

A multistudy examination of organizational stressors, emotional labor, burnout, and turnover in sport organizations

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Abstract

While a growing body of research has examined the types of organizational stressors encountered by individuals and their allied responses, little is known about how such individuals manage their emotional responses to these stressors or the consequences of such behaviors. This paper presents novel findings from two studies examining the moderating role that emotional labor plays in the relationship between the frequency of organizational stressor experience, burnout, turnover intentions, and actual turnover in sport. In study 1, participants (n = 487) completed measures of organizational stressors (OSI-SP), emotional labor (ELS), burnout (ABQ), and turnover intentions. In study 2, a 6-month longitudinal design was used to examine measures of organizational stressors (OSI-SP), emotional labor (ELS), turnover intentions, and actual turnover. Study 1 showed that surface acting moderated the relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors and burnout in sport. Further, surface acting acted as an important mechanism through which burnout mediated the relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors and turnover intentions. Study 2 showed that surface acting moderated the relationship between the organizational stressor frequency and turnover intentions - but not actual turnover - over time. These results highlight the importance of surface acting in understanding how individuals respond to organizational stressors encountered in sport, expanding our understanding of the positive and negative responses component of the meta-model of stress, emotions and performance. These findings also highlight potentially deleterious emotion-management behaviors that practitioners might consider when aiming to support individuals encountering organizational stressors in sport.

Keywords: longitudinal, stress, surface acting, well-being, dropout, emotion regulation

1 emotional, behavioral, and attitudinal ways (Fletcher et al., 2012), that may have diverse
2 consequences for burnout (Tabei et al., 2012), dissatisfaction (Noblet et al., 2003), negative
3 emotions (Fletcher et al., 2012), impaired preparation for and performance in major
4 competitions (Gould et al., 1999) and substantially affected health and well-being (DiBartolo &
5 Schaffer, 2002).

6 In keeping with Fletcher et al.'s (2006) definition of organizational stress, much
7 research has sought to identify the types of organizational stressors encountered by individuals
8 in sport (e.g., Arnold et al., 2014; Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2012; Kristiansen et al.,
9 2012). In a synthesis of this research, Arnold and Fletcher (2012a) developed a taxonomic
10 classification of stressors in sport that included four main categories (viz. leadership and
11 personnel, cultural and team, logistical and environmental, and performance and personal
12 issues). In line with this taxonomy, Arnold et al. (2013) presented a series of studies describing
13 its development and validation of the Organizational Stressor Indicator for Sport Performers
14 (OSI-SP). More recently, Arnold et al. (2014) used the OSI-SP to identify demographic
15 differences (i.e., gender, competition level, and team or individual sport type) in performers'
16 experiences of organizational stressors, providing a stimulus for future research to examine
17 additional moderating variables in the stress process. In addition to the identification and
18 measurement of organizational stressors in sport, researchers have explored individuals'
19 responses to these demands including, but not limited to, athlete burnout (e.g., Fletcher et al.,
20 2012; Kristiansen et al., 2011; Tabei et al., 2012).

21 Within sport, athlete burnout has been described within a psychosocial framework
22 comprising three key components: physical and emotional exhaustion (i.e., perceived depletion
23 of energy due to the demands of sport participation and performance), sport devaluation (i.e.,
24 diminished interest in and negative attitude towards sports participation), and reduced athletic
25 accomplishment (i.e., unfulfilled goals and a sense of constantly falling short of performance
26 standards) (Raedeke, 1997). While a number of conceptual approaches have been put forth to

1 explain burnout (see, for review, Cresswell & Eklund, 2006a), recently an integrated model of
2 burnout (see Gustafsson et al., 2011) has been proposed that incorporates antecedents, early
3 signs, key dimensions, consequences, personality factors, coping and the environment. Indeed,
4 identifying antecedents that contribute to burnout in sport is of central importance to current
5 models, with researchers (see Gustafsson et al., 2008) pointing to numerous situational and
6 organizational antecedents of burnout in elite athletes.

7 The importance of investigating burnout within sport organizations stems from the
8 detrimental impact it can have on health, well-being, and performance. Indeed, burnout has
9 been associated with negative affective, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral consequences
10 such as decreased performance, overtraining, reduced sense of accomplishment, depressed
11 mood, feelings of helplessness, diminished motivation and eventual withdrawal from sport
12 (Cresswell & Eklund, 2006b; Goodger et al., 2007; Gustafsson et al., 2008, 2011).

13 Although it would appear that stressors are an important component of the burnout
14 process, not all individuals who experience stress will burnout or withdraw from sport
15 (Raedeke, 1997). Therefore, to better understand why individuals report different outcomes to
16 similar organizational stressors, research might examine the role of potential moderating and
17 mediating variables, including personal and situational characteristics and various cognitive,
18 emotional, and attitudinal phenomena (see Arnold et al., 2014; Didymus & Fletcher, 2012,
19 2014; Fletcher et al., 2006; Hanton et al., 2012; Sarkar & Fletcher, 2014; Tabei et al., 2012).
20 Indeed, a growing body of research (e.g., Fletcher et al., 2006, 2012b; Fletcher & Wagstaff,
21 2009; Lane et al., 2012; Tamminen & Crocker, 2013; Wagstaff et al., 2012a, 2012b) has
22 highlighted the importance of emotion regulation (i.e., monitoring, evaluating, and modifying
23 emotional reactions) for performance and well-being outcomes in sport organizations. For
24 example, Wagstaff et al. (2012a) noted the importance of regulating one's emotions and
25 aligning them with the expectations and social norms of the organization.

1 The need to manage emotions to fit with the expectations and social norms of the sport
2 organization (see Wagstaff et al., 2012a, 2012b) aligns with the concept of emotional labor
3 (Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labor has been defined as, “the process of regulating both
4 feelings and expressions for the organizational goals” (Grandey, 2000). To elaborate,
5 individuals will display organizationally-desirable emotional *expressions* regardless of the
6 emotions that they are actually *experiencing* at that time (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983).
7 According to Hochschild (1983), there are two main ways to engage in emotional labor:
8 through *surface acting* (i.e., only regulating emotional expressions) or *deep acting* (i.e.,
9 consciously modifying feelings to express the desired emotions). Research conducted in non-
10 sport organizations has shown deep acting to be associated with more positive outcomes
11 compared to surface acting (see, for review, Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011). To elaborate, deep
12 acting, which occurs earlier in the emotion-generation process and involves reappraisal, has
13 been shown to have positive outcomes such as greater personal accomplishment, job
14 satisfaction, personal efficacy, and performance for employees (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002;
15 Grandey, 2003). Conversely, surface acting, which occurs later in the emotion-generation
16 process, has been associated with more negative outcomes such as turnover intentions, actual
17 turnover, reduced job performance, and depersonalisation (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Chau et
18 al., 2009; Goodwin et al., 2011). Further, emerging research (e.g., Lee & Chelladurai, 2015;
19 Rogers et al., 2014) indicates that the management of emotions through surface acting may lead
20 to negative well-being outcomes such as depressive symptoms and burnout.

21 In line with the potentially deleterious implications of emotion management, a body of
22 research exists, which collectively indicates that withdrawal behaviors may be an outcome of
23 emotional labor (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey, 2000). Moreover, Chau et al. (2009)
24 argued that surface acting may contribute to increased turnover of employees due to its effortful
25 nature, creation of emotional dissonance, and associated emotional exhaustion. Within sport,
26 Wagstaff (2014) found emotional suppression (i.e., surface acting) resulted in a 3.3%

1 22.8, $SD = 8.45$). At the time of data collection, all participants were operating within sport
2 organizations as either athletes ($n = 389$), coaches ($n = 74$), performance directors ($n = 7$), or
3 sport scientists and medics ($n = 17$). Within their organizations, participants were operating at a
4 variety of levels ranging from club ($n = 183$), county ($n = 121$), regional ($n = 62$), national ($n =$
5 75), and international ($n = 46$). Participants were recruited via opportunity sampling and online
6 distribution. A link to a web-based online questionnaire or a paper hard-copy of the
7 questionnaire was sent out to all participants. Prior to data collection, a favourable ethical
8 opinion was received and information about the nature of the study and issues of confidentiality
9 and anonymity were explained to all participants.

10 **Measures**

11 A range of validated questionnaires were used to address the research hypotheses and
12 measured organizational stressors, emotional labor, burnout, and turnover intentions
13 respectively. Both online and paper versions of the questionnaire were piloted prior to the main
14 study but as this did not reveal any deficiencies in the design, format or length of the
15 questionnaire, no changes were made.

16 **Organizational Stressor Indicator for Sport Performers (OSI-SP).** The 23-item OSI-
17 SP (Arnold et al., 2013) was used to assess the frequency of a range of organizational stressors
18 encountered by sport individuals. Arnold et al. (2013) stated using the frequency scale alone
19 would be adequate for researchers requiring a shorter version of the indicator. Therefore, items
20 were measured in relation to the frequency of each organizational stressor on a Likert scale
21 ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (always). The five subscales on the OSI-SP were: goals and
22 development, logistics and operations, team and culture, coaching, and selection. For the
23 present study, all five frequency subscales showed acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .66$ to
24 $.84$).

25 **Emotional labor Scale (ELS).** The 15-item self-report ELS (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003)
26 measures six facets of emotional display, including the frequency, intensity, and variety of the

1 emotional display, and surface and deep acting. Higher scores on a 5-point Likert scale from 1
2 (never) to 5 (always) indicate greater emotional labor. Questionnaire items were adapted to the
3 context of study with the word “job” being replaced with the word “role”; for example, “on an
4 average day, how frequently do you express particular emotions needed for your role”. Internal
5 consistency Cronbach’s alpha for the surface acting subscale was .76.

6 **Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ).** Athlete burnout was assessed using the 15-
7 item ABQ (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). The ABQ comprises of three subscales designed to assess
8 reduced sense of accomplishment, sport devaluation, and emotional/physical exhaustion. Items
9 were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always).
10 Higher total average scores on the ABQ indicated a greater degree of burnout. Internal
11 consistency Cronbach’s alphas for the three subscales were .75 for reduced accomplishment,
12 .78 for sport devaluation, and .88 for physical and emotional exhaustion.

13 **Coach Burnout Questionnaire (CBQ).** Coaches, performance directors, and sport
14 scientists and medics included in the sample completed the CBQ. The CBQ is a 15-item
15 measure that is reworded to assess burnout in coaches. The original ABQ question stems are
16 altered for the CBQ to reflect coaching rather than athletic participation in sport. For example,
17 “I’m accomplishing many worthwhile things in [sport]” is changed to “I’m accomplishing many
18 worthwhile things coaching [sport].” Examination of fit, clarity and the meaning of revised
19 items has found the CBQ to have appropriate content validity and modification of items, with
20 acceptable Cronbach’s alphas (between .81 and .94) being reported (Harris & Ostrow, 2008).
21 The CBQ was selected as it discriminates between dimensions of burnout in a sports context
22 that previous measures of burnout do not (Lundkvist et al., 2014). The CBQ was also deemed
23 appropriate to use for performance directors and sport scientists and medics given their
24 substantive coaching nature of their roles. The title of “coach” is commonly used
25 interchangeably for performance directors (e.g., head coach) and support staff (e.g., strength
26 and conditioning coach) (see Wagstaff, 2016).

1 **Turnover intentions.** Turnover intentions were assessed using the three items (Kim &
2 Stoner, 2008): “In the next few months I intend to leave this organization”, “In the next few
3 years I intend to leave this organization”, and “I occasionally think about leaving this
4 organization”. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7
5 (strongly agree). Kim and Stoner (2008) reported a Cronbach’s alpha for internal consistency
6 alpha of .76. For the present study, internal consistency was found to be acceptable with a
7 Cronbach’s alpha of .77.

8 **Data analysis**

9 In order to investigate whether the effect of organizational stressors on burnout varied in
10 magnitude and nature as a function of surface acting, a simple moderation analysis was used. In
11 addition, to examine whether the effect of organizational stressors on turnover intentions
12 through burnout varied as a function of surface acting, a moderated mediation analysis was used
13 (Hayes, 2013). Traditional techniques to test for moderation and mediation suffer from several
14 problems including low statistical power and the inability to test multiple proposed moderators
15 or mediators together (Hayes, 2012). Therefore, the present study used Hayes’s (2012)
16 PROCESS macro, with 1000 bootstrap resamples and 95% confidence intervals to test indirect
17 effects for significance at different values of the moderator (i.e., surface acting). This
18 regression-based path analytic framework allows the input of data, configuration and estimation
19 of two and three way interactions in moderation models.

20 **Results**

21 **Preliminary analyses**

22 Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all study
23 variable dimensions. There was a positive relationship found between the frequency of
24 organizational stressors and mean burnout ($r = .32, p < .001$). Surface acting was also positively
25 related to burnout ($r = .31, p < .001$) and turnover intentions item 3, “I occasionally think about

1 leaving this organization" ($r = .14, p < .01$). In addition, mean burnout was positively related to
2 turnover intentions ($r = .37, p < .001$).

3 [TABLE 1 AROUND HERE]

4 **Testing for moderation**

5 The simple moderation results are presented in Table 2. Consistent with hypothesis 3,
6 surface acting moderated the relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors and
7 burnout ($F(3, 483) = 33.03, p < .001, R^2 = .20$). For every one unit increase in stressor
8 frequency, there was a .95 increase in burnout ($b = .95, t(483) = 5.67, p < .001$) and for every
9 one unit increase in surface acting, there was a .87 increase in burnout ($b = .87, t(483) = 5.77, p$
10 $< .001$). The interaction between stressor frequency and surface acting was $b = .46, t(483) =$
11 $3.02, p < .05$.

12 [TABLE 2 AROUND HERE]

13 To illustrate the nature of this interaction, the relationship between the frequency of
14 organizational stressors, surface acting, and burnout is displayed graphically in Figure 2 (with
15 one standard deviation above and below the mean of surface acting). Interaction slopes for
16 stressor frequency predicting burnout showed that at low levels of surface acting burnout scores
17 increased by .54 ($b = .54, t(483) = 2.36, p < .01$) compared to athletes who reported high levels
18 of surface acting, for whom burnout scores increased by 1.37 ($b = 1.37, t(483) = 6.65, p < .001$).

19 [FIGURE 2 AROUND HERE]

20 **Testing for moderated mediation**

21 A moderated-mediation model was used to test whether the indirect effect of the
22 frequency of organizational stressors on turnover intentions through burnout is moderated by
23 surface acting (Figure 3). There was a conditional indirect effect of the frequency of
24 organizational stressors on turnover intentions through mean burnout (index of moderated-
25 mediation = .27, 95% CI [.10, .47]). Specifically, the indirect effect of organizational stressors
26 on turnover intentions through burnout was positive and increased with higher levels of surface

1 acting (Table 3). The conditional direct effect was also moderated, as indicated by a statistically
2 significant interaction (see Hayes, 2012). Indeed, the relationship between the frequency of
3 organizational stressors and mean burnout was positive and significant when surface acting was
4 high ($b = .70, p < .05$) but non-significant when equal to its mean ($b = .42, p = .12$) or when
5 surface acting was low ($b = .16, p = .66$). Thus, the mediational effect of burnout in the
6 relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors and turnover intentions were
7 stronger in those with high levels of surface acting.

8 [FIGURE 3 AROUND HERE]

9 [TABLE 3 AROUND HERE]

10 **Study 1 Discussion**

11 This study provides the first empirical examination of emotional labor in the context
12 of organizational stressors and burnout in sport and offers a valuable insight into the role these
13 constructs might play in such organizations. These findings serve to highlight the importance of
14 surface acting in understanding how individuals respond to organizational stressors they
15 encounter in sport. Indeed, at comparable stressor levels, surface acting increases burnout and
16 turnover intention. One explanation for this may be that surface acting, which requires
17 expressive suppression of socially undesirable emotions is effortful and drains limited mental
18 resources (e.g., Richards & Gross, 2000). These self-regulatory cognitive and emotional
19 resources are important for the intra- and inter-personal processes that demand emotion
20 regulation within sport organizations (Wagstaff et al., 2012a, 2012b; Wagstaff et al., 2013).
21 Hence, the level of self-regulatory resources (i.e., sufficient or depleted) may account for the
22 different well-being and performance outcomes (e.g., burnout and turnover intentions) for
23 individuals performing emotional labor. Therefore, practitioners might encourage the avoidance
24 of potentially deleterious surface acting when working with individuals in sport.

25 **Study 2**

1 Study 1 examined surface acting as a moderator in the relationship between
2 organizational stressors, burnout, and turnover intentions in sport, and as such, provides a first
3 empirical examination of mechanistic factors (i.e., emotional labor) that influence the
4 organizational stress-response process in sport and extends previous work by providing an
5 insight into how such variables influence both psychosocial (i.e., burnout) and behavioral
6 intentions (i.e., turnover) outcomes. Nevertheless, it was beyond the scope of study 1 to
7 examine how organizational stressors impacted *actual* turnover in sport. Therefore, we reiterate
8 Fletcher et al. (2006) and Arnold et al.'s (2013) call for a longitudinal approach to better capture
9 the complex, ongoing nature of organizational stressors.

10 Voluntary turnover from sport organizations is a salient issue given the negative effect it
11 can have on replacement recruitment and training, operational functioning, and morale of the
12 remaining members. In elite sport the turnover of talent due to environmental demands will
13 affect team climate, culture, stability, and functioning. At the non-elite level, turnover from
14 sport organizations is likely to impact participation rates and, where chronic, will threaten the
15 survival of amateur sport organizations. Further, as alluded to in Study 1, surface acting may
16 contribute to turnover due to its effortful nature and association with burnout (Brotheridge &
17 Grandey, 2002; Grandey, 2003). Therefore, and in an attempt to extend the findings of Study 1,
18 the purpose of Study 2 was to examine the influence of surface acting in the relationship
19 between organizational stressors, turnover intentions, and actual turnover in sport. Hence, a
20 longitudinal design was employed to examine whether surface acting moderated the
21 relationship between organizational stressors from time 1 and turnover intentions and actual
22 turnover at time 2, which was six months after time 1. To our knowledge, there have not been
23 any longitudinal studies that have investigated the stress-turnover relationship in sport. We
24 hypothesised that the relationship between organizational stressors at time 1 and a) turnover
25 intentions at time 2 and b) actual turnover will be moderated by surface acting such that the

1 relationship between organizational stressors and a) turnover intentions b) actual turnover will
2 be stronger in individuals reporting high levels of surface acting.

3 **Method**

4 **Participants and procedure**

5 In total, 90 participants from a range of individual and team sports (e.g., athletics,
6 football, hockey) were recruited for this study ($n = 28$). The participants age ranged from 17 to
7 60 years ($M = 26.70$, $SD = 10.98$). All participants were operating within sport organizations as
8 athletes ($n = 65$), coaches ($n = 16$), performance directors ($n = 4$), and or sport scientists and
9 medics ($n = 5$). Within their organizations, participants were operating at a variety of levels
10 ranging from club ($n = 26$), county ($n = 21$), regional ($n = 12$), national ($n = 17$), and
11 international ($n = 14$). Either an online or paper hard-copy of a questionnaire including the OSI-
12 SP, ELS, and turnover intentions was sent to all participants to be completed. After
13 approximately 6 months (+/- 2 weeks), the same questionnaire pack was sent out to all
14 participants again with one additional item to measure actual turnover. Prior to data collection, a
15 favourable ethical opinion was received and information about the nature of the study and
16 issues of confidentiality and anonymity were explained to all participants.

17 **Measures**

18 The measures employed in study 1 for org stress (OSI-SP), emotional labor (ELS) and
19 turnover intentions, were again used for study 2. In addition, actual turnover was measured
20 using a single-item question: "I am no longer part of this sport organization".

21 **Data analysis**

22 As with Study 1, a simple moderation analysis was used to ascertain whether the effect
23 of the frequency of organizational stressors from time 1 on turnover intentions and actual
24 turnover from time 2 varied in magnitude and nature as a function of surface acting. The present
25 study used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS macro, with 1000 bootstrap resamples and 95%

1 confidence intervals to test indirect effects for significance at different values of the moderator
2 (i.e., surface acting).

3 **Results**

4 **Preliminary analysis**

5 Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for study variable
6 dimensions. The mean values reported were in accordance with extant literature. For the main
7 study variables, there was a positive relationship found between the frequency of organizational
8 stressors (time 1) and surface acting ($r = .24, p < .05$) but not turnover intentions (time 2) or
9 actual turnover (time 2). Turnover intentions (time 1 and time 2) were positively related to
10 actual turnover ($r = .27, p < .05$; $r = .46, p < .001$).

11 [TABLE 4 AROUND HERE]

12 Dependent t-tests showed a significant increase in the scores between turnover
13 intentions at time 1 ($M = 6.74, SD = 4.31$) to turnover intentions at time 2 ($M = 8.27, SD =$
14 5.05); $t(89) = -2.82, p < .01$. There was a small but non-significant decrease in reports of the
15 frequency of organizational stressors from time 1 ($M = 1.45, SD = .74$) to time 2 ($M = 1.36, SD$
16 $= .74$); $t(89) = .10, p > .05$.

17 **Testing for moderation**

18 The relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors (time 1) and turnover
19 intentions (time 2) was moderated by surface acting ($F(3, 86) = 3.65, p < .01, R^2 = .11$)
20 supporting Hypothesis 5a. Indeed, the interaction of stressor frequency and surface acting on
21 turnover intentions was $b = 2.41, t(86) = 2.66, p < .01$. Interaction slopes for stressors predicting
22 turnover intentions showed that at high levels of surface acting turnover intention scores
23 increased by 2.11 ($b = 2.11, t(86) = 2.39, p < .01$), and for performers reporting low levels of
24 surface acting there was not a significant increase in turnover intention scores ($b = -.201, t(86)$
25 $= -1.54, p = .13$). However, although 14 out of 90 participants had left their sport organization
26 by time 2, the moderation results for actual turnover showed an insignificant interaction effect

1 ($b = .54$, 95% CI [-.62, 1.48], $Z = .81$, $p > .05$). Hence, the relationship between the frequency
2 of organizational stressors (time 1) and actual turnover (time 2) was not moderated by surface
3 acting and the findings were not consistent with Hypothesis 5b (see Figures 4 and 5).

4 [FIGURE 4 AROUND HERE]

5 [FIGURE 5 AROUND HERE]

6 **Study 2 Discussion**

7 This study provides the first longitudinal examination into the influence of the
8 frequency of organizational stressors and emotional labor on behavioral outcomes in sport. The
9 main finding was that surface acting positively moderated the relationship between the
10 frequency of organizational stressors (time 1) and turnover intention (time 2) whereby, the
11 relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors (time 1) and turnover intentions
12 (time 2) was only significant at higher levels of surface acting. Nevertheless, surface acting did
13 not moderate the relationship between the frequency of organizational stressors (time 1) and
14 actual turnover. The findings indicate that at comparable levels of organizational stressors
15 experienced, those reporting greater emotional labor express an increased desire to leave their
16 sport organization after six months, yet do not necessarily turnover.

17 Although intentions have been found to be the best predictors of behavior (Armitage
18 & Conner, 2001), this relationship can vary considerably. Indeed, the theory of planned
19 behavior (Ajzen, 2002) proposes the intention-behavior relationship may itself be moderated.
20 That is, the relationship between turnover intentions and actual turnover might be stronger in
21 certain individuals and circumstances than others (e.g., those with greater perceived behavioral
22 control, self-efficacy). For example, performers remaining in their current organization despite
23 expressing a desire to leave may not be able to due to a lack of available and appropriate
24 alternatives. Indeed, performers may want to leave their organization but resolve not to do so
25 due to financial repercussions, distance to alternative organizations, or fears regarding
26 reemployment. There is scope for future studies to explore these possible explanations further

1 players. Such findings also reinforce the notion that the organization of sport can create
2 climates associated with higher incidences of burnout for individuals (Cresswell & Eklund,
3 2006b; Gould et al., 1996). Given the emerging findings pertaining to the important role
4 emotional phenomena play in sport organizations (Wagstaff et al., 2012a, 2012b, 2013;
5 Wagstaff, 2014), it is perhaps not surprising that organizational-stressor dimensions were most
6 strongly correlated to physical and emotional exhaustion burnout scores in the present research.
7 This observation also lends support to the assertion that physical and emotional exhaustion
8 captures the ‘core meaning’ of burnout (see Cropanzano et al., 2003).

9 The results of this study significantly advance previous research by highlighting the
10 role of emotional labor as a moderating variable in the relationship between organizational
11 stressor frequency and burnout, as well as offering a first insight into such dynamics in sport.
12 The finding that surface acting moderates turnover intentions through burnout and turnover
13 intentions is salient because such findings significantly extend extant cross-sectional findings in
14 this domain and provides empirical support for several hypotheses of the meta-model of stress
15 and emotions (Fletcher & Fletcher, 2005). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the relationship
16 between organizational stressors, surface acting, and actual turnover was not significant. To
17 determine why some individuals remain in their organization despite showing signs of burnout
18 and stating turnover intentions, there is a need to examine sport-related attitudes, such as
19 commitment, identity and engagement. Indeed, Jackson et al. (2014) found organizational
20 commitment mediated attrition rates in adolescent groups in sport. In the same study, Jackson et
21 al. (2014) developed a sport-specific measure of organizational commitment providing an
22 excellent opportunity for future research to understand engagement, and intentions to turnover
23 or actual turnover in sport organizations (Wagstaff & Larner, 2015).

24 The findings reported here suggest that emotional labor has significant explanatory
25 potential for psychosocial dynamics and outcomes in sport, specifically, that surface acting is
26 likely to lead to negative outcomes such as burnout and turnover intentions. Hence, it would

1 appear that the use of surface acting is maladaptive and should be discouraged, yet we are
2 reluctant to make such conclusions or recommendations at this time. To elaborate, in light of
3 the negative outcomes associated with surface acting observed in the present studies, one might
4 question why individuals employ such strategies. In attempting to fathom such behavior,
5 previous research on organizational stressors in sport (see Hanton et al., 2012) might offer
6 insight. Indeed, Hanton et al., (2012) found that when encountering organizational stressors in
7 sport, individuals perceived them to be largely negative, and appraised themselves to have little
8 control and limited resources to cope with such demands. Such findings offer insight into why
9 individuals might employ surface acting; that is, because they do not think they can control or
10 resolve the demand through problem-focused action, they suppress their emotional response to it.
11 Therefore, we encourage researchers to examine the cognitive determinants of surface acting in
12 order to better understand why individuals use such strategies despite the associated negative
13 wellbeing consequences. In terms of our reticence to advise the *universal* avoidance of surface
14 acting, we would add that the consequences of acute versus chronic surface acting are not well
15 understood, and it is possible that there are times when surface acting might be an effective
16 short-term strategy (e.g., to avoid interpersonal conflict). Clearly, further research is required to
17 better understand the complexity of emotional labor in sport organizations.

18 In addition to examining the complexity of the emotional labor process in sport,
19 researchers might seek to develop and evaluate emotion-regulation interventions for promoting
20 well-being and retaining talent and participation numbers in sport organizations. For example,
21 in a non-sport sample, Parkinson and Totterdell (1999) trained employees to use either
22 engagement strategies (i.e., direct attention towards current mood and challenges) or social
23 support strategies (i.e., divert attention away from the current situation), with those employees
24 who used engagement strategies to experience more positive moods were better at withstanding
25 emotional demands than those taught social support strategies. Further, there exists a body of
26 research in non-sport organizations evaluating the effectiveness of burnout prevention

1 interventions. In a review of this literature, Awa et al., (2010) observed that the majority of
2 interventions were directed at the individual level (68%), with 8% being aimed at organizational
3 change, and 24% were a combination of both. The authors concluded their review by arguing
4 that a combination of both intervention types should be further investigated, optimized and
5 practiced.

6 We perceive several strengths aligned with the present research. First, the
7 examination of organizational stressors, well-being outcomes and turnover extends quantitative
8 research in organizational psychology in sport. Further, the use of a longitudinal design to
9 predict the relationships between these variables over time also provides a novel contribution to
10 this literature. Nevertheless, as with all studies, there are limitations of the present research. One
11 limitation of the present research was the absence of appraisal data. According to the meta-
12 model of stress, appraisals play a key role in the stress process. Nonetheless, as appraisals are
13 highly individualised, these phenomena are difficult to measure using existent quantitative
14 methods and empirical examinations of organizational stress appraisals remain a key area for
15 future research (cf. Didymus & Fletcher, 2012; Hanton et al., 2012). The absence of multilevel
16 analyses allowing for handling of the potentially clustered nature of the data is also a potential
17 limitation. However, very few participants were from the same sport or organization as others,
18 and therefore, we do not believe that data were skewed by organizational-level variables. In
19 addition, the OSI-SP was developed and validated with a specific population in mind (i.e.,
20 athletes) and therefore, required slight modification when used with other populations (i.e.,
21 coaches, managers, sport scientists and medics). To aid future research wanting to identify and
22 measure organizational stressors among other key stakeholders operating within sport, there is a
23 need to develop and validate the OSI for other sport populations. Finally, it was beyond the
24 scope of the present research to assess intensity and duration of stressors in addition to
25 frequency using the OSI-SP. Therefore, another potential area for future research would be to

1 investigate these dimensions, particularly in relation to the experience of burnout and turnover
2 intention.

3 **Perspectives**

4 In putting these findings into perspective, the present studies significantly advance
5 current theory and research and empirically link organizational stressors and burnout in sport.
6 Further, the present studies advance emotional theory and research by identifying surface acting
7 as a moderating variable in the relationships between the frequency of organizational stressors,
8 burnout, and turnover intentions. These findings have the potential to assist sport organizations
9 to change individuals' experiences of organizational stressors and emotional labor and
10 subsequently reduce individuals' burnout and their desire to leave their organization.

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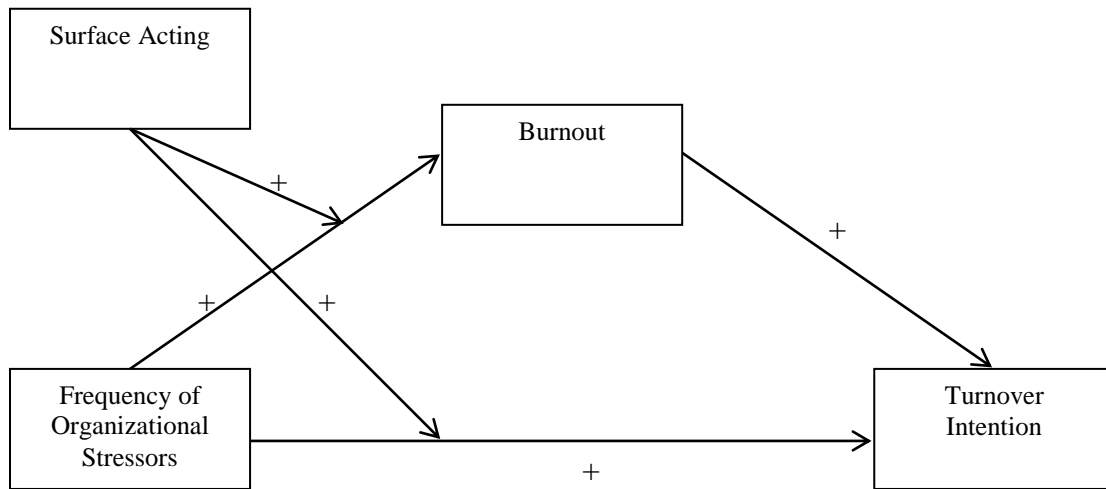
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15 *Figure 1.* Hypothesised model for organizational stressors, surface acting, burnout, and turnover
16 intention.

Table 1 *Correlations and descriptive statistics*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. OSISP Freq	-																	
2. OSISP Int	.86**	-																
3. OSISP Dur	.80**	.91**	-															
4. OSISP G&D	.74**	.68**	.67**	-														
5. OSISP L&O	.72**	.63**	.56**	.59**	-													
6. OSISP T&Cu	.79**	.67**	.63**	.47**	.51**	-												
7. OSISP Co	.74**	.64**	.62**	.48**	.46**	.45**	-											
8. OSISP S	.75**	.62**	.57**	.39**	.41**	.59**	.35**	-										
9. Surface acting	.26**	.26**	.25**	.24**	.23**	.22**	.19**	.15**	-									
10. Deep acting	.26**	.27**	.27**	.26**	.25**	.23**	.15**	.18**	.13**	-								
11. Burnout	.32**	.29**	.31**	.28**	.20**	.28**	.25**	.19**	.31**	.07	-							
12. PEE	.40**	.40**	.39**	.39**	.32**	.30**	.31**	.22**	.29**	.20**	.74**	-						
13. SD	.22**	.17**	.20**	.13**	.17**	.21**	.18**	.15**	.22**	.06	.84**	.46**	-					
14. RA	.14**	.12*	.14**	.13**	-.01	.17**	.12**	.09	.21**	-.08	.74**	.27**	.51**	-				
15. TI	.19**	.17**	.18**	.09	.09*	.20**	.13**	.13**	.08	.04	.37**	.20**	.38**	.29**	-			
16. TI1	.18**	.16**	.16**	.09*	.07	.14**	.16**	.13**	.02	-.03	.37	.19**	.40**	.29**	.74**	-		
17. TI2	.12*	.10*	.12**	.02	-.01	.15**	.07	.11*	.03	-.01	.26**	.12**	.28**	.22**	.88**	.53**	-	
18. TI3	.21**	.18**	.19**	.12**	.17**	.20**	.15**	.10*	.14**	.11*	.37**	.22**	.37**	.27**	.82**	.60**	.52**	-
M	1.54	1.60	1.48	1.75	1.19	1.74	1.36	1.67	2.56	2.81	11.39	10.97	10.46	12.75	7.70	1.88	3.19	2.63
SD	.82	.88	.92	.98	.83	1.01	1.21	1.33	.90	1.04	3.05	4.01	4.02	3.57	4.73	1.56	2.19	1.93

Note: G & D: goals and development; L & O: logistics and operations; T & Cu: team and culture; Co: coaching; S: selection; PEE: physical and emotional exhaustion; SD: sport devaluation; RA: reduced accomplishment; TI: turnover intention. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

Table 2

Simple moderation results

Variable	<i>b</i> [LLCI, ULCI]	se	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	11.30 [11.05, 11.54]	.13	88.81	.000
Surface acting	.88 [.58, 1.18]	.15	5.77	.000
OSISP Frequency	.95 [.62, 1.28]	.17	5.67	.000
OSISP Freq x surface acting	.46 [.16, .76]	.15	3.02	.003

Note. LLCI: lower limit confidence interval; ULCI: upper limit confidence interval.

^aBootstrap sample size = 1,000. ^b95% confidence intervals.

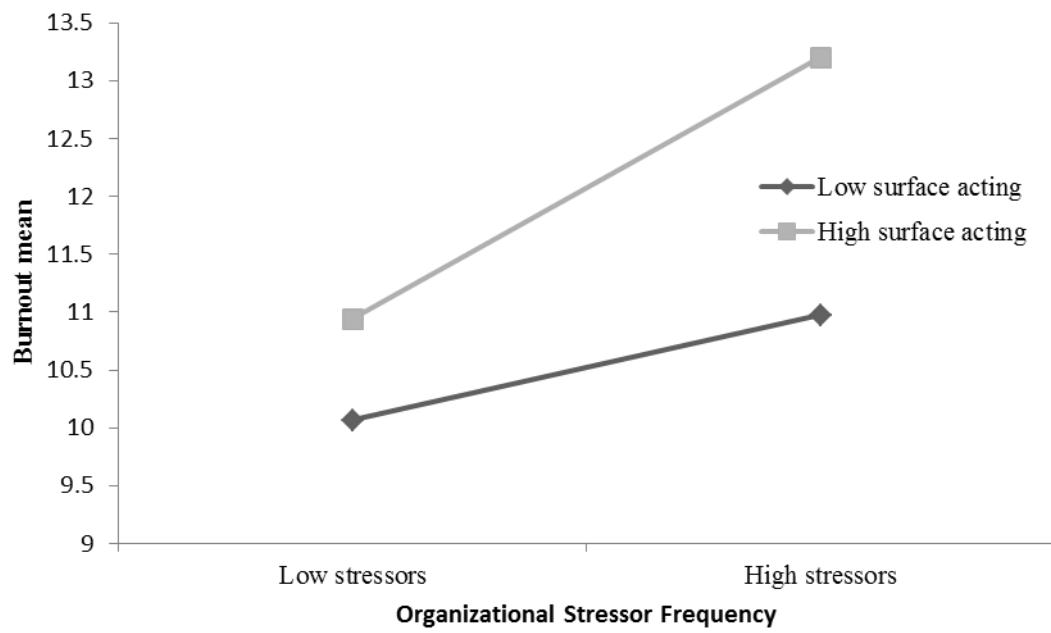


Figure 2. Plot of the interaction between the frequency of organizational stressors and surface acting in predicting burnout.

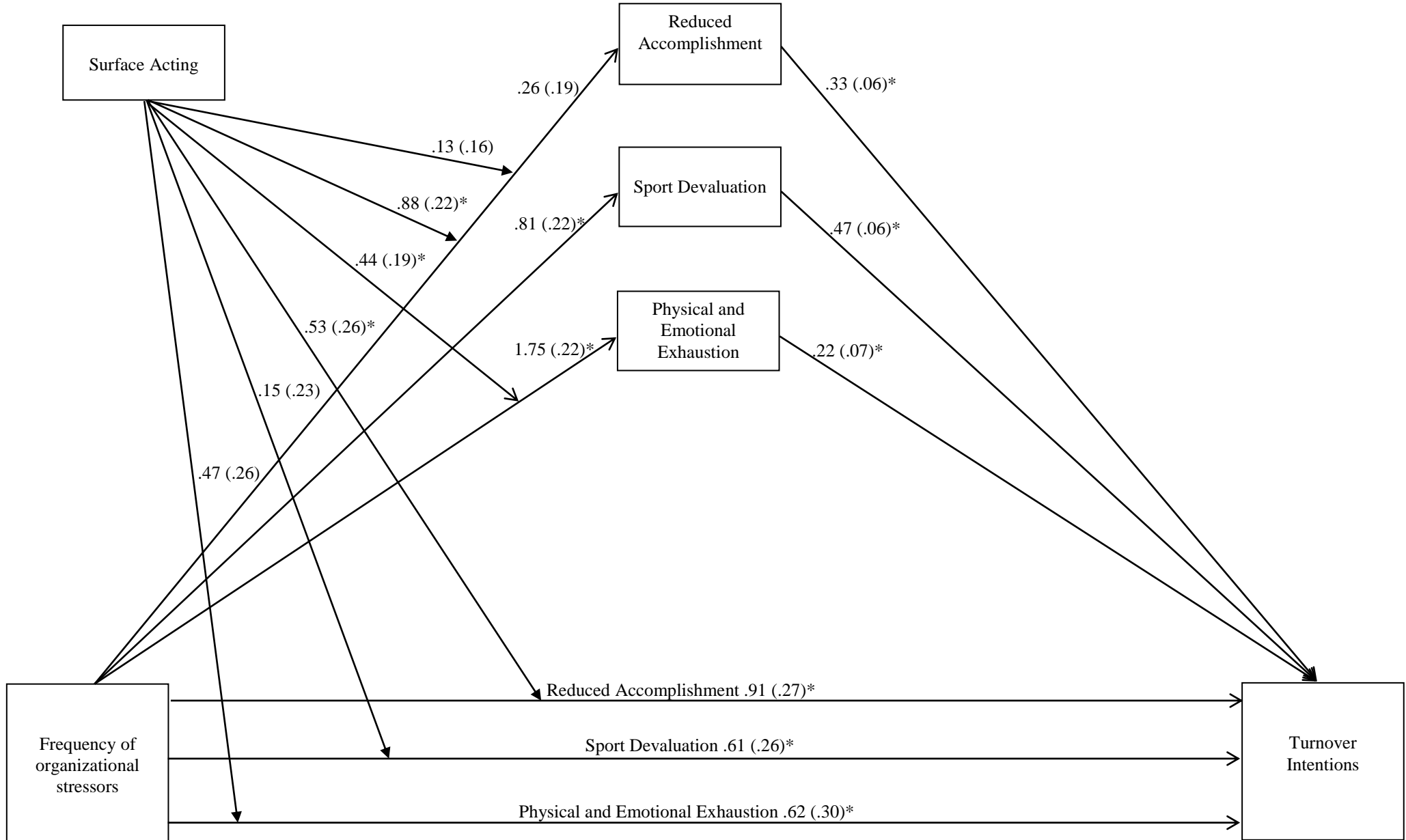


Figure 3. Moderated-mediation model with surface acting as a moderator. * $p < .05$

Table 3

Conditional indirect effects of organizational stressor frequency on turnover intentions (through burnout) at three levels of surface acting

Surface acting	<i>b</i> (SE)	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
-1SD (-.90)	.33 (.14)	.08	.64
M (.00)	.57 (.12)	.35	.83
+1SD (.90)	.81 (.16)	.54	1.19

Note. LL: lower limit; CI: confidence interval; UL: upper limit; SD: standard deviation; M: mean.

^aBootstrap sample size = 1,000. ^b95% confidence intervals.

Table 4 *Correlations and descriptive statistics*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. OSISP Freq	-																		
2. OSISP Int	.77**	-																	
3. OSISP Dur	.72**	.90**	-																
4. OSISP G&D	.69**	.53**	.53**	-															
5. OSISP L&O	.61**	.48**	.39**	.47**	-														
6. OSISP T&Cu	.78**	.62**	.60**	.40**	.41**	-													
7. OSISP Co	.70**	.52**	.78**	.33**	.48**	.41**	-												
8. OSISP S	.70**	.56**	.56**	.48**	.20**	.52**	.22**	-											
9. Surface Acting	.24*	.22*	.22*	.40*	.13	.16	.16	.08	-										
10. Deep Acting	.27*	.24*	.32**	.21	.20	.22*	.21*	.18	.30**	-									
11. TI (time1)	.25*	.28*	.21*	.04	.14	.34**	.09	.18	.08	.12	-								
12. TI1	.17	.20	.08	-.08	.09	.23*	.13	.10	-.04	-.06	.70**	-							
13. TI2	.13	.19	.11	-.08	-.03	.26*	-.07	.19	-.07	.06	.84**	.49**	-						
14. TI3	.30**	.30**	.27**	.10	.29**	.36**	.21	.13	.24*	.21*	.81**	.54**	.54**	-					
15. TI (time 2)	.01	.11	.05	-.05	.02	.02	-.04	.04	-.12	.01	.49**	.26*	.47**	.36**	-				
16. TI1	.06	.17	.15	-.04	.01	.08	.02	.09	-.08	-.01	.48**	.27**	.48**	.30**	.79**	-			
17. TI2	-.06	.03	-.05	-.07	-.03	-.09	-.08	-.02	-.25*	-.08	.40**	.25*	.41**	.29**	.79**	.45**	-		
18. TI3	-.01	.11	.07	-.10	.03	.03	.01	-.05	-.04	.09	.29**	.14	.29**	.30**	.83**	.58**	.55**	-	
19. Actual turnover	.08	.10	.09	-.06	.01	.12	.08	-.12	.08	-.17	.27*	.27*	.22*	.21*	.46**	.61**	.24*	.24*	-
M	1.45	1.44	1.30	1.63	1.19	1.68	1.28	1.46	2.60	2.70	6.74	1.68	2.57	2.50	8.27	2.21	3.07	2.99	.16
SD	.74	.82	.84	.89	.73	.96	1.27	1.27	.85	1.04	4.30	1.55	1.95	1.82	5.05	1.96	2.19	1.92	.36

Note: G & D: goals and development; L & O: logistics and operations; T & Cu: team and culture; Co: coaching; S: selection; TI: turnover intention. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$ (2-tailed)

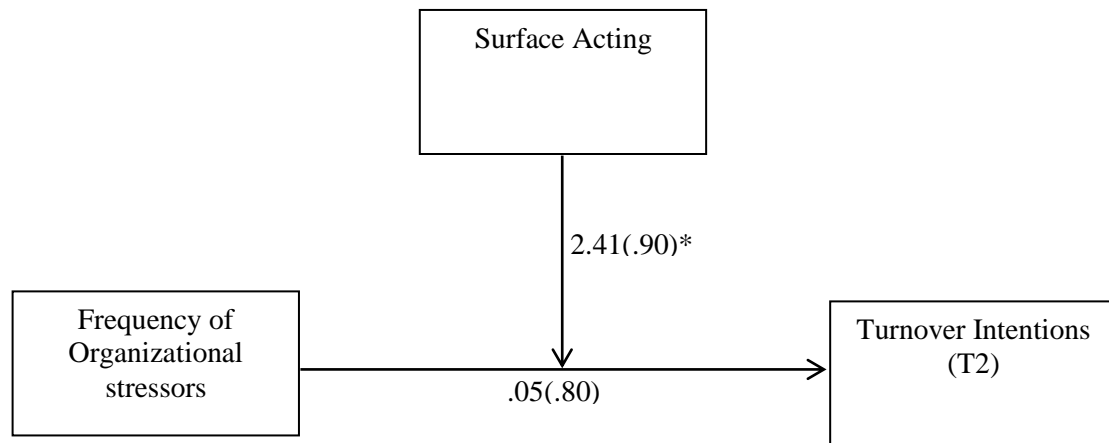


Figure 4. Moderation model for organizational stressor frequency, surface acting, and turnover intentions. * $p < .05$

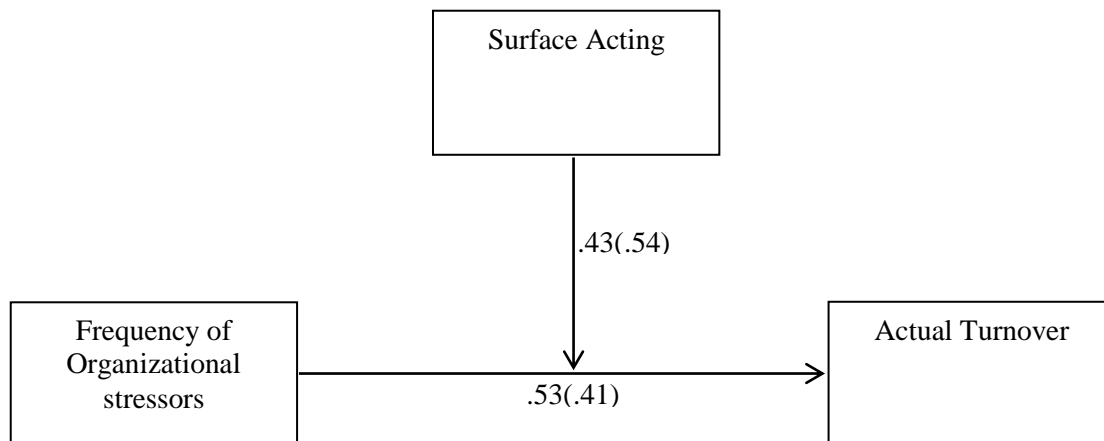


Figure 5. Moderation model for organizational stressor frequency, surface acting, and actual turnover. * $p < .05$

Table 5

Conditional indirect effects of the frequency of organizational stressors on turnover intentions (time 2) and actual turnover at three levels of surface acting

Surface acting	<i>b</i> (SE)	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Turnover Intentions			
-1SD (-.85)	-2.01 (1.31)	-4.60	.59
M (.00)	.05 (.80)	-1.55	1.64
+1SD (.85)	2.11 (.88)*	.36	3.85
Actual turnover			
-1SD (-.85)	.16 (.56)	-.94	1.26
M (.00)	.53 (.41)	-.28	1.34
+1SD (.85)	.90 (.67)	-.41	2.20

Note. LL: lower limit; CI: confidence interval; UL: upper limit; SD: standard deviation; M: mean.

^aBootstrap sample size = 1,000. ^b95% confidence intervals. * $p < .05$