

The side-effects of a job well done. Antecedents and consequences of job involvement in the Romanian private business sector

Nicoleta Ivas¹, Ticu Constantin¹

Abstract: This paper examines the antecedents and consequences of job involvement using a sample of 339 participants out of which 228 were females, with an average age of 28 years, working in Romanian companies specialized in commerce, service delivery and IT. The various definitions of the term are identified and integrated along with the analysis of the two most frequently used measurements. Our research aimed to investigate job characteristics, extraversion, neuroticism, family to work conflict, perceived organizational support and ownership as antecedents of job involvement and burnout, professional satisfaction, general mental health, organizational commitment, work to family, professional performance and turnover intent, as its consequences. The findings of the study indicated that job involvement is influenced by job characteristics, neuroticism, family to work conflict, perceived organizational support and ownership and has a significant impact on burnout, professional satisfaction, general mental health, organizational commitment, work to family and professional performance. The data did not show any significant relationship between job involvement and extraversion, position in the company or turnover intent.

Keywords: Job involvement, perceived organizational support, ownership, professional performance.

Introduction

The research aimed to clarify and refine the job involvement concept and to analyze the relationship between job involvement and other relevant employee and organization related variables: burnout, job satisfaction, general mental health, neuroticism and extraversion, organizational commitment, job characteristics, ownership and perceived organizational support. The job involvement research was characterized by controversy regarding the concept definition and measurement (Brown, 1996; Kaplan, Boshoff & Kellerman, 1991); Pelkey, 2017; Salessi & Omar, 2019; Reeve & Smith, 2001). In an attempt to bring more clarity to the nature of the construct, our research tried to answer various questions concerning job involvement and its role in the organization and in the life of the employees in the Romanian private business

¹ Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

*E-mail of corresponding author: nicoleta_ivas@yahoo.com

sector: “are the involved employees more satisfied than those uninvolved?”, “is performance related to job involvement?”, “which factors increase or decrease job involvement for the employees working in the private business sector?”.

In the first phase of the research, we conducted a pilot study which aimed to compare the two most widely used measurements for job involvement and to identify the one with the best psychometric properties: *Job Involvement Scale* designed by Lodhal & Kejner (1965) and Kanungo’s *Job Involvement Questionnaire* (1982) (Hoole & Boshoff, 1998; Brown, 1996). In the second phase, we studied the antecedents of job involvement and we approached variables related to the individual: extraversion, neuroticism, family to work conflict, marital status, number of children, and variables related to the organization: job characteristics, perceived organizational support, ownership towards the organization, company size, company field of activity and job position. Also, we analyzed the job involvement consequences related to the employee and the organization, in terms of burnout, job satisfaction, general mental health, organizational commitment, work to family conflict, professional performance and turnover intent.

Literature review

While reviewing the literature, we have identified various meanings and theoretical models describing job involvement and, although there is still no consensus regarding the definition, previous research provides a rich background for understanding and further analyzing this concept. The first systematic efforts to define and measure job involvement were made by Lodahl & Kejner (1965) who viewed it as a multidimensional and stable work-related attitude, defined as "the degree to which a person is psychologically identified with his work or the importance of work for the self-image of the individual" (p. 24). Saleh & Hosek (1976), in an effort to deepen the knowledge and to bring more clarity to the theoretical basis of job involvement, identified four different interpretations and conceptualizations of this concept: the job has a critical importance in personal life, the interpretation of job involvement in terms of active participation (as a behavioral act that directs the individual towards satisfying his current needs), personal self-esteem influenced by job performance and the existence of congruence between job performance and self-concept that refers to the extent to which a person considers his / her professional performance to be aligned with characteristics essential to the self-concept. Kanungo (1982) refined the job involvement construct and defined it as the psychological identification of the employee with their work, arguing that the main cause of confusion related to the definition of job involvement is the extra meaning added. From his perspective, job involvement is a one-dimensional bipolar concept, with job alienation at one extremity and job involvement at the opposite one (Kanungo, 1979, 1982). Paullay et al. (1994) defined job involvement as the degree to

which one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned with one's present job and built a measurement consistent with this definition. Yoshimura (1996) viewed job involvement from a different perspective and stated that it consists of three dimensions: emotional job involvement (how much employees like their job), cognitive job involvement (how strongly employees want to participate in their job related decision making or how important the job is in their life) and behavioral job involvement (how often employees take extra-role behaviors). Later on, Khalid & Rashid Rehman (2011) described job involvement as motivation to carry out work, while Sethi & Mittal (2016) defined the job involvement as the degree to which employees submerge themselves in their jobs, dedicate time and energy and consider work as a central part of their lives.

Due to the lack of consensus regarding the definition and the job involvement measurements, numerous results of previous studies are ambiguous, the researchers' views are diverse and many of them formulated in vague and inconclusive terms (Ho, 2006; Kaplan, 1990; Salessi & Omar, 2019). However, through continuous research in the past, several evidences of predictors and consequences of job involvement had accumulated, which can be further refined through additional studies. Rabinowitz & Hall (1977) promoted an *Integrated Model* according to which job involvement is generated by three categories of variables: dispositional variables (related to the individual: age, gender, marital status, personality traits) situational variables (related to the employee's workplace and job characteristics) and a third category of personal work attitudes and behaviors. Kanungo (1979, 1982), while describing the *Motivational Approach*, stated that job involvement is generated by two categories of factors: historical factors and contemporary factors. The historical causes of job involvement or alienation originate during the personal early socialization process: organizational, cultural and group norms, while contemporary causes are the environmental conditions in the immediate proximity of the employee: the workplace characteristics, organizational practices, management style and leadership. He sustained that job involvement is influenced by peoples believes that the working environment can offer the appropriate conditions to satisfy personal needs. Brown (1996) proposed the *Causality Theory Model* on the relationship between job involvement and related variables and, based on a meta-analysis that incorporated the results of previous research, concluded that job involvement is influenced by personality and situational variables. Yoshimura (1996) proposed a theoretical multidimensional model which presented job involvement from three perspectives: affective, cognitive and behavioral and claimed that job involvement is influenced by three categories of factors: personal variables (personality, need for growth, values related to work, career level and professional success), organizational factors (type of job, job characteristics, human resources management policies, job

satisfaction, organizational commitment) and non-organizational factors (family and life outside organization).

Our research originated from Rabinowitz & Hall's (1977) *Integrated Model* perspective and Brown's (1996) assumptions that job involvement is a one-dimensional construct influenced by both individual and situational variables, with significant impact on the individual as well as on the organizations. We based our research on results of previous studies and addressed the relationship between job involvement and the following variables related to the employee and their working environment: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, burnout, general mental health, work to family conflict, perceived organizational support, ownership and professional performance (as consequences) and extraversion, neuroticism, job characteristics, turnover intent, family to work conflict and company size (as antecedents).

Job satisfaction is an important work-related attitude that contributes to the well-being of the employees and affects a wide range of employee behaviors in the organization. The concept refers to the positive feelings related to the job, as a result of evaluating its characteristics and describes, in general, how satisfied the employees are with their job (Currivan, 1999; Jones, George & Hill, 2000; Mukhtar, 2012). The relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction has been extensively studied and even though all authors agree about their positive relationship, a causal factor has not been identified, most studies summarizing the correlation without addressing the causality issue (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail & Baker, 2010). The first perspective viewed job involvement as an antecedent of job satisfaction and is motivated by the fact that an involved employee receives more rewards and therefore feels more satisfied (Currivan, 1999; Brown 1996). The job involvement as a consequence of job satisfaction perspective is promoted by authors who consider that an employee happy with his job will be more likely to get involved in his daily work (Bakker, 2014; Carmeli, 2005). Also, various authors accept the perspective of mutual impact (Brown 1996; Kuruüzüm, Çetin & Irmak, 2009). Our research aims to demonstrate that job satisfaction is a consequence of job involvement, based on the premise that the involvement generates performance and that a person performing well is recognized and rewarded, and so the employee gets satisfied by the acknowledgement of their results.

Organizational commitment was defined as the employee's identification with the organization, by adhering to the organization's value system and objectives, by making efforts on behalf of the organization and by wanting to remain in the organization (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). Even though the role of job involvement and organizational commitment in the organization has been extensively studied, it was only later when research was conducted to directly address the relationship between the two variables. In Brown's meta-

analysis (1996) a strong positive correlation has been identified between the two variables, as well as in other organizational studies (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999; Knoop, 1995, Uygur & Kilic, 2009).

Numerous studies approached professional stress and *burnout* in organizations and many of them addressed the relationship between job involvement and burnout (Allam, 2007; Chiu, & Tsai, 2006; Azeem, 2010; Chauhan, 2009; Griffin et al., 2010). Pioneer of the concept, Freudenberger (1974) defined burnout as “a state of physical and emotional depletion resulting from the condition of work”. Multiple studies indicated a positive correlation between job involvement and burnout: the higher the job involvement, the higher the burnout levels (Azeem, 2010). Previous studies identified a negative effect of job involvement on burnout (Chauhan, 2009), concluding that burnout in employees can be avoided or reduced if they develop a high level of involvement and identify themselves psychologically with their work. On the other hand, previous results showed a positive relationship between job involvement and burnout, meaning that highly involved employees have higher levels of burnout (Griffin et al., 2010).

We were interested in the influence of job involvement on the employee's *well-being* in terms of general mental health and we assessed this relationship using an adapted version of the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1979). Previous research job involvement showed either a positive correlation between job involvement and well-being (Castro, 1986), either an insignificant relationship (Weiner, Muczyk & Gable, 1987).

Work-family conflict is the conflict that arises when an individual experiences incompatible demands between work and family roles, causing participation in both roles to become more difficult (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Previous research has shown a significant relationship between the conflict between work and family and job involvement (Tharmalingam & Bhatti, 2014; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Razak, Yunus & Nasurdin, 2011), but there are also studies that did not identify a significant relationship between the two variables (Lawrence, 2013).

The perceived organizational support refers to employees' beliefs that the organization values their contributions and cares for their good (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski & Rhoades, 2002). Previous research on organizational behavior provides evidence that employees with high scores on the perceived organizational support scale are more likely to have positive feelings and attitudes towards the workplace and have adequate behavioral intentions in the organization. Among the variables influenced by the perceived organizational support is job involvement (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Wickramasinghe & Wickramasinghe (2011) found that job involvement partially mediates the relationship between the perceived organizational support and the turnover intention.

Ownership is defined as the psychological state of a person who feels that an object (material or immaterial) is belonging to them (Pierce, Kostova & Dirks, 2001). Van Dyne & Pierce (2004) proved the existence of a positive link between psychological ownership for the organization and employee attitudes (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organization-based self-esteem) and work behavior (performance and organizational citizenship). Exploring this approach, we presumed that job involvement, as one of the most important work-related attitudes, would be positively connected to the organizational ownership, therefore we included this variable in our research.

Professional performance is considered one of the most important organizational construct and multiple studies identified a positive and significant influence of job involvement on professional performance (Chungtai, 2008; Khan & Akbar, 2014; Rotenberry & Moberg, 2007; Danish, Shahid, Aslam, Afzal & Ali, 2015) which can be explained by the fact that fully involved employees' jobs relate to their self-esteem, giving meaning and purpose to the employee (Khan & Akbar, 2014). Nevertheless, previous research has not always confirmed the significant relationship between the two variables (Brown, 1996). We have based our approach regarding job performance on the contributions of Biefert & Hatrup (2003) who built a multidimensional performance assessment scale, based on the analysis of perceptions regarding the importance of various general work behaviors.

Organizational psychology research has verified if an employee's job involvement is determined by their personality traits in detriment or in interaction with other personal or situational factors (Liao & Lee, 2009; Li, Lin & Chen, 2007; Elankumaran, 2004). Starting from previous research results we aimed to clarify the relationship between extraversion and neuroticism and job involvement. In terms of *neuroticism* or emotional stability, there are studies proving a significant negative influence over job involvement (Ravangar, Mohamad, Sajjadnia & Ghanavatinejad, 2014), while others have not identified any significant relationship between the two variables (Bozionelos, 2004). Regarding *extraversion*, the relationship with job involvement is positive, so the extraverted people are more involved in their job than the introverted ones (Liao & Lee, 2009).

Brown's (1996) theoretical model implies that job involvement changes when elements of the job context change. Stating from his assumption that job's potential for satisfying salient psychological needs can mediate the relationship between environmental factors and job involvement, we wanted to assess if the positive characteristics of one's job have a significant impact on job involvement. In the 1980s, the Gallup Institute's researchers focused their work on teams and employees with high performance and, through qualitative research, gained insight into the thoughts, feelings and behaviors associated with professional success. Based on their findings, the researchers build the Q12 tool,

to assess whether the workplace is of good quality. As far as our research is concerned, we are interested in verifying to what extent the conditions or characteristics of the workplace influence the level of job involvement, compared to or in combination with individual or other organizational factors.

Previous research proved that conscious and voluntary intention to resign is one of the strongest predictors and an immediate antecedent of giving up work (Hafer & Martin, 2006). Job involvement was associated with significant improvements in the quality of life of employees at work (Bothma, 2011), but there are studies that demonstrate that job involvement not only brings substantial new responsibilities, but also brings psychological pressures and tensions that may be perceived as inconveniences rather than challenges (Vidal, 2007) thus influencing the intention to resign of the employees. However, numerous studies provide evidence of a significant negative link between job involvement and *turnover intent* (Blau & Boal, 1987; Wickramasinghe & Wickramasinghe, 2011). Our research attempts to clarify the relationship between the two variables in the context of Romanian private business sector.

Research objectives

Our interest in studying job involvement was inspired by its important effects on organizations, especially the increased productivity and work performance, and on the employees, in terms of satisfaction and quality of life (Chungtai, 2008; Khan & Akbar, 2014; Brown, 1996). Our research aimed to increase the knowledge on job involvement on a theoretical, as well as on a practical level. From a theoretical perspective, the research findings improved the understanding of the concept, its role and the factors that influence job involvement in organizations. From a practical point of view, the findings increased awareness regarding job involvement consequences that are largely reflected in the management and administration of human resources.

To achieve our objective of identifying the antecedents and consequences of job involvement, we selected the variables related to the employee, the job and the organization that presented clear ties with job involvement in previous research and also included variables poorly addressed in earlier studies with high potential in explaining the job involvement: organizational ownership and perceived organizational support.

Hypotheses

Antecedents: Variables related to the individual - extraversion, neuroticism, conflict between family life and professional life, marital status, number of children - and to the organization - positive characteristics of job, perceived organizational support, ownership towards the organization, the company size, the company field of activity and job position – have a significant impact on job involvement.

Table 1. Specific hypothesis for predictors study

Specific hypothesis for job involvement antecedents' study	
Hypothesis 1	Job involvement is influenced by job characteristics; individuals having jobs with positive characteristics have a higher level of job involvement than those with negative <i>job characteristics</i> .
Hypothesis 2	<i>Extraversion</i> influences job involvement, meaning that extravert employees have higher levels of job involvement than the introverts.
Hypothesis 3	<i>Neuroticism</i> influences job involvement, in the sense that job involvement is lower for the employees with high level of neuroticism than for the employees with low neuroticism.
Hypothesis 4	Job involvement is influenced by the <i>family to work conflict</i> , in the sense that employees whose family life requirements affect their professional life are less involved in their job than employees for whom family and professional life are not in a conflict.
Hypothesis 5	Job involvement is influenced by the <i>perceived organizational</i> support, meaning that employees who feel supported by their organization are more involved in their job than those who do not feel support from their company.
Hypothesis 6	Job involvement is influenced by <i>ownership</i> , in the sense that employees who feel that the company belongs to them will be more involved in their job than those who do not have strong feelings of ownership towards the organization.
Hypothesis 7	There are significant differences in the level of job involvement of employees working in large companies and those working in small firms, in the sense that the higher the company, the lower the level of job involvement (<i>company size</i>).
Hypothesis 8	There are significant differences in the level of job involvement between married and unmarried employees, meaning that married employees will be less involved in their job than unmarried ones (<i>marital status</i>).
Hypothesis 9	There are significant differences in employee job involvement based on the <i>number of children</i> they have, meaning that employees with more children will be less involved in their job than those with fewer or without children.
Hypothesis 10	Job involvement is influenced by the company's <i>field of activity</i> , meaning that IT employees will be more involved in their job than those in the service and commerce sector.
Hypothesis 11	Job involvement is influenced by the employee's <i>position in the company</i> , meaning that employees with leadership positions will be more involved in their job than those with executory functions.

Consequences: Job involvement influences individual and organizational variables: stress, well-being, work-family conflict, turnover intent, performance, professional satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Table 2. Specific hypothesis for consequences study

Specific hypothesis for consequences study	
Hypothesis 12	There are statistically significant differences among employees in terms <i>burnout</i> , depending on the level of job involvement, meaning that employees more involved in their job will have a higher stress than those less involved.
Hypothesis 13	Job involvement has a significant influence over <i>job satisfaction</i> meaning that employees more involved in their jobs will have a higher level of professional satisfaction than the least involved.
Hypothesis 14	Job involvement has a significant influence over employee's <i>general mental health</i> , meaning that more involved employees will have better mental health than those less involved their job.
Hypothesis 15	Job involvement has a significant influence over the <i>organizational commitment</i> , meaning that the more involved employees will have a higher level of organizational commitment than the non-involved ones.
Hypothesis 16	Job involvement has a significant influence over the level of conflict between <i>work and family life</i> , meaning that the more involved employees will experience a higher level of work-family conflict than those not involved.
Hypothesis 17	Job involvement influences <i>professional performance</i> (assessed by employee and manager), meaning that more involved employees will perform better than those less involved.
Hypothesis 18	There are significant differences in employees' <i>turnover intent</i> , depending on the level of job involvement, meaning that the more involved employees will want less to leave the organization than the non-involved ones.

Method

Participants

The research was carried out on a group of 339 employees, with an average age of 28 years ($SD = 4.27$). The group was formed of 111 male participants and 228 female participants. By company field of activity, the group of subjects includes 21 employees working in commerce companies, 306 employees in service delivery and 12 employees in IT firms. By business sector, 167 employees work in Romanian companies and 172 employees in multinational companies. The distribution of participants by marital status is as follows: 147 unmarried and 192 married. In terms of number of children, 171 employees had no child, 54 had one child, 15 had 2 children, and 99 participants refused to declare the number of children.

Materials and instruments

In the present study, job involvement was assessed through the total score on the Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ; Kanungo, 1982). The 10-item measure asked participants to assess to which extent they agree with the statements in the questionnaire. The answers were rated on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. The results indicated that the scale is one-dimensional measurement that has a good internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha was .83).

For measuring the neuroticism and extraversion, we used the items of the Romanian version of Eysenck Inventory (A) (EPI; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1963) for determining the "N" factor - neuroticism / stability (24 items, Alpha Cronbach = .81) and the "E" factor - extraversion / introversion (24 items, Alpha Cronbach = .573), scoring the items on a dichotomic (*Yes/No*) scale.

In our study, a measure of positive job characteristics was obtained through the answers provided by employees to the Gallup Q12 Questionnaire (Q12; Harter, Schmidt, Killham & Agrawal, 2009) assessing to what extent their current job presents the characteristics that make them think they have a good job. The 12 items of the original scale were translated from English with the help of a group of experts, and the answers were scored on a five-point Likert scale from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. Cronbach's alpha was .98.

The Work and Family Conflict Measurement (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014) assessed the level of conflict between professional life and family life throughout 20 items. The instrument consists of two sub-dimensions: work to family conflict (items 1-9) and family to work conflict (items 10-20), considered distinct constructs. In our research the items 10 to 20 were used to assess the intrusion of the family role over the career of the employee. The items of the original scale were translated from English with the help of a group of experts and the answers were registered on a five-point Likert scale from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the family to work conflict sub-scale was .85.

Perceived organizational support was measured using a translated version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). The instrument contains 8 items and the participants' answers were registered on a five-point Likert from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. The alpha Cronbach coefficient of the family to work conflict sub-scale was .85.

In the present study, a measure of ownership was obtained using an adjusted version of the Psychological Ownership Scale (Dyne & Pierce, 2004). The seven items of the original scale were translated from English with the help of a group of experts and the answers were registered on a five-point Likert scale from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. Of the initial version of the

scale two items were excluded during the pilot pre-testing phase, in order to obtain a better internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .82.

A measure of job satisfaction was obtained using a scale inspired by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1985). The items of the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1985) were translated from English to Romanian and were tested on a sample of 99 participants who were asked to reply to items scored on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*. Out of the 36 items, we have excluded the items related to the Nature of Work and we have reduced the number of items for the other dimensions of scale (Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Benefits, Rewards, Operating conditions, Coworkers and Communication), in order to increase the internal consistency of the scale. The resulting instrument contains 16 items, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient equal to .87.

In our study, burnout was measured using the occupational burnout subscale of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI; Borritz & Kristensen, 2004). Given the purpose of our research, we selected the seven items measuring the level of physical and mental fatigue and exhaustion experienced by the employee. The answers were scored on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree* and the Cronbach's alpha was equal to .89.

The General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg et al., 1997) was used to assess the well-being in terms of mental health. The items translated from English to Romanian were tested on a sample of 99 participants, who were asked to evaluate the severity of a mental problem over the past few weeks using a four-point Likert scale (from 0 to 3: *not at all*, *no more than usual*, *rather more than usual* and *much more than usual*). Out of the 12 initial items, two were removed in the pilot testing phase and the resulting 10-item version of the scale had a Cronbach alpha of .799.

In the present study, a measure of organizational commitment was obtained using an adapted scale of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974). The 15 original items of the questionnaire were translated from English to Romanian. After testing the scale on a sample of 99 participants, who were asked to reply to the survey on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*, four items that decreased the internal consistency of the instrument were removed (final Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .86).

Due to its complexity and importance, in our study, professional performance was assessed from both individual (self-assessment) and managerial perspective (hetero assessment by direct manager):

- self-assessed performance: inspired by the Task and Contextual Performance Scales (Befort & Hattrup (2003) we have built 18 self-reporting statements on perceived task performance, communication, compliance, extra

effort and we required each participant to assess on five-point Likert scale, from (1) = strongly disagree to (5) = strongly agree, to what extent the statements apply to themselves. The alpha Cronbach coefficient was .84.

- self-assessed comparative performance: an additional item which required the employee to evaluate their own performance by direct comparison with the colleagues' performance. The participant is invited to state whether compared to their colleagues, from the point of view of the professional performance, is considered: Among the 5% very weak, among the 15% much weaker than the others, among the 30% somehow weaker than the others, as good as the others, among the 30% better than the others, among the 15% much better than the others, among the 5% very good.

- performance rating by direct manager was obtained through the employee's general performance score at the annual review of the company. The direct/line manager assessed to what extent the employees had fulfilled their goals for the previous year. Multiple scoring scales were used by the companies and, in order to align the scores, we converted the general score provided to us into a scale of 1 to 3 as follows: (1)=*Employee has results below company expectations*; (2)=*the employee has the results in line with the company's expectations*; (3)=*Employee's performance exceeds the company's expectations*.

In the present study, a measure of turnover intent was obtained using the four items of the Turnover Intent scale (Kelloway, Gottlieb & Barham, 1999). The items scored on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) = *strongly disagree* to (5) = *strongly agree*, presented an alpha Cronbach of .90.

Procedure

A pilot study was firstly set with the purpose of identifying the better fit instrument for measuring job involvement, out of the two most widely used scales so far: Lodhal & Kejner Scale (1965) and Kanungo's Job Involvement Questionnaire (1982). Together with the job involvement scale we have also tested various tools used in the upcoming stages of the research to assess the dependent and independent variables in the study of antecedents and consequences of job involvement. We built the items by translating the original scales to Romanian, with the help of a group of experts using the back translation method and we tested the items on a sample of 99 participants (working in local private sector, between the ages of 23 and 36, out of which 78.78% were women).

Depending on the positions held in the company (function variable), the group of subjects contains 12 employees in management positions and 87 employees in subordinate positions. Depending on the level of income, the group of subjects is divided as follows: 27 employees with low incomes (under the equivalent in RON of 375 Eur/444 USD) and 72 with average incomes (between the equivalent in RON of 375 Eur/444 USD and 750 Eur/888 USD).

The group of subjects contains employees from Romanian private companies, in the field of service provision.

In the following phase, we identified the effects of job involvement on multiple individual and organizational variables: organizational commitment, job satisfaction, burnout, general mental health, work to family conflict, turnover intent and professional performance. We then evaluated the influence of the following variables on job involvement: job characteristics, perceived organizational support, ownership, extraversion, neuroticism and family to work conflict.

We gathered participants by approaching companies in the local private sector that were required to allow us to invite their employees to participate and to disclose the annual general performance scores for their employees who accepted to be included in our studies. The employees answered the questionnaires that were shared online, through *Google forms* and on emails or on paper - pencil format.

Results

Preliminary analyses

The correlations among job involvement and the related variables are presented in Table 3.

The pilot study results, which compared the two most widely used measurements of job involvement: Job Involvement Scale (Lodhal & Kejner, 1965) and Job Involvement Questionnaire (Kanungo, 1982), showed that Kanungo's scale presents the best internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha .835 compared to .701 for Lodhal & Kejner's scale). Also, confirmatory factorial analysis proved its one-dimensional characteristic (model fit scores: $\chi^2(30) = 26.260$; $p = .662$; GFI = .949; NFI = .931; CFI = 1.000; RMSEA = .000, $p = .890$).

Table 3. Pearson correlations and descriptive statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
1. Job Involvement																				
2. Extraversion	-.04																			
3. Neuroticism	.21**	.14																		
4. F to W conflict	-.12*	.13	.21**																	
5. Perceived org. supp.	.22**	-.14	-.10	-.29**																
6. Ownership	.19**	-.14	.24*	.06	.43**															
7. Burnout	.30**	.05	.13	.28**	-.32**	-.25**														
8. Job satisfaction	.11*	-.12	-.12	-.10	.45**	.29**	-.53**													
9. General ment. health	-.28**	.05	-.41**	-.44**	.19**	.17**	-.73**	.46**												
10. Org. commitment	.41**	.01	.14	-.01	.67**	.53**	-.34**	.62**	.20**											
11. W to F conflict	.26**	0.1	.25**	.50**	-.42**	0	.76**	-.40**	-.75**	-.17**										
12. Performance (SE)	.44**	-.07	-.01	-.12*	.32**	.30**	-.09	.44**	.19**	.53**	-.02									
13. Performance (C)	.13*	.13	-.18*	.07	-.17*	.06	.29**	-.22**	-.11	-.19**	.27**	.19**								
14. Performance (M)	.70**	-.16*	.08	-.24**	.26**	.22**	.09	.13*	-.14**	.33**	.03	.31**	.22**							
15. Performance (O)	.24**	-.04	-.06	-.13*	0	.26**	.17**	.47**	.32**	.21**	.15*	.62**	.73**	.26**						
16. Turnover intent	-.01	.20**	.09	.23**	-.49**	-.22**	.52**	-.53**	-.43**	-.56**	.45**	-.16**	.14*	-.12*	-.04					
17. Age	.03	-.11	.08	.09	-.17**	.16**	.38**	-.23**	-.16**	-.14**	.34**	-.01	.36**	.06	.10	.10				
18. Tenure	.05	-.22**	.03	.11	-.05	-.12*	.31**	-.34**	-.28**	-.22**	.30**	0	.21**	.01	-.28**	.16**	.50**			
19. Children	-.07	-.04	-.09	.13*	-.21**	-.01	.32**	-.25**	-.25**	-.24**	.22**	-.07	.34**	-.01	.15*	.28**	.51**	.12		
SD	6.5	3	4.7	7.2	3.3	3.1	6.5	9.6	4.8	7.9	8.3	8.6	1	.3	2.5	4.6	4.2	37	.35	
Mean	30.55	12.22	9.96	21.93	11.66	7.74	16.15	52.47	36.73	35.47	20.75	71.38	5.15	2.02	5.96	10.13	28.38	30.6	40	

Note: *p < .05; **p < .001; F to W – Family to Work; W to F – Work to Family; SE – self-assessed; C – compared; M – manager; O – overall

Results regarding job involvement antecedents

In the predictors study, for the verification of the hypothesis we applied linear regression, ANOVA One Way, ANOVA Univariate and Independent sample T tests using the SPSS 17.0 for Windows application and we assessed the extent to which job involvement is influenced by the individual and organizational variables included in the study.

The results displayed in the Table 4 showed that the variables job characteristics, neuroticism, family to work conflict, perceived organizational support, ownership, company size, marital status number of children and field of activity have a significant influence on job involvement, while extraversion and position in the company presented no significant impact on this variable.

Table 4. Results for study of antecedents

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Status	Test	Results
H 1	Job characteristics	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1, 239) = 17,782 p <.01, r^2_{adjusted} = .066. Participants' predicted job involvement is equal to 18.778+.264 points on positive job characteristics. Job involvement increased .264 points for each point on Gallup 12 scale.
H 2	Extraversion	Not confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,164) = 0.270, p > .05, r^2_{adjusted} = -.004.
H 3	Neuroticism	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,161) = 7,645, p = .006 with an r^2_{adjusted} = .039. Participants' predicted job involvement is equal to 27.505+.327 points on neuroticism. Job involvement level increased .327 points for each point on the Eysenck neuroticism subscale.
H 4	Family to work conflict	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,239) = 4,009, p = .046 with an r^2_{adjusted} = .012. Participants' predicted job

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Status	Test	Results
H 5	Perceived org. support	Confirmed	Linear regression	involvement is equal to 33.664-.129 points on the family to work conflict scale. Job involvement level decreased .129 points for each point on the family to work conflict subscale. F (1,248) = 13,115, p <.01 with an r^2 -adjusted = .047. Participants' predicted job involvement is equal to 24.687+.387 points on the perceived organizational support scale. Job involvement level increased .387 points for each point on perceived organizational support.
H 6	Ownership	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,248) = 9,614, p = .002 with an r^2 -adjusted = .034. Participants' predicted job involvement is equal to 26.440+.356 points on the ownership scale. Participants' job involvement levels increased .356 points for each point on ownership.
H 7	Company size	Confirmed	Anova One Way	F (1,248) = 3,111 p = .02 MD between <50 employees and 50-250 employees = 1.83, p = 1.00; MD between <50 employees and >250 employees = 3.90, p = .47; MD between <50 employees and multinational = 4.49, p = .04, MD between 50-

Antecedents and consequences of job involvement

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Status	Test	Results
H 8	Marital status	Confirmed	Independent Samples T Test	250 employees and >250 employees MD = 2.07, p = 1.00; MD between employees 50-250 and multinational MD = 2.66, p = .45; MD between >250 employees and multinational MD = 0.58, p = 1.00. t (337) = 2.727, p = .007)
H 9	Number of children	Confirmed	Anova One Way	F (2,239) = 4.251, p = .015. MD between 0 and 1 child = 3.07, p = .02; MD between 0 and 2 children = 1.15, p = 1.00; MD between 1 and 2 children = 4.23, p = .13.
H 10	Field of activity	Confirmed	Anova One Way	F (2,338) = 13,115, p <.01. MD between commerce and service = 1.91, p = .54; MD between commerce and IT = 10.98, p <.01; MD between service and IT = 9.07, p <.01.
H 11	Position in the company	Not confirmed	Independent Samples T Test	t (337) = -1.423, p = .15.

Results regarding job involvement consequences

For verifying the hypotheses of the second phase, we applied linear regression using the SPSS 17.0 for Windows application and we assessed the extent to which job involvement affects the individual and organizational variables studied.

The results displayed in the Table 5 showed that job involvement has a significant influence on burnout, job satisfaction, general mental health, organizational commitment, work to family conflict and professional performance, while the statistical analysis presented no significant impact of job involvement on turnover intent.

Table 5. Results for study of consequences

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Status	Test	Results
H 12	Burnout	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,239) = 24,555, p<.01 with an $r^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .09$. Participants' predicted burnout is equal to 7.629+.276 points on job involvement scale. Participants' burnout level increased with .276 points for each point on job involvement.
H 13	Job satisfaction	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,239) = 4.845, p = .028 with an $r^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .01$. Participants' predicted job satisfaction is equal to 47.127+.175 points on job involvement scale. Participants' job satisfaction level increased with .175 points for each point on job involvement.
H 14	General mental health	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,338) = 30,687, p <.01 with an $r^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .081$. Participants' predicted general mental health is equal to 43.265-.214 points on job involvement scale. Participants' general mental health level decreased with .214 points for each job involvement point.
H 15	Organizational commitment	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,338) = 71,217, p <.01 with an $r^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .174$. Participants' predicted organizational commitment is equal to 19.912+.509 points on job involvement scale. Participants' organizational commitment level increased with .509 points for each job involvement point.
H 16	Work to family conflict	Confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,239) = 17,686, p <.01 with an $r^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .065$. Participants' predicted work to family conflict is equal to

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Status	Test	Results
				11.433+.302 points on job involvement scale. Participants' work to family conflict level increased with .302 points for each point on job involvement.
H 17	Professional performance	Confirmed	Linear regression	<p>Self-assessed performance: F (1,238) = 59,684, p <.01, with an r^2adjusted = .197;</p> <p>Comparative performance: F (1,238) = 4,625, p = .033 with an r^2adjusted = .015;</p> <p>Performance rated by manager: F (1,337) = 337,798, p <.01 with an r^2adjusted = .499;</p> <p>Overall performance (mean of standardized scores for self-assessed, comparative and performance rated by manager): F (1,337) = 21.275, p <.01 with an r^2adjusted = .057.</p>
H 18	Turnover intent	Not confirmed	Linear regression	F (1,239) = 0.31, p = .860.

Discussions

Our research improves the existing knowledge regarding job involvement's definition and measurement and brings clarity to the relationship between this important work-related attitude and its predictors and consequences. Kanungo's *Job Involvement Questionnaire* (1982) showed better psychometric properties than the other frequently used measurement, Lodhal & Kejner's Scale (1965).

Regarding the antecedents of job involvement, the results showed a significant positive effect of neuroticism, which contradicts previous research that showed either an insignificant relationship (Bozionelos, 2004) either a negative one (Elloy, Everett, & Flynn, 1991). Extraversion, on the other hand, showed no significant relationships with job involvement, the results regarding

this personality trait are different from previous research that found a positive influence of extraversion over job involvement (Elloy et al., 1991). As far as the personality traits are concerned, the results are interesting and somehow surprising. In local private companies, neurotic employees tend to be more involved in their job than those who are emotionally stable, and the extraversion / introversion does not have a statistically significant influence on job involvement. These results regarding the influence of personality traits on job involvement, corroborated with the analysis concerning other individual variables, led us to conclude that job involvement is more sensitive to organizational than to personal influences. Among the factors that concern the employee, neuroticism and family work conflict showed significant but low correlations with job involvement. Job characteristics analysis allowed us to conclude that employees who do their job in good working conditions have high levels of job involvement. Job characteristics have a strong effect on job involvement, which implies that the employees are more involved in their job if their workplace presents positive attributes and can be considered "a great place to work". The results on family to work conflict are consistent with findings in previous research (Lambert, Hogan, & Cheeseman, 2011). This relationship is mostly due to the fact that family responsibilities force the employees to allocate less of their time and energy to companies' goals and requirements and more to the close ones' needs and claims. The perceived organizational support is a variable less approached in work-related studies. Our results match previous research in the field (Eisenberger et al., 2002) and allow us to state that the feeling that the organization supports the employees is associated with increased job involvement. The employees' feeling of owning their organization is associated with increased levels of job involvement, but their relationship is lower than expected. We can place the impact of the ownership on job involvement on the sociocultural characteristics of a capitalist society in an early stage. In the local business environment, ideas like "*Nothing is yours*", "*You do not work for yourself*" are widely spread, especially in large and multinational company, where we also registered lower levels of job involvement. The demographic variables marital status, the number of children, the company size and field of activity influence job involvement, while the other demographic variables are not significantly related to it. The results allowed us to state that the bigger the company, the lower the employees' job involvement levels are. In the same way, the results showed that the company field of activity influences the job involvement levels, meaning that the employees in IT industries register higher levels of job involvement than those working in services and commercial sectors. The results regarding the relationship between job involvement and job satisfaction are consistent with previous studies in the field (Brown, 1996; Currivan, 1999; Griffin et al., 2010). Burnout showed a negative relationship with job involvement, meaning that the job involved employees feel higher

levels of burnout than the non-involved ones. This contradicts some previous research that demonstrates the positive effects of job involvement in terms of stress and general well-being (Lambert et al., 2011), but this finding showed that job involvement had negative side-effects, assumable due to the predilection of the involved employees to intensive effort which can cause physical and psychological discomfort (Brown, 1996). General mental health showed a significant negative correlation with job involvement which contradicts some of the research in the field, that showed that the employees involved feel better than the non-involved ones (Lambert et al., 2011). The analysis on the work-family conflict disclosed that the more an employee is involved in their job, the more conflict between work and the family will arise, especially due to the predisposition to increased effort, which affects the quality of the interaction and the attention paid to the family.

The relationship between job involvement and burnout, general mental health and work to family conflict, even though somehow surprising, supported the idea that, in the Romanian private business sector, being involved in your job carries negative consequences on a personal level: these employees showed higher burnout levels, worse general mental health states and experienced greater intrusions from job requirements in the family life. This is a negative characteristic of the local labor market that should get attention from Romanian authorities and top employers, who can promote guidelines and regulations for the employees' protection against the above-mentioned side-effects.

Among the variables approached in the research, organizational commitment has one the strongest relation with job involvement (preceded by professional performance), which is consistent with previous research (Cohen, 1999; Brown, 1996; Blau & Boal, 1987; Knoop, 1995; Uygur & Kilic, 2009). Professional performance is analyzed from both individual (self-evaluation) and managerial perspective (hetero evaluation) and the results allowed us to conclude that there is a significant positive influence of job involvement on all tiers of the professional performance studied here. Many studies in the field were driven by this relationship, but few of them actually measure it (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; Hafer & Martin, 2006). Analyzing the results, we noted that the strongest association in terms of performance is the correlation registered between job involvement and performance evaluated by the direct manager. These results lead us to believe that the job involved employees make a good impression on their supervisors and they are viewed in a positive light by the managers who evaluate their work. Based on these results, we can metaphorically say that performance and job involvement lay more in the eye of the beholder and it is difficult to catch it outside each organization's fences. The turnover intent showed no statistically significant link with job involvement and the results are not consistent with previous research that showed a strong negative connection between them (Blau & Boal, 1987; Wickramasinghe &

Wickramasinghe, 2011). We can speculate that these results are attributed to two particular reasons. The first refers to the local socio-economic and cultural characteristics, in the sense that, for Romanian employees, the decision to leave a specific job is based more on aspects regarding job stability and the labor market attributes and less on their feelings of alienation or lack of job involvement. Due to the characteristics of our developing economy, other factors seem more important in taking a decision to resign: salary, stress and required effort, quality of supervision, financial and administrative aspects, etc. The second aspect that might explain our results are the side effects of job involvement. Given the relationship between job involvement and stress levels or general mental health, we can assume that jobs that stimulate employees' job involvement, do not have a great employee retention capability. Employees look for jobs where they feel happy and a low level of job involvement seems to be more related to the employees' well-being.

Analyzing the relationship between all variables included in our research, we can conclude that job involvement is a contradictory construct in terms of personal and organizational implications. Regarding its impact on the organization, we discovered that job involvement carries great advantages in terms of organizational commitment, performance and job satisfaction, while we noticed negative effects on a personal level, due to the link between high levels of job involvement and high levels of burnout, low mental health levels and high work to family conflict. Previous studies, such as those included in Brown's meta-analysis (1996), hypothesized on the negative effects of job involvement, symbolically called "side-effects".

The research achieved its original purpose, but it also encountered several limitations, mostly emerging from the sampling issues, mixed data collection techniques and variables measurement. With only 339 participants divided into three categories, of young age and relatively little seniority in the current job, the chosen sample reduces the possibilities of generalizing our results. Apart from the positive implications of job involvement, the surprising relationship with high burnout levels, low levels of general mental health and high levels of work to family conflict revealed in our research, warns about the risks that highly involved employees are facing in the private companies. The side – effects of job involvement should raise awareness for Government, labor institutions and employers on Romanian job market that measures need to be taken for protecting the psychological, social and physical well-being of the employees.

Thus, we found that job involved employees are a great asset for organizations, the positive effects being reflected, above all, on professional performance. Based on these results, organizations and professionals in the Human Resources and Management field can follow two practical directions: to focus on recruiting, training and retaining highly involved employees and also to address the possible side-effects of high job involvement (burnout, lower general

mental health, work to family conflict) by creating employee assistance and training programs, which support the personal development and wellbeing of the employees. Besides that, taking into account the confirmed antecedents of job involvement, organizations can plan and implement improvement projects focused on increasing the perceived organizational support, improving job characteristics and working conditions and creating a work life balance climate.

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