



# Working Well With Others: The Effects of Emotional Dissonance on IT Professionals

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# A Fictitious Memo . . .

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“Dear colleagues,

The MIS Group has had enough. We have tried for years to answer your questions (no matter how bizarre or irrelevant), fix your equipment (no matter how you abuse it) and correct your software problems (no matter how deranged your actions may have been). We almost always smile and try to be kind, and never, ever swear (at least not until we get back to our offices). But, ladies and gentlemen, MIS is going to change.”

- Gibbs 1996, p. 58



# Burnout in IT Professionals

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- Enduring concern for academics and industry
  - reduced morale, productivity, job satisfaction
  - increased turnover intentions
    - Sethi, Barrier and King 1999; Moore 2000
- 71% of IT managers concerned with employee burnout – Meta Group survey
  - Chabrow 2003; Hayes 2003
- \$300 billion annually in lost productivity and health care expenses due to work stress
  - Parus 2003



# Antecedents to Burnout in IT Professionals

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- Existing research
  - Perceived workload
    - Sonnentag, Brodbeck, Heinbokel and Stolte 1994; Moore 2000
  - Role conflict, role ambiguity
    - King and Sethi 1997; Sethi, Barrier, and King 1999; Moore 2000
  - Interpersonal contacts with users
    - Huarng 1998, 2001



# Emotional Labor

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- The management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display
  - Hochschild 1983
- The act of displaying appropriate emotion regardless of whether the emotion is discrepant with internal feeling
  - Glomb and Tews 2004



# Why Control Emotional Display?

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- Organizationally mandated display rules
  - Ekman 1973; Ashforth and Humphrey 1993; Zapf 2002
- Organizational and professional norms
  - Rafaeli and Sutton 1987
- Personal motivation
  - Goffman 1969; Rafaeli and Sutton 1987; Cote and Morgan 2002

# Importance of IT Professional / IT User Relationship



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- Systems development
  - user support of the project
  - exchange of knowledge
  - effective project performance
    - Smith and McKeen 1992; Beath and Orlikowski 1994; Jiang, Chen, and Klein 2002; Wang, Chen, Jiang, and Klein 2005
- Support
  - willingness to help
  - concern with problem at hand
    - Dormann and Zijlstra 2003
- Credibility
  - poor interpersonal relationships can damage credibility even when technical performance is excellent
    - Markus and Benjamin 1996



# Emotional Dissonance

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- Conflict between the way one feels and the emotion one feels compelled to display
- Generally thought to be stressful
  - increased work exhaustion, job stress, psychological distress
  - decreased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, customer service perceptions
    - Morris and Feldman 1997; Pugliesi and Shook 1997; Abraham 1998, 1999; Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini and Isic 1999; Dormann and Kaiser 2002; Lewig and Dollard 2003

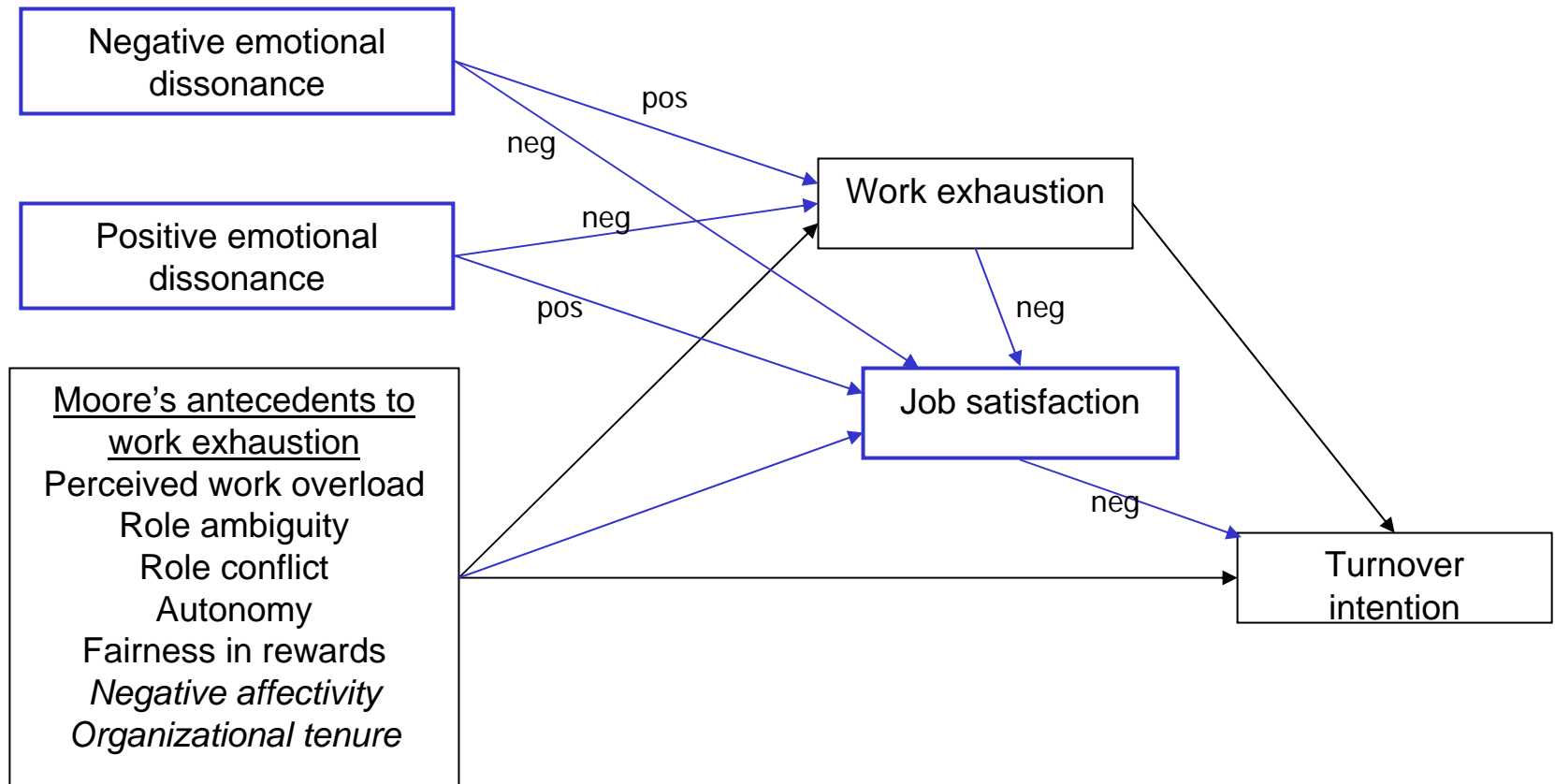


# Positive and Negative Emotional Dissonance

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- Early work on ED did not address valence of emotional display
  - Schaubroeck and Jones 2000; Cote and Morgan 2002, Diefendorff and Richards 2003
- Suppression of negative emotions
  - decreased job satisfaction
  - increased work exhaustion
- Amplification of positive emotions
  - increased job satisfaction
  - decreased work exhaustion

# Theoretical Model





# Data collection and measures

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- 225 employees of a Fortune 100 company, 161 usable responses
  - Perceived work overload, Fairness of rewards, Work exhaustion, Turnover intentions
    - Moore 2000
  - Role conflict and role ambiguity
    - Rizzo, House and Lirtzman 1970
  - Autonomy
    - Aiken and Hage 1966, McKnight 1997
  - Negative affectivity
    - Watson, Clark and Tellegen 1988
  - Job satisfaction
    - Hackman and Oldham 1980, McKnight 1997



# Emotional dissonance measures

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- Difference score from parallel scales – Adelman 1989, Abraham 1998, 1999
  - Emotional expression as requirement of job
  - Compliance with that requirement
- Perceived dissonance – Morris and Feldman 1987; Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini and Isic 1999; Cote and Morgan 2002



# Emotional dissonance measures

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- Example items –
  - “To be effective in my job, I must try portray myself as interested in customers’ frustrations even when I don’t care”
  - “To do my job well, I must pretend not to be irritated at customers even when I may feel that way”



# Item Culling

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- 2 NA items eliminated for non-normality
- Principal components factor analysis
  - Eliminate items with higher loading on wrong factor than their own
  - Eliminate items loading  $< .50$
  - 2 PWL items, 1 RC item
- All ED items loaded very strongly on one factor



# Descriptives and Reliability

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Internal Consistency</b>
Negative emotional dissonance	2.8	1.00	0.95
Positive emotional dissonance	2.6	1.09	0.94
Perceived work overload	4.2	1.13	0.72
Role ambiguity	2.9	1.22	0.85
Role conflict	3.9	1.27	0.85
Autonomy	5.0	1.21	0.89
Fairness in rewards	4.6	1.43	0.87
Negative affectivity	1.7	0.80	0.85
Work exhaustion	3.4	1.37	0.88
Job satisfaction	5.1	1.16	0.87
Turnover intention	2.5	1.52	0.93



# Correlations and Validity

	NED	PED	PWL	RA	RC	AUT	FIR	NA	WE	JS	TO
NED	<b>0.89</b>										
EDN	0.90	<b>0.87</b>									
PWL	0.32	0.24	<b>0.91</b>								
RA	0.09	0.00	0.16	<b>0.81</b>							
RC	0.81	0.28	0.19	0.23	<b>0.74</b>						
AUT	0.02	0.00	0.12	-0.17	0.17	<b>0.82</b>					
FIR	-0.19	-0.15	0.11	-0.17	-0.16	-0.02	<b>0.88</b>				
NA	0.21	0.13	0.13	0.48	0.28	-0.20	-0.07	<b>0.75</b>			
WE	0.40	0.27	0.26	0.25	0.28	0.03	-0.20	0.29	<b>0.81</b>		
JS	-0.14	-0.12	0.16	-0.57	-0.20	0.07	0.29	-0.038	-0.32	<b>0.83</b>	
TO	0.02	0.03	-0.18	0.27	0.16	-0.01	-0.40	0.25	0.07	-0.43	<b>0.88</b>

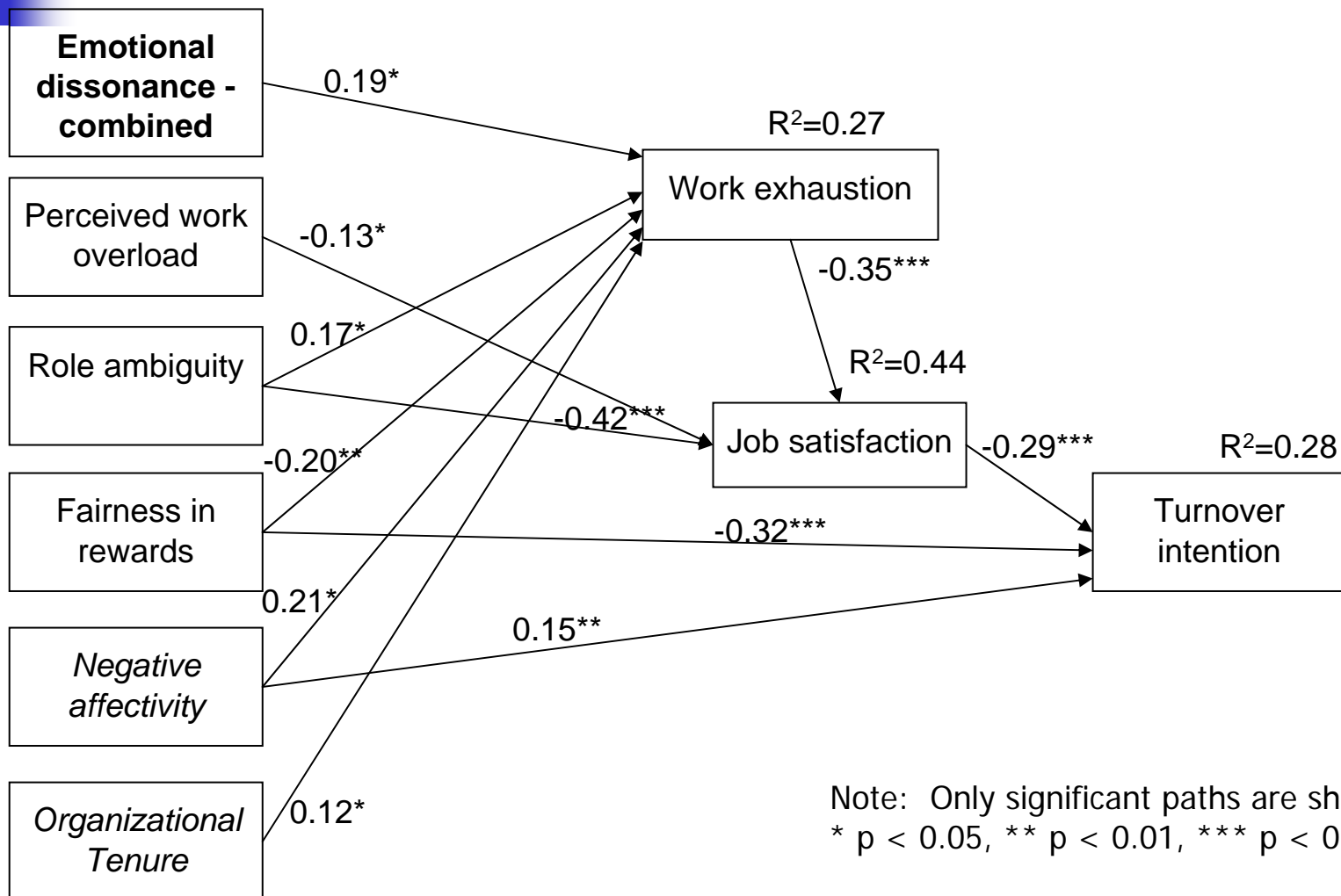
Diagonal contains square roots of AVE's



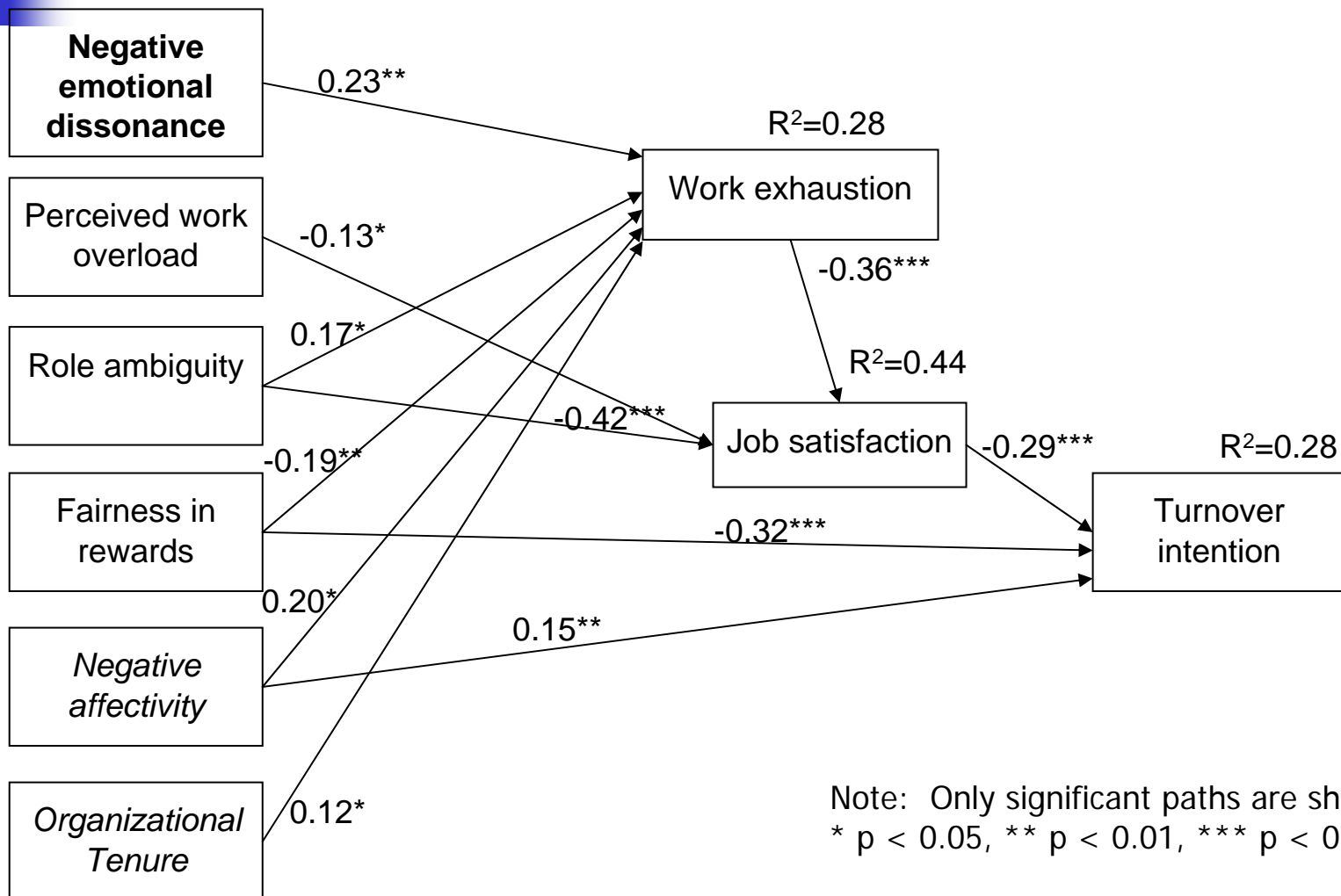
# Model Fit

	<b>CFI</b>	<b>IFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>
<b>Confirmatory factor models</b>			
NED and PED as a single variable	.88	.89	.073
NED only	.91	.91	.066
PED only	.91	.92	.065
<b>Structural models</b>			
NED and PED as a single variable	.88	.88	.073
NED only	.91	.91	.064
PED only	.91	.91	.064

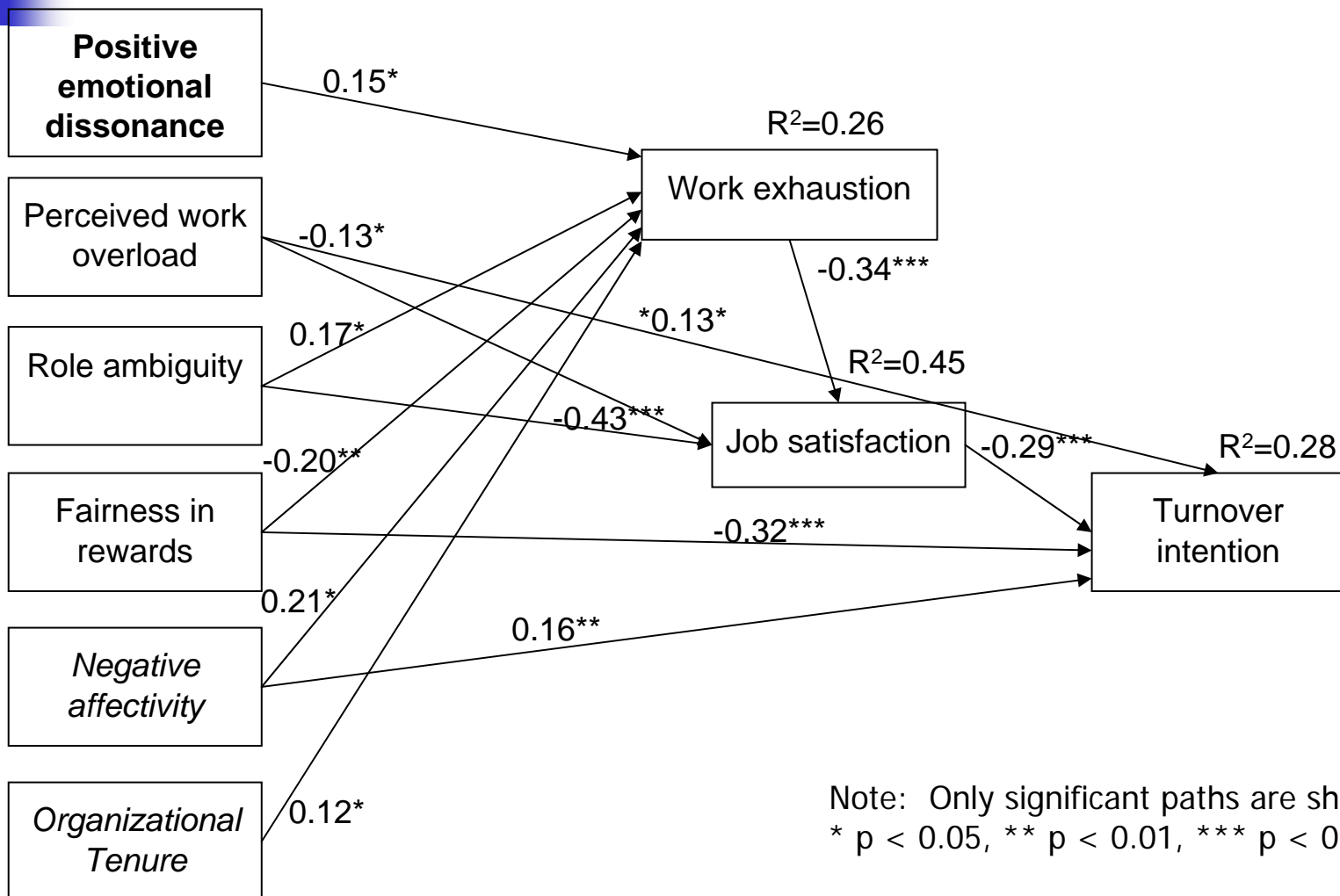
# Results – ED Combined



# Results – NED Only



# Results – PED only





# Future research

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- What are the display rules for IT professionals?
- How should emotional dissonance be measured?
- What factors might influence emotional display expectation and emotional dissonance?

# Questions

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