Applicant faking behavior on personality questionnaires: An empirical model of motivational faking determinants

1. INTRODUCTION
Many studies on job applicants have found individual differences in their tendency to fake on personality questionnaires (Galč et al., 2012). Therefore, from theoretical and practical points of view it is very important to find out the factors which determine whether applicants will fake their responses and to what extent. Recently, a number of possible faking determinants have been suggested by several models of faking (e.g. Goffin & Boyd, 2009; McFarland & Ryan, 2006; Mueller-Hanson et al., 2006). However, only few studies empirically tested some of the models using limited sets of proposed determinants and yielding inconsistent results. The fact that key factors which determine individual differences in faking behavior are still not well established encouraged us to comprehensively investigate motivation to fake and applicants’ faking behavior. In this study we aimed to combine and simultaneously test motivational determinants proposed by different theoretical models of faking.

2. METHOD
The sample included 185 students and alumni, who filled in the five factor personality questionnaire (IPIP-100) twice – first in a condition which stressed honesty, and later on in a simulated “applicants” condition. Instead of the job, five candidates could get a financial reward equivalent to student’s monthly pocket money. Potential motivational determinants (Figure 1) specified in different models of faking were measured in “honest” condition only. The difference between personality scores collected in “honest” and “applicants” conditions represented an individual measure of faking: specifically, we used the first unrotated component of five difference scores indicating faking on every personality dimension. Similarly, to operationalize the motivation to fake, we used the first unrotated component of three different motivational scales: VIE scale, Pre-intention to fake scale and Post-intention to fake scale. The scales were administered as a part of the second data collection point.

3. RESULTS
In order to identify key faking determinants we analyzed data in several steps. First, we conducted a series of regression analyses with motivation to fake and faking behavior as criteria, separately for each category of potential determinants (Figure 1) and afterwards a hierarchical regression analysis with significant predictors obtained in previous analyses (Step 1), motivation to fake (Step 2) and faking behavior as criterion. Finally, we tested faking determinants via structural equation modeling. Initial structural model (Figure 2) was based on the outcomes from the hierarchical regression analysis but did not fit the data very well (χ²/df = 2.78; GFI = .70; CFI = .76; RMSEA = .10; CAIC = 2504.97). Refined model (Figure 3) fitted the data much better (χ²/df = 1.21; GFI = .90; CFI = .97; RMSEA = .03; CAIC = 767.9). According to the refined model, Attitudes toward faking and Perceived behavioral control predicted the level of faking via motivation to fake, while Adventurousness and Perceived discrepancy between ideal and self-descriptive profile influenced the criterion directly.

4. CONCLUSION
As predicted by Goffin & Boyd (2009) model, the study confirmed the importance of faking determinants belonging to every hypothesized category: personality traits, moral code, contextual antecedents and perceived ability to fake. It also confirmed the basic hypothesis of McFarland & Ryan (2006) model that the best predictor of faking behavior is motivation to fake. Since this is the first empirical study that has comprehensively examined motivational determinants of faking behavior proposed by multiple theoretical models, the obtained findings significantly contribute to better understanding of motivational faking determinants.

5. REFERENCES