



Organizational commitment

In an environment with continuous change

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Master's Thesis
International Business Management
2020

MASTERARBETE	
Arcada	
Utbildning:	International Business Management
Identifikationsnummer:	
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<p>Sammandrag:</p> <p>Syftet med denna studie är att undersöka hur medarbetares relationer och arbetstillfredsställelse påverkar organisatoriskt engagemang samt hur engagerade och nöjda målföretagets anställda är. Att förstå organisatoriskt engagemang i målföretaget kan hjälpa med att minska anställdas omsättning och minska kostnaderna för att rekrytera och utbilda ny personal. Även engagerad personal är en nyckelfaktor när en organisation vill bedriva organisk tillväxt.</p> <p>Denna avhandling genomfördes med hjälp av kvantitativa forskningsmetoder. Forskningsmaterialet samlades in via Microsoft Forms-undersökning och sammanlagt svarade 71 anställda. Undersökningen bestod av fyra olika delar: respondenternas bakgrundsinformation, medarbetarnas relation, arbetstillfredsställelse och organisatoriska engagemang. Materialet samlades i mars 2020 och det analyserades kvantitativt med hjälp av statistiska test och analys. IBM SPSS användes som analysprogram.</p> <p>Resultaten av denna studie indikerade att inneboende arbetstillfredsställelse är en nyckelvariabel för organisatoriskt engagemang. Även medarbetarnas relation påverkar engagemanget. Inga demografiska funktioner tycktes ha starkare korrelation än de andra till faktorerna som studien upptäckte.</p> <p>Resultaten av denna studie ökar kunskapen om organisatoriskt engagemang och dess föregångare. Denna studie hjälper till att implementera dessa faktorer i målorganisationen. Resultaten ger ny insikt i egen tillfredsställelse och medarbetarnas relation och dess betydelse i organisatoriskt engagemang. Resultaten kan tillämpas som riktlinjer för säljorganisationer, när de vill specificera vad ledningen behöver fokusera på om organisationen vill engagera sina anställda.</p>	
Nyckelord:	organisatoriskt engagemang, arbetstillfredsställelse, medarbetares relationer, inneboende arbetstillfredsställelse
Sidantal:	59
Språk:	Engelska
Datum för godkännande:	

MASTER'S THESIS	
Arcada	
Degree Programme:	International Business Management
Identification number:	
Author:	Kim Ellonen
Title:	What predicts organizational commitment - In environment with continuous change
Supervisor (Arcada):	Minna Stenius
Commissioned by:	
<p>Abstract:</p> <p>The aim for this thesis is to examine how co-worker relationships and job satisfaction affects organizational commitment as well how committed and satisfied the target company's employees are. Understanding organizational commitment in the target company can help decrease the turnover of employees and reduce cost of recruiting and training new staff. Also committed personnel is a key factor when a organization wants to pursue organic growth.</p> <p>This thesis was executed by using quantitative research methods. The research material was gathered via Microsoft Forms survey and sent out to the target company's employees, altogether 71 employees responded. The survey was composed of four different parts: respondents' background information, co-worker relationship's , job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The material was gathered in March 2020 and it was analyzed using IBM SPSS and performing statistical tests and analysis.</p> <p>The results of this study indicated that intrinsic job satisfaction is a key variable for organizational commitment. Also co-worker relationship affects the commitment. No demographic features seemed to have stronger correlation than the other to the factors the study discovered.</p> <p>The study results gains knowledge on organizational commitment and its antecedents. This study helps these factors put into practice in the target organization. The results give new insights in intrinsic satisfaction and co-worker relationship and its meaning in organizational commitment. The results can be applied to sales organizations as guidelines when they want to specify what the management need to focus on if the organization wants to commit their employees.</p>	
Keywords:	organizational commitment, Job satisfaction, co-worker relationships, intrinsic satisfaction
Number of pages:	59
Language:	English
Date of acceptance:	

OPINNÄYTE	
Arcada	
Koulutusohjelma:	International Business Management
Tunnistenumero:	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, miten työtoverisuhteet ja työtyytyväisyys vaikuttavat organisaation sitoutumiseen, sekä kuinka sitoutuneita ja tyytyväisiä kohdeyrityksen työntekijät ovat. Organisaation sitoutumisen ymmärtäminen kohdeyrityksessä voi vähentää auttaa vähentämään työntekijöiden vaihtuvuutta ja vähentää uusien työntekijöiden rekrytointi- ja koulutuskustannuksia. Sitoutunut henkilöstö on avaintekijä, kun organisaatio haluaa kasvaa orgaanisesti.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö tehtiin kvantitatiivisilla tutkimusmenetelmillä. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin Microsoft Forms -kyselyn avulla ja kaiken kaikkiaan 71 työntekijää vastasi. Tutkimus koostui neljästä eri osasta: vastaajien taustatiedot, työtoverisuhteet, työtyytyväisyys ja organisaation sitoutuminen. Aineisto kerättiin maaliskuussa 2020 ja sitä analysoitiin kvantitatiivisesti tilastollisia testejä ja analyysejä käyttämällä. Ohjelmana käytettiin IBM SPSS.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tulokset osoittivat, että intrinsinen työtyytyväisyys on avainasemassa organisaation sitoutumisessa. Myös työtoverisuhde vaikuttaa sitoutumiseen. Yhdelläkään demografisella piirteellä ei näyttänyt olevan korrelaatiota enemmän, kuin toisella tutkimuksen löytämiin tekijöihin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tuloksilla saadaan tietoa organisaation sitoutumisesta ja sen edeltäjistä. Tämä tutkimus auttaa viemään nämä tekijät käytäntöön kohdeorganisaatiossa. Tulokset antavat uusia käsityksiä sisäisestä tyytyväisyydestä ja työtoverisuhteesta ja sen merkityksestä organisaation sitoutumisessa. Tuloksia voidaan soveltaa suuntaa antavina ohjeina myyntiorganisaatioille, mikäli yritys haluaa määritellä, mihin asioihin johdon on keskityttävä, mikäli organisaatio haluaa sitoutuneita työntekijöitä.</p>	
Avainsanat:	Organisaation sitoutuminen, työtoverisuhteet, työtyytyväisyys, luontainen työtyytyväisyys
Sivumäärä:	59
Kieli:	Englanti
Hyväksymispäivämäärä:	

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1 INTRODUCTION

The most important asset in many businesses are its employees. In many cases they are also the greatest cost in a company and that is why committed employees are in many organizations very valuable. In many cases the behaviors of a committed employee represent decreased costs in the organization where individuals reject alternative courses of action and choose to tie themselves to the organization (Mowday et al., 1979) The cost is surely one reason, but also in an organization that builds itself on the knowledge of the people within the company, keeping the knowledge embedded in the employees is also a competitive advantage. Recruiting people is very costly and after the recruitment process the company needs to instruct and educate the new employee, incurring further costs. Almost every major listed company today actively promotes actions that try to commit their staff to their organization, or at least they feel that the topic is really important and urgent (Deloitte Consulting, 2014). When CEOs have been asked about work organization development, the employee commitment has been one of the top five challenges that companies face (Wah, 1999). The message from companies is very clear: commitment to the work organization benefits a successful company.

Commitment is a multidimensional concept and the antecedents, correlates of commitment vary (Meyer et al., 2002)

Furthermore the digitalization of the world is changing the work environment and some jobs may perish. Many studies show that the total number of employees stays the same or increases. (Wilén, 2017) The changing organizational reality underscores the need to understand what explains organizational commitment in a rapidly and continuously changing work environment.

1.1 Research Aim

The aim of the thesis is to better understand how to commit employees to an organization in a turbulent work environment. The study will be made for a mid-sized company

with a fast growth rate in personnel and one key factor for the company's success is to keep the employees turnover as small as possible. Organizational commitment is one key aspect in this objective and that is why the aim of the thesis is to identify which factors are the most promising to keep the employees committed, working hard and grow with the company.

Specifically the research questions that the empirical study seeks to respond to are:

- RQ1: What is the level of organizational commitment among employees of target company?
- RQ2: Are there differences between men and women in organizational commitment in target company?
- RQ3: What is the level of job satisfaction among employees of target company?
- RQ4: To what degree do co-worker relationships and job satisfaction explain organizational commitment in target company?

The empirical study will be formulated based on Meyer J. and Allen N. three component model of commitment.

The main reason for the study is to find some kind of united factor that the company can modify so that the employees have longer employment time.

1.2 Delimitations and scope

This study will be conducted as a quantitative study of a mid-sized company's employees. The industry of the company is outsourcing and subcontracting business where the company's main asset is the personnel. Hence any results are primarily applicable to the case company in question. They may, however, apply to other similar companies. The quantitative analysis tries to find common links that has been presented in the theory. Perhaps even find new ones. The theoretical framework will also take in consideration the negative part of organizational commitment and see if any such signs are detected in the target company.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For years, many have studied the concept of organizational commitment. The interest has in many cases been studied by social scientists but many human resource managers have had a growing interest in the field also. There have been both theoretical endeavors to explain the construct and empirical trials to determine the antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. The importance of commitment has been highlighted in different studies and in general commitment helps organizations to achieve strategic plans. (Klein, Sorra. 1996: Mowday et al. 1979)

In the work environment different people form many different psychological connections or bonds. Over the past five decades many kinds of connections have been labelled "commitment" in the management literature. These connections can be differentiated in terms of type and target. Bond type refers to how the bond is experienced. For example, Etzioni in 1961 argued alternative, moral, and calculative connections, and Meyer and Allen (1991) told the difference between continuance, normative, and affective commitments. (Klein et al. 2012)

Employee commitment towards the organization would seem to be quite strongly linked to turnover intention. Committed employees should more likely want to remain with an organization and work in the direction of its targets. The interest in enhancing employee attachment, dates from the early studies of employee loyalty and has a very strong appeal to managers. (Mowday et al. 1979) The importance of coworker relationships to an organization has been known for a long time. Co-worker networks are not just groups of friends at work, they are operational systems for decision making, resource mapping, transferability information and much more that is connected to workplace interaction. (Lincoln & Miller, 1979, 196.) Research results have shown that workplaces breed friendships promote efficiency at work and reduce work stress; and uncertainty (Lee & Ok, 2011, 1)

2.1 Definitions of organizational commitment

There are many definitions and approaches when discussing organizational commitment. E.g. Mowday, Steers and Porter presented several different definitions made by others in their study, the measurement of organizational commitment, in 1978. The definitions are quite differentiating depending on who the study was made by.

Below are a few different studies and following definitions:

- "an attitude or an orientation toward the organization which links or attaches the identity of the person to the organization (Sheldon, 1971, p. 143)"
- "a structural phenomenon which occurs as a result of individual organizational transactions and alterations in side bets or investments over time (Hrebiniak, Alutto, 1972, p. 556)"
- "a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and through these actions to beliefs that sustain the activities and his own involvement (Salancik , 1977, p. 62)"
- "the process by which the goals of the organization and those of the individual become increasingly integrated or congruent (Htall, Schneider, Nygren, 1970, p. 176)"
- "Commitment behaviors are socially accepted behaviors that exceed formal and/or normative expectations relevant to the object of commitment (Wiener, Gechnian, 1977, p. 48) "

Even if there is a wide range of differentiation in the definitions one pattern emerges. Many of the definitions are behaviors related to commitment and such type of commitment behaviors represent sunk costs in the organization. Another concept from the definitions above can also be identified, attitude. Attitudinal commitment represents a state of mind where the individuals identifies in certain organizational goals and wishes to remain employment status in order to reach those goals. (Mowday et al. 1978)

This type of commitment often consists of a relationship in where employees link themselves to the company in return for certain payments or other rewards. The commitment can be described by at least three things.

1. Strong acceptance to company's values and goals
2. Want to make significant effort to the organization
3. Strong desire to maintain employment

When defined this way, organizational commitment represents something different than just passive loyalty to an organization. This involves an active relationship with the company and that employees are willing to give something of themselves in order to be a part of the organization's wellbeing. (Meyer et al. 1978)

Commitment differentiates from the fundamental concept of job satisfaction. Organizational commitment is something more deep and reflects an emotional reaction to the whole organization. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, projects only one employees feelings either to the job or to certain aspects of the job. This is why organizational commitment expresses attachment to the whole organization, including company goals and values, while job satisfaction only to the specific task of the employee. Therefore organizational commitment should be somewhat more stable over time than job satisfaction. Although daily events and tasks in the work environment may affect an employee's level of job satisfaction, incidents that affects job related things should not be the reason why an employee could reassess his or her attachment to the company. (Meyer et al. 1978)

2.2 Positive aspects of organizational commitment

The concentration on optimizing operations has woken up attention in organizational psychology. It has increased the study of the human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed. This have

been done in order to make a performance improvement in today's work. One factor that have been identified as a positive factor is, work engagement, which is considered to be the opposite of burnout (Schaufeli, 2006). Workers with no symptoms of fatigue, cynicism or reduced professional handling of work are experiencing work engagement. Another definition of work engagement, is the employees sense of responsibility for their own work performance and commitment to the job. Getting the job done has therefore a very personal meaning for its maker. (Hakanen, 2009) Jos engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. (Schaufeli, 2006) Studies show (Hakanen et al. 2008) that work engagement is quite strongly related to organizational commitment.

Commitment to an organization is an overall positive experience for the employee, so the concept should not be confused with work addiction. The person who is addicted to his/her job, probably wouldn't find the rest of their life meaningful, even though they would enjoy their job. In general, if the employee is committed to the work organization they are usually also pleased with other aspects of their life. (Hakanen, 2009) When a company can recruit, educate, train, and maintain skilled employees, the overall stability of the organization is maintained. This affects in both productivity and economic viability (Faloye, 2014). Organizational commitment is also a predictor of employee effectiveness in carrying out the mission and vision of the organization and the management. (Al-Jabari 2019)

2.3 Negative aspects of organizational commitment

Many managers and researchers describe organizational commitment as something to desire and as a powerful tool to commit employees to the organization. It can enhance the company's productivity, lower level of turnover intention and absenteeism. (Genevičiūtė-Janonienė, G., & Endriulaitienė, A. 2014) Some studies have found some negative consequences of extended commitment for an organization. This is because the more employees are committed to the organization the may experience stress, conflict between work and family and lower overall life satisfaction. (Meyer et al., 2002).

Affective commitment is usually seen as the positive dimension of organizational commitment whereas the continuance commitment can be negative for employee well-being, meaning that the more employees are continuously committed, the more they may experience stress, conflict between work and family and perhaps lower life satisfaction. Both employee and the organization may experience negative consequences related to high level of continuance commitment. If an employee has few alternatives, combined with the fear to lose the job and feel being trapped to the organization. Instead of high job performance, the employee could be frustrated, work poorly and detain his or her effort or even be lazy at work. It's also likely that a high level of extended commitment leads to stiffness and resistance to change. (Genevičiūtė-Janonienė, G., & Endriulaitienė, A. 2014, Meyer et al. 2004)

2.4 Conceptualizing organizational commitment

This study presents one of the most widely used research concepts to outline commitment to an organization. One widely used concept of organizational commitment is the Meyer & Allen's (1991) three-component model of commitment. John Meyer and Natalie Allen developed the Three Component Model of Commitment. It was published in the 1991 in the "Human Resource Management Review." The model defines the three following types of commitment:

1. Affection for your job - Affective commitment
2. Fear of loss - Continuance commitment
3. Sense of obligation to stay - Normative commitment

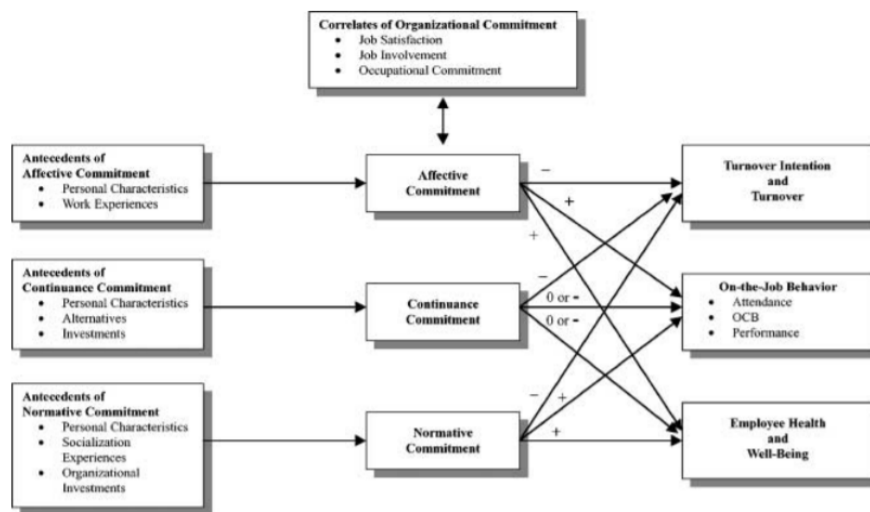


FIG. 1. A Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment.

Figure 1. A Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment (Meyer et al. 2002)

2.4.1 Affective commitment

Affective commitment means that the employee has some kind of deeper emotional connection to the company and continues to work there because he or she wants to be part of that organization or wants to do the job. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

The antecedents of affective commitment can as a rule be divided into four factors. Work experience, personal-, structural-, and job-related characteristics. (Mowday et al. 1982) Meyer et al. saw that job characteristics and work experience are so close to each other that they used in their study a more global term, work experience, which includes both. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

Personal characteristics. Even though demographic features such as age, tenure, gender and education have been linked to commitment there are no strong or consistent relations between them. When relations are explained there is no clear way to interpret them. (Meyer et al. 1991) E.g. Mottaz (1988) demonstrated that the links between the

demographic features and organizational commitment are indirect and disappear when the rewards and values of work are controlled.

Personal characteristics such as career development, need for achievement, personal work ethic and job interests have been found to correlate with organizational commitment. (Meyer et al. 1991) Another approach is to explore the effects of environmental factors. Individuals whose work experience correlates with their own values should have more positive work attitudes than those whose do not. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

Organizational structure. Affective commitment have been known to relate with decentralized organizational structures. The structural characteristics are not be directly linked to organizational commitment but rather indirect. It is communicated by work experience and also as employee and supervisor relations. The more clear e and the feeling of personal importance are associated with the structural features. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

Work experiences. In difference to personal and organizational structure the work experience factor has been studied quite a lot. The assumption can be made, that commitment develops as the result of satisfied employees who are compatible with their values. The work experience variables can roughly be divided into two main categories:

1. The need to feel comfortable in the organization
2. The feelings of competence in the job

In a more recent study, made by Bhat and Maheshwari in 2005, suggest that the following elements are necessary for a company to obtain high affective commitment:

- collaboration between colleagues, middle and higher management
- the possibility to influence and offer consultation to a company's human resource department
- the possibility to grow professionally and find career development opportunities within the company
- perceived correlation between individual performance and reward

2.4.2 Continuance commitment

Continuance commitment means being committed to the organization because understanding the consequences of leaving the company and terminating the employment. Those who are committed to the organization this way are committed because they have to be. Basically anything that increases perceived cost can be categorized as an antecedent. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

Howard Becker defined organizational commitment with a side bet theory in the 1960. This was one of the first attempts to create a conceptualized framework. According to the theory, the relationship between employee and the company is based on a contract with economic exchange. Committed employees are committed because they have hidden investments, so called “side-bets,” they have made by remaining in a given organization and if they left the company they would lose their investment. (Weibo et al. 2010, Becker H. 1960)

The side-bets take different kind of forms and can be work related or not. E.g. the threat of wasting time on something that is not transferrable to anyone else or losing desirable benefits or giving up seniority based privileges. All these can be categorized as potential costs of leaving a company. In Becker’s theory is at least one disadvantage and that is, because of people have so many different feelings of what is important for them in the organization and the cost associated with leaving might be different to the individual. The studies of how age and tenure effects on persons need to stay have been inconsistent. This is why Meyer and Allen did not include age and tenure into their model. They reasonably assumed that continuance commitment will develop over time as the lack of alternative employment offers and the accumulation of side-bets. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

2.4.3 Normative commitment

Normative commitment is defined more as a feeling of obligation to remain with an organization. This may be the result of adopting the norms that focus on a person in the beginning of an employment, when the employee enters the organizations social norms. Normative commitment can also develop if the organization have given something in advance, e.g. paid for an education or something similar or perhaps just the costs of training one for the job. Identifying these investments by the company there might be an imbalance between the organization and the employee. This might create a feel of obligation for the employee to stay within the organization until the debt has been paid. (Meyer & Allen. 1991)

2.5 Measurement of organizational commitment

Measuring commitment to an organization has been almost as varied as field of the subject (Mowday, 1979). Almost all metrics developed seem to have in common that they prove commitment to the work organization as the desire to remain in the work organization (Allen & Meyer 1990) This study presents three of the best measurement of commitment to an organization known in the research literature. They all have a slightly different approach. It is important to understand the metrics of past research so that one can understand what organization commitment research has previously focused on.

One is a widely known measurement of work organization commitment and it is Porter's Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Mowday, 1979). This 15-piece meter was developed to measure affective work organization commitment and has been widely used in research (Allen & Meyer, 1990, 2). The 15 different statements has traditionally been measured with a 7-point Likert scale, and in there the respondents are asked to rate the strength of their commitment by telling how strongly they agree with the claims. (Mowday, 1979, 228). The OCQ measurement was first time used in a study

that included a sample of 2563 employees, all of whom worked in various tasks. Employees also represented many different companies and organizations.

Another widely used measurement tool of work organization commitment is compiled by Nathalie Allen and John Meyer in 1990. It includes an Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment Scale. Allen and Meyer criticized Mowday that the OCQ primarily measures the affective commitment to the organization. Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment presented by Allen and Meyer measures all three known areas of work organization commitment, all at the same time. None of the above mentioned areas in this measurement, excluded from each other. This indicator is compiled based on Meyer and Allen (1991) three-component organizational commitment model. In the assembly of the measurement tool, previous research on affective, continuance and the normative measurement has been used. The measurement tool has been compared with Mowday's and Porter's OCQ meter and it has been found that affective (ACS) and normative (NCS) binding correlates strongly with the OCQ's results, whereas the measure of continuance (CCS) commitment is quite independent from the other results.

Thirdly, the latest developed and nowadays widely used measurement scale, indicator of organization commitment is the Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES) presented by Schaufel and Bakker (2003). The measurement is specifically designed to measure engagement with the organization and the commitment is approached through three different concepts of commitment: vigor, dedication and absorption. The UWES meter does not differentiate between affective, continuance, and normative commitment from each other. Even Meyer and Allen (1991) stated that these factors are not mutually exclusive. Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) have taken the idea to a new level leaving out this differentiation completely. Because Schaufeli and Bakker see their model as an opposite to employees suffer from burnout, they see that there is no need to specify the different types of organizational commitment. Only to focus on it, as a continuous phenomenon of energy, dedication and absorption at all possible emotional states. ((Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003) It is however reasonable to point out that conceptually organizational commitment and work engagement are not the same concepts. More precisely, work en-

gement is an antecedent of organizational commitment. (Hakanen, Schaufleli, Ahola, 2008)

2.6 Factors explaining organizational commitment

According to Welch the research of organizational commitment can be focused and structured along to focal points. The first is, the determination how committed organizational members are and the second is to identify the different variables. Welch research in 1981, divided the variables into 5 categories. (Welsh. 1981)

1. Demographic characteristics of an employee, such as age, length of employment, educational level, and occupation
2. Job satisfaction such as salary, quality of job duties and career opportunities
3. Job characteristics, such as the amount and quality of teamwork or teamwork, power, and understanding of the job role
4. Professional behavior, such as membership in professional organizations
5. Organizational culture such as communication, leadership decision-making processes and motivation

Mowday and his associates in 1982 have compiled a list of only four points of commitment to work organization. According to them, the personal characteristics of the employee and the characteristics of the job are also factors that affects the commitment. They also state that other factors are the employee's experience at work and the structural features of the organization (Allen & Meyer. 1990, 4). It is interesting that these two very traditional theories do not really take any opinion on internal interactions between co-workers or relationships with supervisors. Welsch's (1981) list highlights the amount and quality of team and teamwork, but informal workplace interactions is apparently not a factor explaining commitment to an organization.

Factors for organizational commitment can also be divided into positive and negative categories. Studies have shown that commitment to a work organization combines in a positive way, as reinforcing factors, the personal characteristics of employees, such as

older age, longer employment relationships and even marital status. Negative factors that weaken the commitment, has been found amongst personal traits, including lower employee education. (Mowday et al., 1982.) In contrast to these results, Sarangi suggests (2011) that an employee's personal characteristics may influence the ability to attain a sense of commitment. Such characteristics may include, for example, the age of the employee, but other similar characteristics, such as gender or educational background, do not affect the individual's perceived commitment to the work organization. The age of employee influences how attached one may become to various aspects of the organization. Studies indicate that there are age-related differences in the need for recognition, status and idealism in the work. (Al-jabari, 2019) According to Sarangi, the level of commitment is highest when the employee is 50-59 years old. (Sarangi S. 2011)

Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest that people may have three emotional states or experiences that have been consistently considered to be related to the amount of engagement with the work organization. The experience of having a work organization that supports its employees, the experience of treating employees fairly and equally, and the experience of the organization communicating to its employees that they are competent. According to Chughtai (2006, 40), these experiences have also been incorporated as umbrella concepts above the factors involved in the engagement. E.g., a sense of job security and opportunities to proceed within the organization can contribute the experience of fair treatment of employees. A challenging job and independence of a position can contribute to the experience of an organization communicating that its employees are competent in their work.

The definition of organizational commitment is very fragmented and results of studied varies over time. Because commitment has been defined in such different ways by different researchers also the factors and variables have shared opinions between them and in the results. It has been said that in a previous study, organizational commitment has only been measured by instruments that actually only measure affective commitment (Steers, 1977), and this did not seem to be corrected until a measure compiled by Allen and Meyer (1990) was developed. For instance in today's labor market, the high age of an employee could be an obstacle for quitting a job due to job insecurity. In this case age would not be related to affective commitment and the employee wants to remain in

his or her current job. Rather, it would be a continuance commitment where the employee would be forced to stay in his or her current job.

2.6.1 Co-worker relationships

An employee can be committed to several areas of the organization at the same time. It can be a team, supervisor, or the entire organization. Commitment to smaller areas has not been studied as much, but in existing research all of these may fall under the umbrella concept of commitment to the organization. Therefore, employers should encourage employees to interact across team and unit boundaries to ensure a holistic organization commitment experience. Places and times for such interaction can be, e.g. social events in the work community or work across unit boundaries. (Heffner, 2001.) Lawler (1992) stated that the employee is always committed to the smallest possible area in which he is involved. For example, the employee is more committed to his team than within the department and more committed to the department than the whole organization.. (Lawler,1992)

These social interactions can be interpreted as antecedents for organizational commitment. When a new employee starts in the organization, he or she is first to learn the basics of the work and get to know the other employees in his or her team. At this point, the new employee is dealing mainly with these people in their immediate work group. This means that certain employees shape the new employee's image of the values, goals and attitudes that may be associated with the organization. The new employee's image of these things is formed as interpreted by the team and the new employee reflects these interpretations into their own experiences. Those employees who interact with each other are likely to develop similar interpretations of the social context of the organization. Once the new employee's views are shaped by the group's views, the new employee is more likely to form a meaningful bond or relationship with members of his or her team - and eventually gain commitment to the team. Ultimately, the organizational socialization process often leads to organizational commitment. (Heffner, 2001.) Regarding to

this it can be stated that the meaning of relationships between coworkers, when considering commitment to an organization, is essential.

One important thing in exploring organizational commitment is the culture of the organization. This is because all interaction leading to engagement reflects the culture of the organization (Bakker & Leiter, 5). The culture of the organization is not created by its own, it is created through interaction throughout the organizational community. In interactions when organizational culture is created, many times, different kind of stories, rites and rituals, its own vocabulary or events and activities are used. (Littlejohn & Foss, 2008, 269.) The culture of an organization can be linked to the atmosphere of the organization. The atmosphere is created through interaction between the people in the organization. Atmospheric communication can create both positive and negative circuit in an organization: When you have a comfortable atmosphere, you can increase work efficiency and performance, which in turn creates a good atmosphere and a positive circuit. While it is not fun or desirable to be at work, it can in return, feed a bad atmosphere. (Juholin, 2009, 149.)

The culture or atmosphere of an organization in terms of communication, is the environment in which the employee knows what kind of communication is acceptable. The key to this is to know how information sharing and communication in the organization works. This includes the flow of information, from management to employee level, from employee to management level and between the same hierarchical levels. Also the transparency and reliability of information are key factors. (de Ridder, 2004, 120) Previous research has found that organizational culture also has a connection to work organization commitment. An employee who perceives the culture of the organization as healthy and is satisfied with the communication of their organization is more likely to be committed to the organization. Therefore, when organizations want to commit their employees, they should strengthen their culture and communication. (Sarangi, 2011, 254.) The relationships at work can be very different depending on how deep the relationship is between co-workers, and the goals of the relationship. Though it is suggested that all such relationships can promote very strong commitment to the organization (Heffner, 2001, 471). Even though commitment to the organization is part of everyone's personal experience, commitment itself does not occur in isolation. Even in a very nor-

mal co-working relationship, the different parties can influence each other's experience in an organization. Both parties can offer each other positive interactions, such as support and information, but can also negatively influence each other e.g. with offensive communications. (Bakker & Leiter, 5, 2010)

2.6.2 Job satisfaction of a salesperson

Job satisfaction has been defined as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences." (Brown, 1993) The concept of job satisfaction constitutes all the different characteristics of the job itself and the work environment. Sales representative usually find rewarding, fulfilling, and satisfying. Job satisfaction has been studied as a sales representatives affective state. This has been found out to be suitable for other jobs also, such as, management. (Brown. 1993)

Brown structure his study by grouping specific relationships into four sum categories. the categories were; results of work, individual differences, role perception, management behaviors and job characteristics.

Work Outcomes. The job satisfaction for salesperson comes from the relationship between performance, organizational commitment, liability to leave, and turnover. An extensive research literature has raised the question of whether job satisfaction precedes sales performance or vice versa. Regardless of which proceeds one and other, sales performance and job satisfaction have shown a consistent positive connection. The same debate has also been between job satisfaction and organizational commitment relationship and some researchers (e.g., Bateman and Strasser 1984) have debated that organizational commitment precedes job satisfaction, where some others have maintained that job satisfaction is the predictor. Anyway all research indicates that it has an important role in organizational commitment. The liability to leave, that usually precedes the turnover of employees and in this instant sales representative, correlated in many studies negatively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. (Brown. 1993)

Individual Differences. These includes both demographic and hierarchical factors. Demographic variables include age, education, sales experience, and how long one has been employed in the organization. Research on different stages of salespersons careers has suggested that sales representatives point of view on their own jobs and careers improve over time. Which in turn suggests that factors such as age and working history may be related to job satisfaction. (Brown. 1993)

Role Perception is how sales people perceives their role in the organization. It has been frequently studied and the results suggest it to have important effects on job satisfaction. In particular on the three different constructs of perception regarding sales persons role. The three different variables are: role ambiguity, role conflict, and role clarity. Both role conflict and role ambiguity has had a constant negative correlation to job satisfaction when in the other hand role clarity has consistently been found to have a positive correlation to job satisfaction. (Brown. 1993)

In general, when it comes to *Supervisory behaviors*, studies has shown that greater amounts of feedback, consideration, compensation and close supervision are all positively affecting job satisfaction. The nature and quality of the interaction that sales managers maintain with salespeople significantly influence the sales representatives job satisfaction. (Brown. 1993)

Some *Job/task characteristics* has been connected to job satisfaction. These are task autonomy, task significance, variety of task, influence, innovations required and pay. (Brown. 1993)

The concept of job satisfaction contains very similar definitions to organizational commitment. Both concepts contain the idea of an affective grip of the employee's current job. It has been argued that a positive attitude towards work or work organization is by definition very close to job satisfaction and a negative attitude to work or work organization is very close to dissatisfaction. (Vroom. 1964)

2.7 The research questions and model

In this chapter the research questions created on the basis of theory and the research goal are examined and based on Allen Meyer and prior research on co-worker relationships the following research questions and research model were conducted.

The aim of this thesis is to seek understanding of how satisfied and committed employees in the case company are, and what explains their organizational commitment in an environment characterized by continuous change. The research questions for this thesis are:

- RQ1: What is the level of organizational commitment among employees of target company?
- RQ2: Are there differences between men and women in organizational commitment in target company?
- RQ3: What is the level of job satisfaction among employees of target company?
- RQ4: To what degree do co-worker relationships and job satisfaction explain organizational commitment in target company?

Commitment to the organization in this study is measured by affective-, continuance- and normative commitment. They will be looked at one and separately for each three types of commitment.

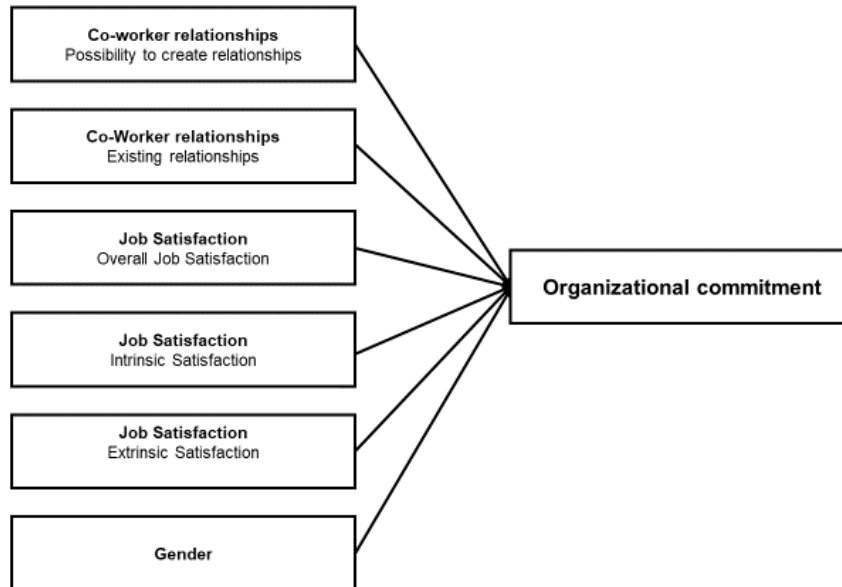


Figure 2. The Research Model.

3 METHOD

This chapter presents the different stages of the research. First, the research method is introduced, then opens the questionnaire, its metrics and the formation of the questionnaire, is discussed, as well as the pre-testing of the questionnaire and finalizing the survey. At the end of the chapter, the data collection and the data collected are described in more detail and the data analysis strategy presented.

3.1 Research method

The aim for the thesis is to find out different factors that can be useful in order for an organization to have committed employees. In order to get enough recipients in a short time the study will be based on quantitative analysis. Quantitative analysis normally studies a statistically representative sample of informants. Of these informants, quantitative data is collected using a structured questionnaire. In a quantitative analysis, what

one wants to study is converted into numbers that represent different properties. (Christensen et al. 2001)

A questionnaire as a data collection method offers many advantages. One of the clearest benefits is that the questionnaire can be used to ask a lot of questions to a large number of people, meaning that the researcher will have access to a wide range of data compared to many qualitative data collection methods. Secondly, the method is quite effective as it saves time for both the researcher and the researcher. Therefore, the timetable can be estimated relatively accurately using the questionnaire. (Hirsjärvi et al., 2010, 195.) Because the questionnaire can be constructed electronically, it is easy to create a questionnaire and to process the material quickly using a variety of computer programs. However, the interpretation of results often takes time and effort (Hirsjärvi et al., 2010, 195). The visual appeal of the questionnaire should also focus on the visual appearance of the form because. The more pleasant looking the form is the more people are likely to fill it out. It is crucial that the questionnaire is logical and clear. (Valli 2015, 26-27.)

The quantitative study was done by an online survey and with the platform Microsoft Forms (forms.office.com). The analysis of the research will be conducted with SPSS. The survey will be sent to all employees in the company. The target group is approximately 180.

3.2 Measures

The survey questionnaire for this study was designed based on the literature and theory reviewed so that the questionnaire items would respond as closely as possible to the research questions in this study. The questionnaire for this study consisted of the following sections:

1. Respondent background
2. Co-worker relationships' involvement in organizational commitment
3. Job satisfaction
4. Commitment to work organization

The survey was conducted in Finnish to maximize the respondents understanding of the questions and numbers of responses.

3.2.1 Respondent Background

The background questions were asked so that they can be used as background variables. The variables are age, gender, education and working history. Using these it is possible to analyze correlations e.g. between gender and organizational commitment.

3.2.2 Co-worker relationships' involvement in organizational commitment

Ivy Nielsen, Steve Jex and Gary Adams conducted a two-dimensional workplace friendship scale in the year 2000. (Nielsen et al. 2000) This part of the questionnaire was constructed based on the workplace friendship scale-study. The original measurement is divided into two sections: opportunities for workplace interactions and how common they are. In other words, the measure can be used to measure whether respondents feel at all that they have a coworker and that their work organization provides opportunities for close coworking. They developed a 12-item scale that contained viable items for each of the two dimensions of workplace friendship (opportunity and prevalence). (Nielsen et al. 2000) The same 12-item scale is used in this questionnaire and as in the original measure, respondents were asked to use affirmations to evaluate their experiences of how much their work organization encourages coworkers and whether they have close coworkers at all. The statements were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = disagree and disagree, 4 = somewhat disagree, 5 = strongly disagree).

3.2.3 Job satisfaction

The Job satisfaction is measured by two known measurement tools. One is the Overall Job satisfaction tool, which is based on the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire also called MOAQ or QAQ and developed by Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins and Klesh in 1983. The other one is the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist, 1967). Both are known and used measurement tools in measuring job satisfaction.

The overall job satisfaction measurement offers an advantage over other job satisfaction measures in that it is a valid measure of the affective component of job satisfaction and it is very short. It consists of only three items. This is important because definitions of job satisfaction have generally described it as including an affective or emotional component. Job satisfaction, in other words, involves not only one's thoughts but also one's feelings about his or her job. Each of the three measurement items, for example, includes either the word "satisfied" or "like," which can be described as being affective or emotion-oriented words. Although the original version of the MOAQ used a 7-point agree-disagree some researchers have used 5-point scale. This questionnaire uses a 7-point Likert scale. (Bowling & Hammond 2008)

The MSQ short form consists of 20 questions, divided to 12 - item subscale for intrinsic satisfaction and 8-items measuring extrinsic satisfaction. (Fields, D. 2002)

The section has a total of 23 questions and are divided in to two groups one with the three questions and one with 20. All the questions takes into consideration the hypothesized correlates, such as job satisfaction, job strains and life satisfaction. It also considerate hypothesized antecedents such as job complexity, stressors, social and organizational support and person-environment fit.

3.2.4 Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment was measured using eight items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). Specifically, one third of the items represented affective commitment (ACS), the other third represented continuance commitment (CCS) and the last third represented normative commitment (NCS). Questions related to these different dimensions of engagement are evenly distributed across the last section of the questionnaire. Each of the sections, ACS, CCS and NCS had eight questions and were positioned after each other. The different sections in the questionnaire were not indicated to the respondents. Respondents were asked to rate how often they had feelings similar to what the meter claims. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.3 Finalization of the survey

Survey completion and implementation has one essential part. The pre-testing of the questionnaire used (Heikkilä, 2008). Preliminary testing helps the researcher to ensure that the questionnaire is reliable and that any errors can still be corrected for the actual survey. If the questionnaire had not been pre-tested, it would be very likely that the actual questionnaire would get some measurement errors. Correcting errors afterward is impossible. For this study, a pre-test was conducted in February 2020 with the questionnaire open for 2 days and the survey will be sent to three requested pre-testers.

The survey was sent to the respondents via Target Company's General Teams channel and through the company email. The survey was published on March 14 and was open until 15th of April. During this time two reminders were sent, one on 2nd of April and the second on 10th of April. During the time of the survey, the corona pandemic outbreak started and staff reduction negotiations started. This may have affected the quality and quantity of the answers.

3.4 Respondents

57,7% (n = 41) of the respondents were men and 42,3% (n = 30) were women. The mean age of the respondents was 32 years. The youngest respondent was 20 years old and the oldest 59 years old. The age distribution of the respondents is shown in Figure 2. In Figure 3, the ages are grouped.

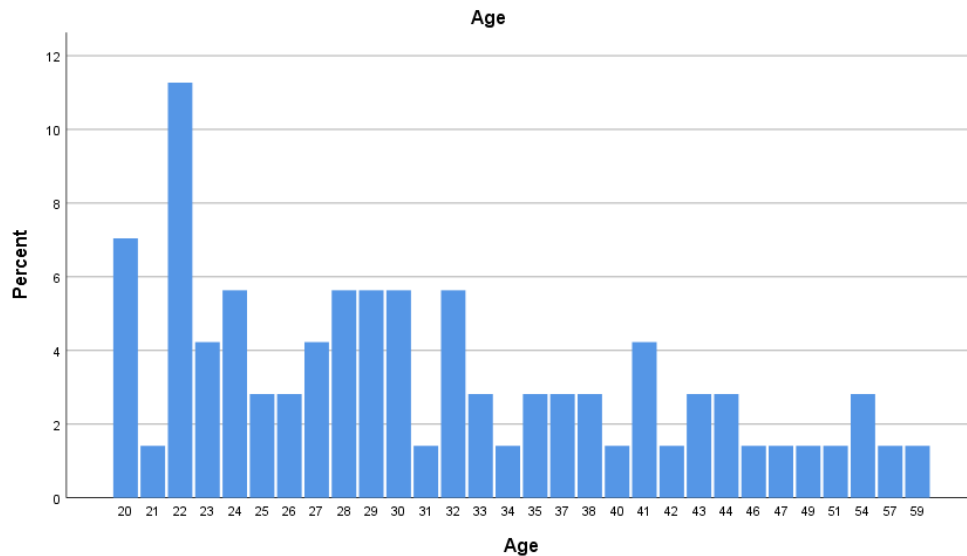


Figure 3. Age distribution of the respondents

The respondents educational level was quite equally divided between Bachelor level 28,2 % (n= 20), Vocational (Trade) school 28,2 % (n= 20), and secondary school graduate 31 % (n= 22). However, there were significantly fewer people with a master's degree (7 %, n = 5) and those with a only a grammar school education (5,6 %, n = 4). Only one (n = 1) respondent had chosen the “Something else, what?” Thought the answer was Vocational school. The answer has been added to that category. The majority of respondents indicated that they work in booking positions (31 %, n = 22) and a significant proportion said that they are in some kind of managerial or supervising positions (22,5 %, n = 16). Close to that was the demanding sales position, with 21,1% (n=15) and sales representative with 18,3% (n=13). If both sales positions are combined, that is the major group with 39,4 % (n=28)

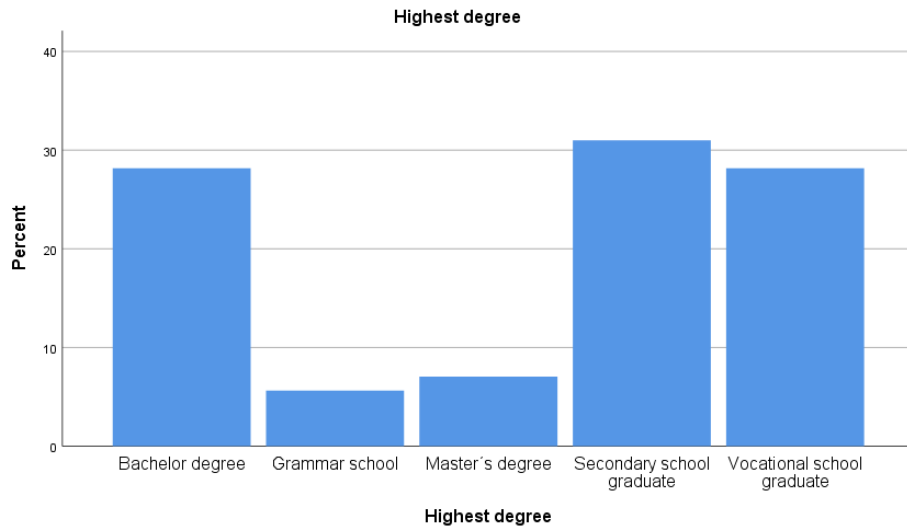


Figure 4. Educational level of the respondents

The duration of the respondents' employment in their own work organizations was surveyed with an open-ended question, which was answered by filling in the years or months of employment in the company. The average time of employment was between 1 and 2 years. In the survey the question was open-ended and the respondents were allowed to fill in the years and months in numbers. The average months for employment was 32,8 witch is round 2 years and 8th months. The answers had to be categorized in order to be simply readable. Based on the information provided by the respondents, seven categories were formed to summarize the information. The categories are presented in Figure 3.

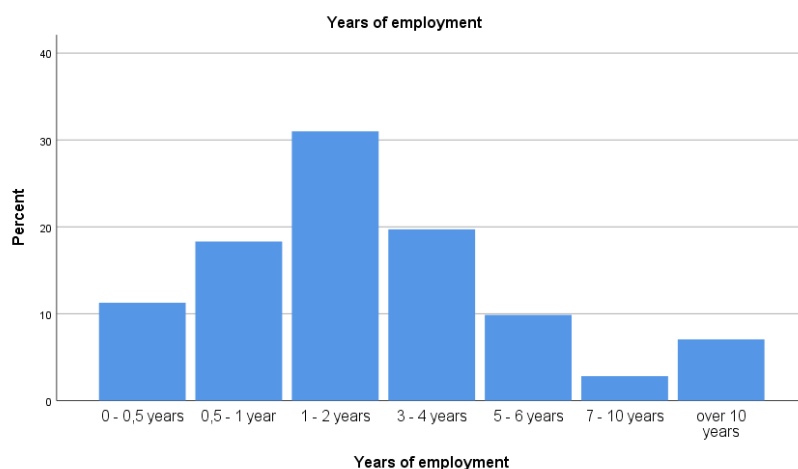


Figure 5. Years of employment categorized

The table reveals that the majority of respondents to the survey have worked with their current employer for less than 4 years. The figure may reflect the change in today's working life and the inherent variability in jobs and work assignments but also the industry where the company works in.

The respondents were also asked about their monthly salary. There were six different scales and the results varied as can be seen from the figure 4 below.

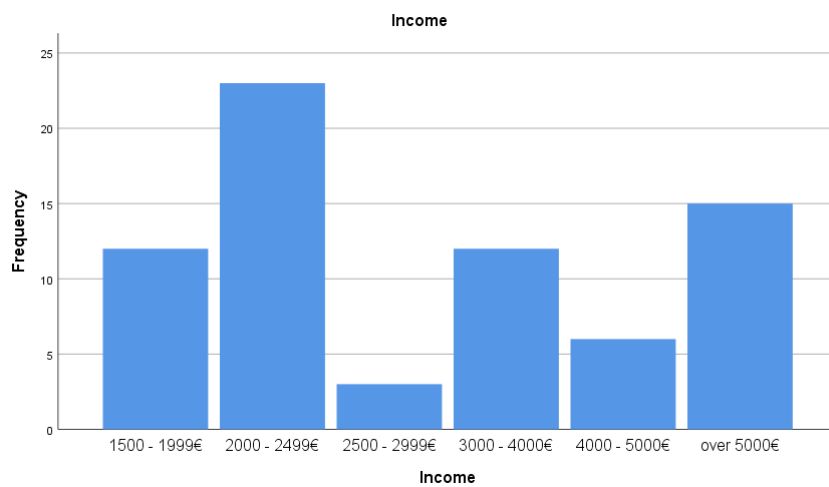


Figure 6. Income per month

Respondents were asked to rate the size of the team in which they work. Responses were given using three options, 5 or less (small team), 6-12 (medium) and 13 or more (large team). Respondents team sizes are presented in Table 1.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	13 or more	34	47,9	47,9
	5 or less	16	22,5	22,5
	6 - 12	21	29,6	29,6
	Total	71	100,0	100,0

Tabel 1. Team sizes

3.5 Statistical analyses

Data analysis and statistical testing were performed using IBM SPSS software. After the closing of the questionnaire, the answers were first examined superficially by browsing the answers. The aim was to get acquainted with the collected data so that the actual analysis would start as efficiently as possible. The in-depth analysis then started using SPSS and statistical tests were performed. The analyses used in the present study are linear regression analysis.

The questionnaire was distributed to a total of 172 people and responses were in total 71 (N = 71). The response rate was 41,3 %. Such a response rate can be considered quite low. Questionnaires are often characterized by a relatively low response rate and the usual response rate to the questionnaire is often less than 50% (Vehkalahti, 2008, 44). The low response rate of this survey may be explained by the busy atmosphere of today's working life and the fact that during the survey's opening week, the corona epidemic was classified as a pandemic and because of that the company started staff reduction negotiations.

3.6 Reliability and validity

With the help of reliability analysis, one can determine, for example, how the questions in the survey are related to each other, you get a reliability coefficient that describes the internal similarity of the variables. With the help of the reliability coefficient, one can find, i.e. a question that does not measure the same thing as other questions intended to measure the phenomenon. (Metsämuuronen, 2011)

The reliability of quantitative measures are assessed using reliability coefficients, e.g. Cronbach's alpha (α). The values of the alpha coefficient range from zero to one. Cronbach's alpha is characterized that the higher the value it has, closer to 1, the more

reliable the result is. The lowest accepted value of alpha is generally acknowledge to be .60. and an alpha value above .80 can be considered good. When calculating Cronbach's alpha, it is important to keep in mind that the number of propositions effects on the value of alpha, as Cronbach's alpha should be calculated based on the average correlations between the variables and the number of propositions. Therefore, the more propositions in the indicator, the better the value of alpha in general. If the value of alpha is not good, it is worth considering the possibility of changing the number of propositions in the sum variable and calculating it again. After that check if the value of alpha changes. If no correlations are found between the variables, the indicator do not measure the same thing and therefore the meter is not reliable. (Nummenmaa, 2004.)

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

Table 2. Table of acceptance of cronbach's alpha value

Cronbach's alphas were calculated for all measures used in the present study were sufficient. They are found in Appendix 2, with all the measures. , Co-worker relationships' involvement in organizational commitment, Job satisfaction and Commitment to work organization. The Cronbach's alpha of the co-worker relationships meter was obtained as .89. The Cronbach's alpha of the overall job satisfaction meter was obtained as .68. For the other section that measured of job satisfaction (MSQ) the Cronbach's alpha was .88. For the measure of organizational commitment, the Cronbach's alpha value was obtained as .89. The reliability of the measures used in the study can be considered very good based on the Cronbach's alpha values, except the overall job satisfaction with an alpha score of .68, which is, however, deemed sufficient.

After reviewing the reliability of the whole section, the sum variables from the data variables were created. The purpose of constructing sum variables is to condense the data by combining variables with the same characteristics. Information on variables measuring similar properties can be presented together. (Nummenmaa, 2004) All the sum variables and the regarding Cronbach's alphas can be found in the appendix list.

When analyzing the results of the study, one important thing is testing of the statistical significance. When data is analyzed with computer programs, statistical significance can also be tested by examining whether there is a dependence between the variables or if there are differences between the means of the data. This is accomplished by using the p-value test, and analyzing the significance level. In statistical testing a so called null hypothesis is set and then testing its significance with the help of its p-value. The null hypothesis assumes that there is no statistically significant difference between the variables tested. The p-value of the tests tells how likely it is that the null hypothesis is true and how likely it is that the hypothesis is a coincidence. It is common for studies to use a 95% risk level, which means that a conclusion can be erroneous with a 5% probability. (Vehkalahti, 2008) Generally accepted level of significance (5 %) is used to determine statistical significance in the present study.

All the survey variables were examined to determine whether parametric tests could be used. The normal distribution assumptions could not be quite fulfilled for all variables.

Nevertheless, in this study the researcher decided to use parametric tests as they are generally more robust than non-parametric ones. As a rule of thumb the dependent variable was reasonably normally distributed. This also applied to all job satisfaction measures. The co-worker relationship measures were the only measures that were not normally distributed. As a rule of thumb and what can be seen from most scientific articles regarding business economics, that even when a small data sample, almost always parametric methods such as t-test and regression analyzes are used. (Karjaluoto, 2007)

4 RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings of this study. The results are approached and guided the by research questions.

The first research question sought to find out how committed employees are to the target company and if there is a difference related to gender. Figure 7. shows, using mean values, how the responses were distributed among the respondents and the difference between genders.. The responses were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale, where a value of 5 meant strongly agree with the statement and a value of 1 strongly disagree. The analysis (see figure 8.) indicates that organizational commitment is a relatively good in the company. Men are slightly more committed with a mean value of 3,30 (Std. Deviation ,478) and female mean value 3,10 (Std. Deviation ,581). The mean value of organizational commitment (OC) was 3,22 (SD ,531) as can be seen in figure 8. The

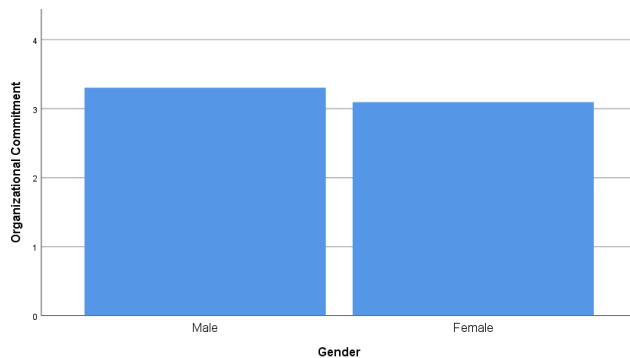


Figure 7. Organizational commitment between gender

The results indicates, that gender correlates weakly with organizational commitment ($r=0,19$; $p< ,01$). Variables such as possibility to create relationships and existing relationships seems to correlate highly with each other ($r=0,71$; $p< ,001$) which is natural as they measure a closely related thing. Intrinsic satisfaction correlates also with Job satisfaction ($p=0,68$; $p< ,001$)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Organisational Commitment	Pos. Create Relationships	Existing Relationships	Job Satisfaction	Intrinsic Satisfaction	Extrinsic Satisfaction
Organisational Commitment	3,22	0,531						
Pos. Create Relationships	4,51	0,487	0,42**					
Existing Relationships	3,96	0,855	0,45**	0,71**				
Job Satisfaction	5,82	0,822	0,55**	0,47**	0,40**			
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4,02	0,505	0,59**	0,62**	0,53**	0,68**		
Extrinsic Satisfaction	3,99	0,466	0,33**	0,47**	0,39**	0,50**	0,61**	
Gender	1,42	0,497	-0,19*	-0,32**	-0,23*	-0,33**	-0,40**	-0,05

**p<0,001; *p<0,01

Figure 8. Mean, Std.D and correlations matrix of the research model.

	β	p
Pos. Create Relationships	-0,056	0,706
Existing Relationships	0,219	0,112
Job Satisfaction	0,280	0,035
Intrinsic Satisfaction	0,380	0,017
Extrinsic Satisfaction	-0,093	0,443
Gender	0,104	0,342
R_s^2	38,2 %	<0,001

Figure 9. Regression coefficients of Research Model.

When all variables included in the original research model entered into a regression analysis (Figure 9), the model explained 38,2 % of the variation in the organizational commitment. The β - coefficients indicate that intrinsic satisfaction was the most important explanatory variable ($\beta = 0,38$; $p = 0,017$). Because of the rather strong correlations between the two job satisfaction measures, and the two co-worker relationships, only one of each were included in the subsequent analyses.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Organisational Commitment	Pos. Create Relationships	Intrinsic Satisfaction
Organisational Commitment	3,22	0,531			
Pos. Create Relationships	4,51	0,487	0,42**		
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4,02	0,505	0,60**	0,62**	
Extrinsic Satisfaction	3,99	0,466	0,34**	0,47**	0,61**

**p<0,001; *p<0,01

Figure 10. Mean, Std.D and correlations matrix of the organizational commitment, reduced.

	β	p
Pos. Create Relationships	0,094	0,459
Intrinsic Satisfaction	0,571	0,000
Extrinsic Satisfaction	-0,057	0,648
R_a^2	33,2 %	<0,001

Figure 11. Regression analysis of the modified research model explaining organizational commitment

When the Overall Job satisfaction and Existing relationships were eliminated from the analysis, intrinsic satisfaction was the only variable with statistical significance. The model explains 33,2 % of organizational commitment in the target company. (Figure 11.) This analysis suggests that intrinsic satisfaction is the strongest predictor of organizational commitment ($\beta = 0,57$; $p < ,001$)

4.1 Model development

The original model proposed that the possibility to create- and existing relationships, Job satisfaction, intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction explain organizational commitment. Because of the ultimate interest of to what degree do job satisfaction and co-worker relationship explain organizational commitment in the target company the variables were reduced and a new simplified model was created. The other reason was to avoid multicollinearity of the variables. All the original variables are still represented in the model, co-worker relationships and Job satisfaction. The next step was to analyze how the three variables explained the three forms of organizational commitment, affective-, continuance- and normative commitment, in three separate analyses. Each organizational commitment variable was used as a dependent variable.

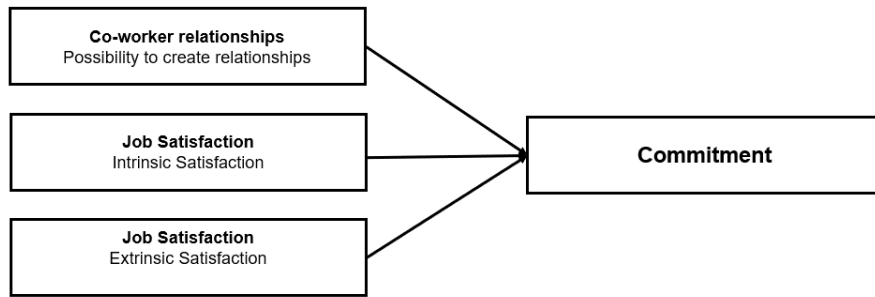


Figure 12. Research Model to invest the three forms of organizational commitment

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment	Pos. Create Relationships	Intrinsic Satisfaction
Affective Commitment	3,63	0,726					
Continuance Commitment	2,94	0,628					
Normative Commitment	3,08	0,666					
Pos. Create Relationships	4,51	0,487	0,52**	0,11**	0,37**		
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4,02	0,505	0,68**	0,230	0,46**	0,62**	
Extrinsic Satisfaction	3,99	0,466	0,48**	0,090	0,190	0,47**	0,61**

**p<0,001; *p<0,01

Figure 13. Mean, Std.D and correlations matrix of the affective, continuance and normative commitment.

	Affective commitment		Continuance commitment		Normative commitment	
	β	p	β	p	β	p
Pos. Create Relationships	0,145	0,206	-0,038	0,803	0,103	0,460
Intrinsic Satisfaction	0,531	0,000	0,302	0,080	0,502	0,002
Extrinsic Satisfaction	0,092	0,415	-0,075	0,622	-0,166	0,226
R _a ²	45,7 %	<0,001	0,2 %	0,250	20,2 %	<0,001

Figure 14. Regression analyses explains 1)Affective 2) Continuance 3) Normative commitment

The results indicates (see Figure 13.) that intrinsic satisfaction correlates highly with affective commitment and is the only value with statistical significance. (correlation ,68, $\beta = ,531$, $p < 0,001$). When comparing the variables correlation to continuance commitment no statistical significant values could be identified. The possibility to create

relationships and the intrinsic satisfaction correlated with normative commitment. The intrinsic satisfaction was the only variable with statistical significance.

Figure 14 shows the results of three regression analyses. The first model indicates that 45,7 % of affective commitment can be explained by co-worker relationships and job satisfaction, more specifically intrinsic satisfaction. The same variables do not explain any of continuance commitment, but on normative commitment the same variables are valid. They, however, only explain 20,2 % of the normative commitment. The only statistically significant β - coefficient is intrinsic satisfaction.

Affective commitment has also the highest mean value, which can also be interpreted as the most important variable of organizational commitment. Looking more closely at the statements measuring commitment to organization, and especially affective commitment, it is worth noting that the item "I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it" had the mean value was 4,06 (sd = ,826). Answers to this statement has been more on positive side of the scale and this got the highest mean value of all the questions related to organizational commitment. Other high values were obtained from "I have a strong sense of belonging to this employer", with the mean of 3,86 (sd = 0,946).

Taking a closer look at the questions, measuring intrinsic satisfaction that was in the survey, the highest mean values can be found from questions, " Opportunity to work independently", mean 4,41 (sd = ,559) and " In my work, I have the opportunity to use my skills", mean 4,28 (sd = ,759) and " Freedom to exercise my own discretion", mean 4,10 (sd = ,777). These values are relatively high and on the positive side of the 5-point Likert scale.

The level of co-worker relationship and job satisfaction are high in the target company. Nearly all values are over 4 on a 5-point Likert scale and overall job satisfaction is close to 6. This was measured on a 7-point Likert scale.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pos. Create Relationships	4,51	0,487
Existing Relationships	3,96	0,855
Job Satisfaction	5,82	0,822
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4,02	0,505
Extrinsic Satisfaction	3,99	0,466

Figure 15. Mean values of Co-worker relationships and Job satisfaction

Overall the research model explained 38,2 % of the organizational commitment. Developing the model by reducing variables did not change that much the outcome. The reduced model explained 33,2 % of the organizational commitment. When analyzed with each commitment variable the analysis showed that 45,7 % of the affective commitment could be explained with intrinsic satisfaction. Intrinsic satisfaction was the most significant predictor of actual organizational commitment.

5 DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to seek understanding of how satisfied and committed employees in the target company are and what explains their organizational commitment. Having committed employees will not solve every problem, but it can definitely help organizations. Organizational commitment has been associated with many desirable outcomes such as satisfaction, performance, reduced turnover, and flexibility (Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, & Rizwan, 2014). With the research questions the study tried to get information on how job satisfaction and co-worker relationships predict the organizational commitment. Based on the theory and research questions a research model was created. For the organizational commitment as test model, Allen & Meyers (1990) three component model was used. It has three variables that measures different aspects of commitment.

Based on the results the organizational commitment in the target company is on a relatively good level. Co-worker relationships and job satisfaction explained organizational commitment. More specifically possibility to create friendships and intrinsic job satis-

faction were the key factors that had the greatest influence on organizational commitment. The overall model explained 38,2 % of the organizational commitment. When modifying the model intrinsic satisfaction was the most important variable for affective and normative commitment. The study showed high mean values in questions like feeling of belonging and like to talk of my employer outside of my organization. The gender was also included in the model, but it did not affect the organizational commitment.

The model did not explain continuance commitment. This suggest that job satisfaction and co-worker relationships are not important for this type of commitment. The antecedents for continuance commitment are alternatives and investments so this could be anticipated. The other reason might be because of the diversity of the respondent's ages and the fact that majority of the respondents are under 35 years old, categorize as millennials, who are individuals born between 1981 and 1996. (Karriker & Hartman, 2019). This indicates that because of the young age, the employees might not have invested that much in the company yet and young people are more likely to change employer. They may also have heightened levels of self-esteem overall (Karriker & Hartman, 2019) which can also lead them not to feel like they have invested to an organization. Perhaps they feel it is vice versa. The answers for questions like " I find it difficult to adapt to a new work environment" got a mean value of 1,69 (sd = ,69) and " I find it harder for me to leave my organization in the future" mean 2,87 (sd = 1,06). These questions measured the continuance commitment and supports the conclusion that the respondent are not committed to the target organization because of continuance variables.

Intrinsic satisfaction was the only variable with statistical significance. Mainly the loyalty was the variable that stood out. E.g. the question " I believe that an employee should be loyal to their employer" had a mean of 3,91 (sd = ,981). When asked about changing organization, "Things were better when people stayed with one employer for most of their careers" the mean was 2,54 (sd = ,867). This could be interpreted in a way that the employees think loyalty to the current employer is important but that does not necessarily mean that the employer should stay the same. The Generation Y and Z are known for wanting to do meaningful work, but in todays work environment it is common to change organizations fairly often.

Prior studies have identified similar characteristics e.g. Meyer and Allen (1997) claimed that understanding the pattern of relationships between different work environmental variables, intrinsic motivation, job characteristics, and their corresponding affective reactions is important. This is because new policies and procedures are constantly being added within companies. This is because of the attempt to try to influence or enhance organizational commitment. Skill variety, job satisfaction, supervisory satisfaction and feedback have strong links to intrinsic motivation for employees. These can in turn, create organizational commitment (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi 2019). This study suggest that intrinsic satisfaction to work is a very important factor for organizational commitment. It seems to be important for the employees to be able to use their own capabilities, work independently, freedom to use their own discretion and get feelings of accomplishment from work. This demands high trust from the management of the company. Prior research (Fard & Karimi, 2015) suggest that when the trust between an employee and the organization is high, there is a positive correlation with job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This study indicates this to be true.

Extrinsic satisfaction was as a variable in all the faces of the analysis and despite it correlated with organizational commitment and especially with affective commitment it did not have a statistical significance in any of the analysis. That said extrinsic variables such as, supervisory feedback and working conditions have strong links to intrinsic motivation for employees, which, in turn, create organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997) In the survey questions like "The way my supervisor treats his subordinates" (mean 4,10 sd = ,813) and "The working conditions" (mean 4,37, sd = ,541) got high mean values. This indicates that management and working conditions are well taken care of in the target company. This can lead to higher intrinsic satisfaction which leads to higher organizational commitment.

Experience of having a supportive atmosphere in the workplace is associated with a stronger commitment to the work organization. (Allen & Meyer, 1997) When a work organization is supportive and encouraging to its employees, the amount of commitment to the work organization can increase. The results suggest that the possibility to create relationships and existing relationships have a correlation with organizational commit-

ment. The level of co-worker relationship is high in the target company. This can be seen from the mean values of co-worker relationships. The possibility to create relationships has a mean of 4,51 (sd = ,487) and existing relationships mean 3,96 (sd = ,855). This indicates that the culture in the target company is to promote formation of friendship and may be one reason why the organizational commitment is relatively high even though the work environment is in continuous change. One other reason why the co-worker relationship is important is because of the respondents age. Most of the respondents are under 35 years and many under that age do not perhaps have a family and business associates yet. Work is one place where relationships are built and that can be beneficial in the future. This study did not take in consideration the marital status or how many children the respondents have.

The model points to two elements that are worth considering when discussing organizational commitment and how to improve or nourish it. First, the existing relationship among colleagues and the organizational culture to promote relationship creation is very important especially for new employees and secondly, intrinsic satisfaction for one's job is important. The cost of the recruitment process is very high (Deloitte Consulting 2014) and the strong indicator that social interactions, and relationships are antecedents organizational commitment. New employees deal with their immediate work group and the positive image of socialization ultimately leads to organizational commitment. (Heffner, 2001) The intrinsic satisfaction is important for the intrinsic motivation for commitment. It is established by doing meaningful work and/or work that have a perceived meaning or provides a contribution to something. When an employee feels that the work is important and it is possible to do it independently and with own discretion and methods. Then the intrinsic satisfaction may truly work as a predictor for organizational commitment.

5.1 Recommendation for practitioners

In the attempt to find out how co-worker relationships and job satisfaction affects organizational commitment the study was quite successful. The findings are supported with previous studies so certain recommendations can be made.

This study identifies intrinsic satisfaction for work as an important predictor of organizational commitment. This correlates with other factors of job satisfaction but is the most important. The possibility to work independently and with your own methods are highly appreciated by the employees. To work independently could be translated into self-direction and being your own boss. It also shows trust and this is a basic psychological demand that most people need to feel. There should of course be supervisors to display the trust and give feedback so the employee gets the feeling. Hence, this is why extrinsic satisfaction supports intrinsic satisfaction.

Also the culture should be promoting employees to spend time together and create relationships. This seems to be especially important in companies with younger employees.

These recommendations are based on the study that was made for a sales organization with young sales representatives. The recommendations should be adjusted properly if they would be used in a different environment.

5.2 Limitations and further research

The limitations of this study are that it is a cross sectional study and may present a so called common source bias. It includes only respondents from one company. To minimize the common source bias the research could have been to use causal interfaces and repeat the survey after 1-2 months. Another limitation is the size of the sample. It is common for quantitative studies to have a small answer rate and this survey was not an exception. The sample size was aprox. 40 % of the company employees. The pandemic outbreak of the corona-virus and the layoffs most definitely affected the response rate. Future study could be made in intervals so the data could be collected for a longer time-period. This could help the validity and reliability of the study. Also qualitative methods could be used to complement the statistical study. Many of the measured variables are based on people's feelings and an interview could better explain the results.

The study was also quite short to maximize the responses to the survey. With a longer survey more measures could have been constructed and analyzed. This would have enhanced the results. Common source bias results from the same person responding to similar questions in a survey. This may strengthen the correlations.

When investigating only one organization it limits the generalization of the results. As stated, this thesis results should be considered using in sales organizations with younger employees. Further studies should be made with the same research model in several organizations in different industries to collect enough data. This way the research model could be generalized and used as a tool e.g. in HR departments to increase and reinforce organizational commitment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Contact letter and questionnaire

Master's Thesis

QUESTIONNAIRE

Master of International Business

14.3.2020

The information collected in this questionnaire is part of the MBA thesis, at Arcada University of Applied Sciences International Business Management degree program. The survey examines the factors influencing commitment to work organization. The study is scheduled to be completed in spring 2020 and will be supervised by Minna Stenius, Director of the Research Line (minna.stenius@arcada.fi).

Answering the survey is optional and takes about 10 minutes. The survey is answered anonymously, so respondents will not be mentioned in the survey by name or otherwise identifiable. The research report will not present the data of the respondents in such a way that it would be possible to identify individual respondents. The answers to the questionnaire are used only as material in Kim Ellonen's thesis, and possibly in teaching and research use.

This survey is interested in the experiences of individuals, so your background is irrelevant to answering the survey. All views are equally valuable and correct.

Best regards,

Kim Ellonen

kim.ellonen@arcada.fi

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Age? _____

Gender?

1. Male
2. Female
3. Neutral

What is your highest educational degree?

1. Master's degree
2. Bachelor degree
3. Secondary School Graduate
4. Vocational School graduate
5. Grammar School
6. Something else, what? _____

How many years have you worked with your current employer

? _____

What size team do you you work in?

1. 5 or less
2. 6 - 12
3. 13 and more

Which position do you think best matches your own??

1. Management
2. Challenging Sales Representative
3. Sales Representative
4. Booking
5. Specialist position
6. Something else, what? _____

Income per month?

1. 1500 - 1999€
2. 2000 - 2499€
3. 2500 - 2999€
4. 3000 - 4000€
5. 4000 - 5000€
6. yli 5000€

In this section, consider all of your coworker relationships and the atmosphere of your organization in general using the statements below.

The statements below are evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Somewhat disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree 4 = Somewhat agree, 5 = Strongly agree)

1. I feel I have the opportunity to get to know my co-workers
2. We are able to work with my colleagues to solve problems
3. In my organization, I have the opportunity to chat informally and visit other employees.
4. In my organization, interaction between employees is encouraged.
5. I feel I have the opportunity to make close friendships in my workplace.
6. Informal conversation is allowed in my organization as long as the work is done.
7. I have formed strong friendships at work.
8. I am dealing with my co-workers outside of working hours.
9. I can trust people in my workplace.
10. I think I can trust many of my colleagues.
11. One of the reasons I look forward to work is because I see my colleagues there.
12. I don't feel that any of my co-workers are a true friend to me.

At this point, consider your own job using the statements below.

The statements below are assessed using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Neither agree or disagree, 5 = Slightly agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly agree)

1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job
2. In general, I don't like my job
3. In general, I like working here

The statements below are evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job, 2 = dissatisfied with this aspect of my job, 3 = Can't decide if I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job, 4 = Satisfied with this aspect of my job, 5 = Very satisfied with this aspect of my job)

1. Opportunity to work independently
2. Possibility to do different things from time to time
3. The opportunity to be "someone" in the work community
4. The way my supervisor treats his subordinates
5. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions
6. The opportunity to do things that are not against my conscience
7. My job provides me with stable employment
8. The chance to do things for other people
9. The chance to tell people what to do
10. In my work, I have the opportunity to use my skills
11. The way the company policies are put into practice
12. I am satisfied with the level of earnings, relative to the amount of work
13. The opportunity to advance in my career
14. Freedom to exercise my own discretion
15. The opportunity to use my own ways and methods of doing the job
16. The working conditions
17. How colleagues get along with each other
18. The praise I get for doing a good job
19. The feeling of accomplishment that I get from my work
20. Being able to stay busy all the time

How do you experience the following statements? Read each statement carefully and decide how strongly you feel the knowledge or idea described in the statement regarding your work.

The statements below are assessed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree or disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree)

Affective

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization
2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it
3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own
4. I don't think I could be as attached to another employer
5. I experience myself in the so-called. "Into the family"
6. I feel attached to the work community
7. I have a strong sense of belonging to this employer
8. This employer is of personal importance to me

Continuance commitment

1. It would be really hard for me to quit my job even if I wanted to
2. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I resigned
3. I would find it scary to resign if I didn't have an alternative job ready
4. It would be expensive for me to leave my current employer
5. At the moment, staying with my current employer is as mandatory as it is necessary
6. If I hadn't already given so much to this organization, I might consider leaving
7. I find it difficult to adapt to a new work environment
8. I find it harder for me to leave my organization in the future

Normative

1. I think people change employers too often
2. I believe that an employee should be loyal to their employer
3. I think that a person who is constantly changing employers is unethical
4. If I got a better job, I would feel wrong to accept it and leave my current employer
5. Things were better when people stayed with one employer for most of their careers
6. I will continue my employment because I experience loyalty to my own organizations
7. I think it makes sense to want to be a so-called. company man / woman.
8. The work must be completed even if free time is spent on it

APPENDIX 2. Sum Variables

Measurement	Questions
Co-worker relationships Possibilities to create relationships Cronbach's alpha: ,787 Number of propositions: 6	1. I feel I have the opportunity to get to know my co-workers 2. We are able to work with my colleagues to solve problems 3. In my organization, I have the opportunity to chat informally and visit other employees. 4. In my organization, interaction between employees is encouraged. 5. I feel I have the opportunity to make close friendships in my workplace. 6. Informal conversation is allowed in my organization as long as the work is done.
Existing relationships measurement Cronbach's alpha: ,862 Number of propositions: 6 R= reverse scored	7. I have formed strong friendships at work. 8. I am dealing with my co-workers outside of working hours. 9. I can trust people in my workplace. 10. I think I can trust many of my colleagues. 11. One of the reasons I look forward to work is because I see my colleagues there. 12. I don't feel that any of my co-workers are a true friend to me.(R)

Table 4. Co-worker relationship's

Measurement	Questions
Overall job satisfaction Cronbach's alpha: ,682 Number of propositions: 3	1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job 2. In general, I don't like my job 3. In general, I like working here
Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Intrinsic satisfaction Cronbach's alpha: ,869 Number of propositions: 12	1. Opportunity to work independently 2. Possibility to do different things from time to time 3. The opportunity to be "someone" in the work community 6. The opportunity to do things that are not against my conscience 8. The chance to do things for other people 9. The chance to tell people what to do 10. In my work, I have the opportunity to use my skills 11. The way the company policies are put into practice 14. Freedom to exercise my own discretion 15. The opportunity to use my own ways and methods of doing the job 19. The feeling of accomplishment that I get from my work 20. Being able to stay busy all the time
Extrinsic satisfaction Cronbach's alpha: ,701 Number of propositions:	12. I am satisfied with the level of earnings, relative to the amount of work 4. The way my supervisor treats his subordinates 5. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions 7. My job provides me with stable employment 13. The opportunity to advance in my career 16. The working conditions 17. How colleagues get along with each other 18. The praise I get for doing a good job

Table 5. Job satisfaction and MSQ combined

Measurement	Questions
<p>Three component model</p> <p>Affective commitment</p> <p>Cronbach's alpha: ,888</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization 2. I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it 3. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own 4. I don't think I could be as attached to another employer 5. I experience myself in the so-called. "Into the family" 6. I feel attached to the work community 7. I have a strong sense of belonging to this employer 8. This employer is of personal importance to me
<p>Continuance commitment</p> <p>Cronbach's alpha: ,745</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It would be really hard for me to quit my job even if I wanted to 2. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I resigned 3. I would find it scary to resign if I didn't have an alternative job ready 4. It would be expensive for me to leave my current employer 5. At the moment, staying with my current employer is as mandatory as it is necessary 6. If I hadn't already given so much to this organization, I might consider leaving 7. I find it difficult to adapt to a new work environment 8. I find it harder for me to leave my organization in the future
<p>Normative commitment</p> <p>Cronbach's alpha: ,810</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I think people change employers too often 2. I believe that an employee should be loyal to their employer 3. I think that a person who is constantly changing employers is unethical 4. If I got a better job, I would feel wrong to accept it and leave my current employer 5. Things were better when people stayed with one employer for most of their careers 6. I will continue my employment because I experience loyalty to my own organizations 7. I think it makes sense to want to be a so-called. company man / woman. 8. The work must be completed even if free time is spent on it

Table 6. Three component model