the relations between different potential moderators and causes for burnout and labour turnover. The researcher has also examined the contrasting views for these models and theories. The common things between each case studies were the high workload, depersonalisation, lack of creativity and the emotional exhaustion of the employees while working in the front-line. By the once whom these issues -mainly workload and exhaustion- were present, the majority of those questioned employees were considering labour turnover on their workplace. Regarding this fact, as a conclusion the researcher states that these are the main issues which can lead to burnout and labour turnover, however there is one issue, which starts this chain reaction for many front-line employees, and this issue is high work load. The factors however, are complex, as there is a slight connection between each of them. As a conclusion, the results in various surveys and questionnaires, as well as the models is going to show the outcome of the hypothesis mentioned in the Methodology chapter, as they are reliable and had proven the truth behind those theories. To put the protentional conclusions of the researcher in the real life, she had decided to choose 10 different five-star hotels in Budapest. These hotels have various connections beside the ratings and therefore they are the most convenient choices which could have been made in Hungary

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to find the most significant common cause/-s of burnout and labour turnover of frontline employees in the hospitality industry, by way of a case study of ten five-star hotels in Budapest. To achieve this aim, the following objectives have been set:

- identification of the external and internal reasons for burnout

- critical analyses of the factors that lead to labour turnover

- evaluation of the connection between contributors to burnout and labour turnover, highlighting commonalities and ranking their significance

In order to reach the aim, hypothesis have been set, which are going to be tested and investigated for the results of this paper.

Hypothesis 1:

H0: There is no main factor which leads to burnout. H1: The main factor which leads to burnout is exhaustion H2: The main factor which leads to burnout is role stress H3: The main factor which leads to burnout is workload

H4: The main factor which leads to burnout is emotional distance

Hypothesis 2:

H0: There is no main factor which leads to labour turnover
H1: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is role stress
H2: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is service climate H3: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is exhaustion H4: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is workload.

Hypothesis 3:

H0: There is no most significant common contributor of burnout and labour turnover
H1: The most significant common contributor to burnout and labour turnover is workload
H2: The most significant common contributor to burnout and labour turnover is exhaustion
H3: The most significant common contributor to burnout and labour turnover is role stress

3.2 The research approach

For this study, a primary quantitative research method has been chosen, as this is the most reasonable technique for this paper. The intention is to examine contributors of burnout and labour turnover and to analyse the information using statistics. McLeod (2019) defines this method as follows: "quantitative research gathers data in a numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement. This type of data can be used to construct graphs and tables of raw data". For studies related to the question of causes and commonalities between burnout and labour turnover among front-line employees in the hospitality industry, the majority of researchers opt for a quantitative research method (Civilidag, 2014; Hoang, 2018; Wen, et al., 2020). The reason for this is the important and compelling information found in distinctive method (Question Pro, 2021), surveys or questionnaires describing the participants (employees in five-star hotels) regarding their age, gender, working experiences, family background, while measuring the characteristics of certain personalities among hotel staff. For instance, the results are analysed based on statistical findings describing how sensitive employees consider themselves, which country they come from, their culture and other details. In addition, in order to explore this topic in depth and to analyse, identify and evaluate the connections between the common causes of labour turnover and burnout, the researcher should formulate certain hypotheses and prove

their general truth, which is only possible with a large number of participants (McLeod, 2019). In the event of a low number of subjects participating in a qualitative research study, there would be various limitations, such as the unreliability of the conclusion, which should be statistically valid and true for most people worldwide (McLeod, 2019). Furthermore, qualitative research leans towards examining certain behaviours in depth and seeks to understand the perspectives of the participants, and why they behaved in certain ways. In this study, the quantitative research approach will help determine cause and effect among constrict variables (Bianchi, Renzo and Brisson, Romain, 2019) such as potential moderators of burnout and as of labour turnover and what significant commonalities they have that influence this issue. Moreover, with a quantitative approach, this paper is intended to offer beneficial insights for the hotel industry, especially in Budapest. If managers familiarise themselves with the results of this paper, more attention will be paid to analysing the workplace, thereby also avoiding burnout and labour turnover.

3.3 Sampling

For the sampling of this paper random sampling has been selected, and to be more precise, the researcher has decided for the stratified random sampling in order to make the results more reliable. The definition of stratified random sampling according to Taherdoost (2016) is "where the population is divided into strata (groups) and a random sample is taken from each subgroup." According to Malhotra and Birks (2006, cited by Taherdoost, 2016) the only weaknesses are within this type of sampling the expenses and the difficulty of selecting the relevant stratification variables, because if we select many, it could be not feasible anymore. However, on the other hand, this method has the strengths of being precise, because it includes all of the important subpopulation which is needed for an investigation and proper analysis of the results. Taking into consideration that the method of this research has a quantitative approach, the intention is to include a large number of participants in the survey. The target number is approximately 300 frontline employees, which is based on the calculation of Taherdoost (2016). If we have a population of 1500 then the sample size ideal is 306 in order to receive the confidence level of 95%.

With this stratified random sampling method, after sending the questionnaires to ten five-star hotels in Budapest, Hungary, the front- line hotel employees who are willing to participate in this study and are fitting within the categorisation will be chosen at random. This has the benefit that the

participants cannot be chosen subjectively, and thus the study remains objective (Holloway, Immy and Wheeler; 2009).

They have an equal chance of being chosen by the author, or, in this situation, by the human resources departments where the questionnaires will be sent, to be forwarded to those employees who are willing to participate in the study. To define the characteristics of the participants the researcher has decided to have an equal number of genders with spread in the ages and with 90% non-interns who have the experience at least of 4 years in the front line in hospitality industry and 10% interns. This smaller number of interns is due to the fact that they do not really contribute to understanding burnout, because of the lack of proper knowledge within the profession as well as the lack of enough experiences. As it can be concluded, this research is going to be non-experimental, as the environment of the samples are not going to be controlled, it is going to be based on real-life experiences of employees.

3.4 Data collection

For the purposes of data collection, ten five-star hotels will be contacted via email in order to conduct a survey among the employees. These hotels are, namely, the Four Seasons Hotel, the Aria Hotel, the Mystery Hotel, the Párisi Udvar Hotel, the Iberostar Grand Hotel, the Kempinski Hotel, the Anantara New York Palace Hotel, the Marriott Hotel, the Corinthia Hotel and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. After explaining the aim of the survey to the human resources departments, they will send the survey to their staff according to the chosen stratified random sampling method. Regarding the type of the questions within the surveys the first category is going to be related to the experiences and knowledge (where they worked before, how many years of experience they have, do they have a degree in hospitality). The second category is going to be related to the feelings of the employees within their working area and their past life. After that the researcher is going to ask about the potential causes of role stress, burnout, exhaustion and labour turnover. An additional motive with this survey is to evaluate the connection between labour turnover and burnout.

3.5 Data Analysis

According to Jansen and Warren (2020) quantitative data analysis is the "analysing data that is numbers-based – or data that can be easily "converted" into numbers without losing any meaning." Regarding this research, the author is going to objectively analyse the collected data with the three categories (mentioned above in 3.4 Data collection), which are going to be carefully

selected into different subgroups, such as genders, interns and non-interns, long time and short time workers of the company, age groups or education level (Degree). For the data analysis of a quantitative research, two categories can be used: descriptive or inferential statistics (The Organic Chemistry Tutor, 2019). The author has chosen to use the descriptive statistics for this paper, as it is going to conclude the data numbers of employees and those will be analysed for example by using Pie Charts or Median.

3.6 Validity

Validity is essential in order to complete a research paper. There are three groups of validity which can be identified: construct validity, internal validity and external validity (MeanThat & Authentic Data Science, 2020). The researcher needs to justify all the methodological choices, why the assumptions (the hypothesis) regarding the aim and objectives were made, and lastly, if the paper can be generalised (MeanThat & Authentic Data Science, 2020). In order to make the surveys even more valid and reliable globally, test surveys can be sent out to less successful companies, such as smaller five-star hotel chains, or non-hotel chains.

3.7 Objectivity

Stated by AQR (2021), every Objectivity implies that there is an independent reality that exists despite of any observation. The main role of the researcher in a quantitative study is to stay objective. In order to accomplish it, the survey should be sent out to individuals through the Human Resource Department, who does not have any connection with the researcher. Therefore, the subjective answers from the responders will be carried out objectively by the researcher.

3.8 Reliability

In order to have a high level of Reliability in the research, there must be a consistent data collection and sampling method (MeanThat & Authentic Data Science, 2020; Heale, Twycross, 2015). Mistakes can occur easily in an investigation, therefor the researcher has identified four common mistakes which need to be avoided: participant error, participant bias, researcher error, and researcher bias (MeanThat & Authentic Data Science, 2020). In this research paper only two of the mentioned errors may have occurred. Firstly, the timing of the questionnaire filling can influence the answers, therefore the researcher decided to time these questionnaires before any dining of the employees, for example at 11:00am. Secondly, not to be subjective as the

researcher while analysing the responses of the participants.

3.9 Generalisability

It is challenging to generalise this study for every front-line employee in five-star hotels, since measuring a whole population all over the world has its own limits and these kinds of limitations could hinder this study (Hozack, n.d.). However, in order to achieve a higher level of generalised quantitative research, the author will select around 300 samples from ten five-star hotels in Hungary, whose responses can contribute to hospitality industry in similar countries such as in Eastern Europe.

3.10 Ethical issues

Due to considerations of the safety and security of the members, it is essential to address ethical issues affecting the participants in any research study or experiment that is made with the purpose of proving or understanding a certain phenomenon. According to the Belmont Report (The National Research Act, 1974), there are three guiding principles that must be observed if any persons are involved in a research study, namely, respect, beneficence and justice. In addition to this, participants are required to sign an agreement that they are willing to participate in the research. Moreover, those conducting the research should also mention the reasons for the study, its purpose and what the authors aim to discover from the results. The researcher must never force any member to participate. Additionally, the participation agreement must also include an option, whereby the potential participants in the research may decide to terminate their participation in the study. If a person should decide to participate, the results of the research, whether it is qualitative or quantitative, must be kept confidential in observance of personal and human rights. Thus, names should not be mentioned, nor should any other details by which persons may be recognised (the Office for Human Research Protections, 2018).

3.11 Limitations

Limitations can happen to every research, let it be a qualitative or a quantitative study, as researchers cannot control everything within the planning and the execution phase (Chetty, 2016). One limitation regarding the online survey is the already given answers, which may lead to a limited outcome. Although, employees might not be true to themselves. They might motivate themselves by giving more positive answers despite their real feelings regarding the workplace and stress. Additionally, the collection of the data might be more time consuming, as the author of this study is going to analyse everything alone, and the participants might not fill the survey out quickly. Lastly, the Human Resources Team of certain hotels might not want to be involved in this case study, and in this case, the author has to contact another five-star hotel in Budapest. The hotels which fit into the category of this investigation are limited in the city, as it has 17 altogether (Google, 2021).

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

One of the biggest challenges of five-star Hotel Industries is the front- line employee burnout and labour turnover. The question occurs, why they are still happening, what are the steps which leads to them, and if these two issues have common causes or are not related to each other. There is a limited number of studies conducted by a similar topic of finding the most significant common cause/-s of burnout and labour turnover of frontline employees in the hospitality industry. Therefore, further investigation of the objectives - based on the literature review and the empirical research - is needed in order to be closer to the results.

4.2 Identification of the external and internal reasons for burnout

Demerouti (2001) highlighted the fact, that front-line employees especially in the hospitality industry have one of the highest chances to experience burnout throughout their career. Regarding this issue, the theoretical Model of Compson (2015) shows, what kind of moderators are able to influence and bring burnout to life. The main question of the first objective of this study is, which of those moderators can be called the main contributor for burnout. Some investigations and research show, how high workload at five-star hotels positively influences the outcome of burnout. According to Smith et al. (2017) high workload leads to exhaustion, which leads to bad work performance, followed by constant disappointment and burnout. To support this statement, after the comparison of the result of the case studies of Tepeci (2016) as well as Acar and Erkan (2018), Salem and Kattara (2018), and Temeloglu and Aksu (2015) the researcher of this study concluded that high workload is the main factor which leads to burnout. The reason for this conclusion is that workload played always a big part of the answers regarding the questionnaires of participants in those case studies, and it was the only issue, which was present in all of the four case study conclusions as the main cause of burnout.

4.3 Critical analyses of the factors that lead to labour turnover

In the Literature Review of this study the "Role Stress and Turnover Intention" model (Figure 2, Wen, 2020) demonstrates all the possible influences of labour turnover. The main factors for the outcome could be role stress, service climate, workload and exhaustion, but the majority of the researchers of different studies support their ideas with allegations that role stress is the main reason for labour turnover.

Although it could play the biggest part of it, quantitative and qualitative role overload – in other words high workload- must not be forgotten, as they are claimed to be the triggers of role stress (Wen et al., 2020).

They occur due to high expectations of employers towards front-line employees, and due to the limited time given to them to complete these tasks. There is not enough personal, employees have to work instead of two or three people, they need to deal with the chaos and the impatient guests. The result of the study of Tepeci (2016) in the Empirical Research supports this statement, which is also the result of Hypothesis 2: H1: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is role stress.

Moreover, role stress is also the strongest key factor which lead to labour turnover by the majority of employees in five-star hotels. This is mentioned by the other studies in the Empirical Research.

4.4 Evaluation of the connection between contributors to burnout and labour turnover, highlighting commonalities and ranking their significance

The researcher has examined the different connections between burnout and labour turnover based on different studies and research. They have more commonalities which influences both of them on a high level, such as exhaustion, role stress and high workload. However, the researcher discovered the potential order of these key moderators. The most significant moderator of them is workload, then comes role stress and exhaustion. Workload is the most significant commonality, because as it was mentioned, it is the base for burnout as labour turnover to occur. Without it, these issues would happen much rare in hospitality.

According to the researcher this issue is more easily influenceable as the others, as it requires mostly "only" the organisation's site to be aware of the knowledge and information regarding high workload. The organisations have to change their strategies in order to avoid the negative consequences, which are likely to grow over the years for the employees.

4.5 Conclusion

The discussion chapter has examined the Literature Review as well as the Empirical Research of this study, and based on them, the researcher concluded the potential results regarding the Hypothesis. These results are based on primary research content, and later on will be based on the secondary research as well (surveys). For Hypothesis 1, the following result has come out: H3: The main factor which leads to burnout is workload. For Hypothesis 2, the conclusion is H3: The main factor which leads to labour turnover is role stress. The outcome of the last Hypothesis, number 3 is H1: The most significant common contributor to burnout and labour turnover is workload. As it was mentioned, high workload is the base and positively effects and strengthens every other negative issue such as exhaustion or role stress. Without the constant high workload at front-line employees, it is likely that the possibility for the other negative potential moderators of burnout and labour turnover does not develop and that these issues will not even happen, or at least not so often.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the studies, exhaustion is universally present in the hotel industry, albeit at different levels, which are influenced by a number of circumstances, such as age, experiences, working conditions, lack of personal accomplishment, excessive working hours and several other internal and external factors (Temeloglu et al., 2015).

The Turkish and Egyptian studies both arrive at the conclusion that employees who work in contact with guests (such as those in the front office or F&B) encounter more stress and more complications on a daily basis (Salem et al, 2018). Usually, older and more experienced employees are able to overcome these situations, but younger employees experience more difficulty early in their career (Aksu,2015). What is most difficult for the employees is that they are required and expected to hide their true emotions from the guests in order to provide them with perfect quality service (Tepeci, 2016).As a conclusion, employee burnout affects both the hotel and personal life of the employee negatively. Losing an employee, besides the loss of money, time and effort, may have an effect on the loyalty of guests.

Erkan (2018) believes that a negative occurrence with an exhausted employee can have an adverse effect on the reputation of a hotel.

Therefore, it is critical that more attention should be paid to employees in five-star hotels. Also, to add to the conclusion, the demands and expectations are so great that stress levels in the workplace can rise easily. According to statistics, it can be concluded, that the most significant cause what burnout and labour turnover share is workload (Hypothesis 3: H1). This is the starting point of every other issue, such as exhaustion, which may finally turn to burnout and labour turnover. If five-star hotel continuously expect high workload -high quality number of tasks, resulting mostly in over hour, good performance-most of the front-line employees dealing as well with other stress are not going to cope with it for a long time. If managers fail to resolve adverse conditions, in due time the employees will become demotivated and the workplace will cease to function efficiently. As indicated in surveys, questionnaires, theories and models on the effects and potential causes of burnout, further studies are required specifically for the luxury hotel industry, in order to prevent exhaustion and burnout among employees.

5.2 Recommendation

In the author's opinion, managers should pay attention to their employees and practise a softer, rather than a harder, form of human resource management, in order to give employees a sufficient amount of responsibility for them to feel important in the hotel, besides which, the communication between employers and employees should be improved. Whenever problems arise, employees should feel free to contact their managers for these problems to be solved together in partnership.

Moreover, managers reported that for them employee turnover represents cost incurred and time and effort wasted (Salem and Kattara, 2018). As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, the world has fallen into the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic and this has had particularly harmful effects on the hospitality sector. In the post-COVID future, hotels will doubtless attempt to improve, but as standards are raised to keep pace with competitors, it will be crucial for employers to be aware of employees' needs if they are to provide the expected level of service in the long-term. For future studies of this topic the researcher suggests to analyse data also from the neighbouring countries of the chosen place, and locations, which have similar background conditions (salary, citizens). The recommendation for the limitations of this study the researcher suggest to discuss timings in advance, when the survey has to be filled out (after dining for example, or in the morning).

In this paper the most important needs and employee requirements (according to questionnaires, experiments and observations) are listed, which is why it is hoped that the paper will be of use in future decision- making. If employers wish to have lower staff turnover and if they also have a long-term goal regarding guest satisfaction, it is strongly recommended that they consider the theories mentioned as well as the case studies of the ten different five-star hotels, in order to learn a moral lesson from them.

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