

**WHAT'S IT ALL WORTH?**  
**A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON WHAT MOTIVATES**  
**WOMEN IN LOW-PAYING JOBS IN FINLAND**

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## ABSTRACT

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<p>Abstract</p> <p>The concept of work motivation has received increased attention in the management literature during the past decades, and the interest continues well into today's management practices and related research. This should be the case, as motivated employees can be considered as the most valuable resources a company can have.</p> <p>Through exploratory research design, qualitative research strategy and qualitative thematic analysis of the data, this study aims to provide insights to what motivates women employed in low-paying jobs in Finland. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews of 14 women who are working in jobs considered as low-paying. From the data, three overarching themes relating to factors that contribute towards women's motivation could be found. The data suggests that quality of work, appreciation and personal development are the aspects that contribute the most to women's work motivation. Moreover, it was discovered that for most of the participants', money is not among the primary sources of work motivation. Instead, it was revealed that pay fades into the background when other motivating aspects are fulfilled.</p> <p>The themes were analyzed with the help of previous research, followed by presentation of eight distinct conclusions relating to what motivates women in low- paying jobs.</p> <p>After this, managerial recommendations were made based on the analysis and conclusions of the research. Finally, limitations of the study, along with further research opportunities and quality criteria were discussed. Altogether, the findings of the study offer new viewpoints on the phenomenon of women's work motivation in low-paying jobs.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Work motivation as a topic has been concerning managers for years, and the question of “How can I motivate my employees?” has been asked in multitude of ways and in several different languages over the past decades (Terpstra, 1979). Even though the question may seem unanswerable to some, this is not the case. In fact, there might be too many answers to this question. Attempts to answer the question have been made, and over the years a myriad of methods for employee motivation have been presented, each bringing some utility and validity for managers (Terpstra, 1979).

In addition to managers, the topic of work motivation has been a popular interest in media as well. However, the topic itself often appears to be covered under explorations of trends in people’s work behavior and habits, job satisfaction levels, entrepreneurial activity, leisure behavior and/or career turbulence (Pinder, 2014). Why then has the question of work motivation been a popular topic in discussion related to organizations for years? A simple answer is that employee’s motivation embodies a key component which influence factors and behaviors that appear as effort and energy towards reaching the goals of the company and, also achieving one’s own aims (Rusu & Avasilcai, 2014). Moreover, managers should be interested in the concept as productivity, absenteeism and tendency to quit is usually influenced by the amount of job satisfaction derived from one’s work (Brown & McIntosh, 1998). What is more, as the economy is under rapid change, with the increases made in e-commerce and globalization in general, motivated workforce is regarded as a symbol of competitive advantage for a company (Steers et al, 2004).

Stemming from this, the focus of this thesis is work motivation and more specifically what motivates women in low-paying jobs in Finland. The topic of work motivation, as was discussed above, is one that is always current and something that will require manager’s attention time after time. Moreover, as the particular interest of this research is directed towards women working in low-paid jobs, it aims to bring new perspectives on the widely researched concept of work motivation.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Research

This research aims to add something new to the research of employee work motivation, especially from the perspective of the sources of work motivation of women employed in low-paying jobs. Furthermore, this research aims to fill the gap that exists within previous research.

To be employed in a low-paying job is something that many of us have experienced at some point in our lives. Some of us even go through an entire career employed in a job that can be characterized as low-paying. Finland is currently in the midst of adverse economic conditions, and it might be so that these types of jobs will become more and more common in the employment markets in the future. When considering the Finnish scale, many of these low-paying jobs tend to employ slightly more women than men. In light of these mentioned reasons, it is beneficial for managers, government officials and researchers to understand what motivates women in these types of jobs.

What is more, Pinder (2014, p. 478), agreeing with the late Peter Frost, states that previous work motivation research, and organizational research in general, has focused too much attention on small, elite populations of managers and professionals, and therefore focus should also be placed on lower-level employees. Moreover, the issue of work motivation and how to foster it, is primarily the concern of managers, which accentuates the importance of this topic for them. After all, motivating employees successfully relies more on managerial philosophy than just applying some technique (Gilmeanu, 2015). What is also important to note, and further highlights the importance of this research, is that a lot of the women within the working force are not professionals, as in lawyers, executives, professors, architects or advertising agents (Selmi & Cahn, 2006). Majority of the women, like men, work hard in the lower economic level, doing service work that drives our economy with not a lot of hope for considerable advances or power (Selmi & Cahn, 2006). Therefore, by understanding the motivational factors of low-paid women, it is possible for the managers of these organizations to find tools to possibly improve their work motivation, and boost productivity, without having to make grand monetary investments.

From this aim stems the following research question:

*“What motivates women employed in low-paying jobs in Finland”*

The study also has instrumental dimension which is to see what managers could do to improve women's work motivation and whether pay or money acts as an influencing motivator at work for women employed in low-paying jobs.

The preconception that the researcher has about the topic, is that various reasons, maybe even surprising ones, for work motivation among women employed in low-paying jobs will surface. Moreover, it can be expected that money may not play as big of a role in this motivation equation as might be initially assumed. Indications of this has been found in previous research, for example in the research of Lambert (1991). In her research, it was discovered that women place great importance on socialisation and relationships established at work. The author hopes that this research will reveal whether similar aspects can be seen in the Finnish scale as well.

In order to understand the phenomenon of work motivation the following theoretical standpoints must be taken into consideration. First group of theories under observation will be the theories relating to work motivation in general.

The subject of work motivation, as previously mentioned, has been studied in several ways, from several different viewpoints and from the interest points of different stakeholders. Therefore, the topic of work motivation can be approached from many different angles, depending on the issue under study. Nevertheless, there are dominating theoretical views that surface when discussing work motivation. One of the most popular theories relating to motivation is Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Second very popular theoretical aspect of motivation is Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory (1966). And thirdly, a prominent viewpoint to motivation; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Also, the very popular viewpoint to motivating employees, goal setting, will be reviewed. After the discussion of the before mentioned theoretical concepts of work motivation, attention will be turned to job design, job crafting and their connection with work motivation.

Second bigger theoretical standpoint addresses previous research related to women and their work motivation. The topic has been researched from the viewpoint of comparing women's job motivation to that of men, for example by Lambert (1991), Murray & Atkinson (1981) and Clark (1997). Moreover, the topic has been researched from the point of view of how family affects women and men's work motivation.

Third overarching theoretical standpoint of this research is the effect that pay has on one's work motivation. The topic has been researched from many point of views, for example, how important pay is for employee's job-motivation and what the attitudes are towards pay and how that affects work motivation (Leana & Meuris, 2015; Thozhur & Szivas, 2006; Williams et al, 2006; Ruiz-Palomino et al, 2013). From these theoretical standpoints emerges the topic of this research. The topic takes viewpoints from each theoretical section described above, and combines them into a topic that has not received sufficient attention in the previous literature.

The study has been divided into six different sections. The first one is the theoretical framework, where the previous literature is reviewed in relation to the theories presented above. In this section, most important concepts related to this thesis will be presented. The following section will discuss the methodological choices applied when conducting this research, starting from research design and strategy, through sample, data collection and the method of analysis utilized. Furthermore, the methodological choices will be reflected against the aim of the research. After this, the results of the study will be presented in line with the data structure presented in the methodology section. Following the results section is the discussion conducted from the results of the research, with the help of previous research presented in the theoretical framework. Following the discussion section, conclusions from the research will be drawn. Thereafter, managerial recommendations stemming from the research will be made and limitations of the research will be discussed. Finally, further research opportunities will be presented, as well as assessment of the quality criteria.



## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Work Motivation

#### 2.1.1 Hierarchy of Needs

The first theoretical concept discussed relating to motivation, is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The theory was developed by Abraham Maslow in 1943 and approaches motivation through satisfying different types of needs (Terpstra, 1979). The needs can be categorized as psychological needs, safety, belongingness, esteem and self-actualization, which can be thought as in the form of a pyramid and appearing consecutively (Terpstra, 1979). According to Maslow (1943) the needs are organized in the form of pyramid, or hierarchy, due to the fact that once a more basic need has been fulfilled other higher needs surface, and when these needs are then satisfied again new and higher needs arise.

The Hierarchy of Needs starts with basic psychological needs. According to Maslow (1943), psychological needs are the foundation for motivation theory. Psychological needs include things such as need for food, water, sleep and sheer activity (Maslow, 1943). The author continues that these needs are the very basic human needs that must be satisfied before moving on to satisfying more complicated needs. Additionally, if these needs are not satisfied, a person is dominated by them and all the other needs may become abstract or fade into the background.

The next level of motivators are safety needs. Like the previously mentioned psychological needs, if unfulfilled, these needs might be the sole determinant of one's behavior (Maslow, 1943). The author also states that the same reasoning applies to safety needs as psychological needs, but to a lesser extent. Examples of safety needs include things such as smoothly running society and shelter from environment.

After safety needs have been fulfilled, again new need surfaces called belongingness. This need will present itself in the form of a need for affectionate relations with others, and as a need to find a place in a group (Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, according to the author, it is as important for a person to give love as it is to receive it. Moreover, if the need for belongingness is not fulfilled a person becomes just as obsessed with satisfying it as he once was trying to satisfy hunger or thirst (Maslow, 1943).

The need that follows belongingness is called esteem. The author states that these needs stem from the fact that practically all the individuals in the society have a need for receiving a high evaluation of themselves, need for self-respect or self-esteem and a need for the esteem received from others. According to Maslow (1943, p. 381) esteem needs can be divided into two categories: first "the desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom". Second: "the desire

for reputation or prestige (defined as respect or esteem from other people), recognition, attention, importance or appreciation" (Maslow, 1943, p. 382). Additionally, once these needs are satisfied it leads to a person feeling self-confident, worthy, strong, and the adequacy of being useful and necessary in the society and in the world. In turn, if these needs are neglected it leads to feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness and consequently motivation will not surface (Maslow, 1943).

The final level of the pyramid is the need for self-actualization. This need refers to the desire to reach one's full potential, to reach the full level that one can reach (Maslow, 1943). The author also notes that these types of needs are subject to variation from person to person. Again, the rise of these needs is contingent on the satisfaction of the needs described previously. The author asserts that people satisfied in these needs can be generally called satisfied people and from this stems the fullest creativeness. Nevertheless, according to the research, in our society, satisfied people are an exception, and therefore fairly little is known about self-actualization, both experimentally or clinically. Therefore, it remains a challenge from research's point of view.

What can this theory of motivation bring to business? The value of Maslow's theory for managers is motivating employees by focusing on their individual needs (Terpstra, 1979). The author states that the implication for managers is that they must identify and grasp the most important needs of their employees and take advantage of those needs by connecting the satisfaction gained from fulfilling a need to effort. An example provided by the author is that if a manager identifies in his or her employee a need for safety, the manager could emphasize the continuity of the job through good or effective job-performance. Or, when a manager identifies a need for esteem, the manager can offer an opportunity for satisfying that need via increased effort in the job. Moreover, Maslow's theory offers a guideline for companies to ensure that the benefits they offer to their workers are in keeping with the satisfying of the levels of the Hierarchy of Needs (Sadri & Bowen, 2011). Sadri & Bowen (2011) also recommend the identification of where an employee is on the hierarchy through one-on-one performance reviews and usage of employee opinion surveys for groups of people. According to the authors, by incentivizing employees in this sort of "building block" manner, the company can utilize their funds in the most effective manner possible while simultaneously attracting and retaining quality employees. This will result in more loyal, productive, and most importantly motivated workforce (Sadri & Bowen, 2011).

Other authors (e.g. Kamalanabhan & Uma, 1999 and Latham and Pinder, 2005) have also found significance in Maslow's theory. For example, in the ordinary working life, the physiological needs are contemplated in terms of lighting, space and the overall working conditions. Safety is taken into consideration when designing work practices. Love in regards of the formation of cohesive work teams, esteem through the responsibility and recognition given to the employee and self-actualization in terms of opportunities given to the employees in the form of creative and challenging jobs and tasks (Latham and Pinder, 2005).

Like any theory Maslow's Hierarchy of needs has not been left without critique. It has been pointed out that even though the idea of an individual progressing in a motivational "ladder" is tempting, there is very little scientific evidence that this actually is the case (Terpstra, 1979). Moreover, it has been stated that Maslow almost exclusively focuses on the personal growth of an individual (Trigg, 2004). According to Hanley & Abell (2002) Maslow's theory treats social relationships as merely tools for building the "self-actualized self", and once achieved the need for social relationship disappears and are only brought back for "maintenance" purposes. Despite the critique received by the theory, it serves a good theoretical addition to other theories included in this research. It also serves as a good starting point for explaining the foundation from which more complicated motivational theories can be developed.

### 2.1.2 Motivation-Hygiene Theory

The second theory reviewed relating to work motivation is Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. The motivation-hygiene theory, also known as the two-factor theory, has gained a permanent foothold in the motivation literature due to its practical approach in employee motivation (Hong Tang & Waheed, 2011). As the theory provides a practical viewpoint to motivating employees, it is suitable when considering the topic of this thesis as well.

The study conducted by Herzberg in his research called "*The motivation to work*" seeks out to test the notion that humans possess two sets of needs: the animalistic need to avoid feeling pain and human needs to achieve psychological growth (Herzberg, 1966, p. 71). The original study was conducted on two hundred engineers and accountants, and they were asked questions relating to experiences at work which either led to increase or a decrease in their job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1966, p. 71). From the study emerged five strong determinants of job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, work-itself, responsibility and advancement, the last three being greater necessities for the facilitation of lasting change (Herzberg, 1966, p. 72-73). Moreover, according to the author, the factors that caused most dissatisfaction in the workers were found to be company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. Within the research, it was also observed that the things leading to job dissatisfaction among the respondents were rarely linked to events that lead to job satisfaction.

What then is the main theme of the factors that cause dissatisfaction? As can be seen from above, the dissatisfying factors basically characterize the environment and act primarily as preventatives for job dissatisfaction, while having little impact on positive job attitudes (Herzberg, 1966, p. 74). The author also states that the hygiene factors lead to job dissatisfaction because of the innate need to avoid all things unpleasant. Furthermore, the hygiene factors act as dissatisfiers because they are a representation of the environment to which man is continuously trying to adapt to (Herzberg, 1966, p. 75). The author continues that it is obvious as to why hygienic factors do not provide positive satisfaction: the hygiene factors do not have the features necessary for providing an indi-

vidual with a sense of growth. To gain that feeling of growth one must gain the sense of achievement from tasks that are meaningful to the individual, and as the hygiene factors do not relate to the task, they cannot provide that meaning to the person (Herzberg, 1966, p. 78). For managers paying attention to the dissatisfying factors is important, because they can prevent employees from becoming dissatisfied in their jobs (Terpsrta, 1979).

Herzberg (1966, p. 74) named the satisfying factors found in his study "motivators", because the findings imply that they are efficient in terms of motivating the individual to perform better and devote more effort to the task. Generally, it can be stated that the motivator events are connected to job satisfaction because of a person's need for growth or self-actualization (Herzberg, 1966, p. 75). According to the author, the reason as to why motivators provide positive satisfaction at work is that motivators are strongly related to the task factors and therefore are a key component for growth. Moreover, the motivator factors bring about psychological stimulation and through that an individual can activate him or herself towards personal self-actualization needs (Herzberg, 1966, p. 78).

The theory presented above has received both acceptance as well as criticism. In keeping with Herzberg (1966, p. 92), one of the most relevant critiques received by the theory relates to the very general nature of the theory itself, which stems from the fact that the sample consisted only of accountants and engineers. Moreover, the nature of psychological investigations has been criticized, more specifically the perceived unreliability of the findings produced by psychological research (Herzberg, 1966, p. 92).

Despite the criticism received by the theory, it bears some merit from manager's point of view (Terpstra, 1979). Firstly, it must be noted by managers that by improving hygiene factors the effect of it for preventing job dissatisfaction will not last for long (Herzberg, 1966, p. 169). In fact, according to the author, hygiene factors function like heroin, it will demand more and more but produce less and less effect. Moreover, industries must notice that if they desire to extract the most out of people's effectivity, they must treat them as humans and not simply in terms of the attributes that suite the organization (Herzberg, 1966, p. 170).

The final bigger rule to actions that managers can gain from this theory is job enlargement. Per Herzberg (1966, p. 177) job enlargement firstly entails that person's job should be equipped with achievement opportunities and these achievements must be a consequence of an increased knowledge about one's occupation or job. Secondly, by increasing responsibility of a person's job, an opportunity is presented for increased understanding of the relationships of the different components related to a task. This in turn leads to psychological growth needed to feel satisfied with one's job (Herzberg, 1966, p. 178). The author states that the third aspect related to job enlargement is to have an open end to a task description, to allow for creativity from the employee's part which again facilitates psychological growth. Fourthly, an employee must have an opportunity for advancement, for example, in the form of high-order tasks, if a traditional advancement in rank cannot be offered. This aspect in turn also con-

tributes towards psychological growth of the employee (Herzberg, 1966, p. 178). Finally, according to the author, the job should have some intrinsically attractive attributes which then assures that the employee is less interested in other people's hygiene factors and less tempted to seek alternative psychological growth from his or her own hygiene needs. Obviously, no job can contain all five things presented above, yet some of these presented things must be there for jobs to be psychologically rewarding (Herzberg, 1966, p.178). Additionally, as presented by the author, an organization should review the growth possibilities of their jobs along these guidelines presented above.

### **2.1.3 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

Now the attention will be turned to intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of motivation, as it is necessary to also inspect what drives the motivation of employees; the task in and of itself, or the possible reward gained. Down the line previous research has grouped motivation into two categories, differing in their conceptualization of how, and if, the different types of motivations combine (Amabile, 1993). One categorization of the sources of work motivation is intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation will be discussed first. Intrinsic motivation can be defined as doing something because it is interesting and enjoyable (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It can also be said that an individual is intrinsically motivated when one looks for enjoyment, satisfaction of curiosity, or personal challenge from the work that he or she is doing (Amabile, 1993). Intrinsically motivated person is not interested in the possible reward gained from an activity but simply performs it for the sake of the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation is a tricky concept to measure as there are no numerical way to describe motivation. Past research has operationalized intrinsic motivation through self-reports of interest and enjoyment of the activity as is (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to the scholars, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have been widely researched in the context of classroom learning. In this context, it has been observed that positive performance feedback had a positive impact on intrinsic motivation and consequently negative feedback has a decreasing effect on intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Another side of the theory is extrinsic motivation, which regards the motivational factors of a person from an entirely different perspective than intrinsic motivation does. As mentioned earlier, intrinsic motivation is an important concept but it must be noted that majority of the activities performed by people are not intrinsically motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The authors assert that this fact becomes more apparent after early childhood, as the world around you more and more limit your ability to be intrinsically motivated, and starts expecting you to assume responsibilities for tasks which are not intrinsically interesting or engaging. Extrinsic motivation can be defined as doing something in order to gain something or to reach a desired outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, as stated by the authors, the reason why people usually agree to per-

form these tasks is that doing them will gain the respect of a significant other to which one feels, or wants to feel connected to.

However, there has been some confusion in previous research as to the functional scale for assessing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and there has been an outright criticism towards the measures used by some authors (Guay et al., 2000). When looking at extrinsic motivation itself, there has been doubts whether, especially in perspective of learning where much of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation research takes place, motivating person through extrinsic means is harmful to their intrinsic motivation or not (Deci et al, 2001). The harmfulness of motivating extrinsically has been especially evident within students who, if motivated solely extrinsically, can lose their intrinsic motivation to learn (Deci et al, 2001).

#### **2.1.4 Goal Setting**

This theory stems from the research of Edwin A. Locke in the 1970's. The theory is concerned with showing a relationship between intentional goals or intentions and task performance (Locke, 1968). The first part of the study investigates the notion that if goals that are harder to reach act as regulators for performance, it should follow that these goals should translate into a higher level of performance than goals that are easier to reach (Locke, 1968). Twelve separate studies were investigated by the author, and it was discovered in all 12 studies that the higher the goal the higher the level of performance. Even though participants with very hard goals did not reach their goals as often as participants with very easy goals, the formerly mentioned still constantly performed at a higher (Locke, 1968).

Another aspect related to the theory concerns the difference between goal/task assignment and goal acceptance (Locke, 1968). It is a known fact that most people will turn down difficult tasks and even more people will turn down tasks that are very hard compared to a task that can be characterized as only moderately hard (Locke, 1968). According to the author, once one accepts a hard task, the only logical thing to do is to give it your all and try your hardest until one decides to lower or abandon the goal. It is said that people who decide to give up on the goal when confronted by a hard task are the people who have made up their minds that the goal is impossible to attain and who no longer try to pursue that goal (Locke, 1968).

The previously discussed findings were all related to studies where all the participants were required to work on a similar kind of tasks and the primary topic of interest was how well the participants did the task (Locke, 1968). Following from this, the author also investigated what would change if the participants could choose either the difficulty of the task they would work on, or the type of response they would give. The results of the study showed that the people who were instructed to challenge themselves also performed on the highest level (Locke, 1968). It was also noted by the author that through time it has been proven that if you want someone to do something, usually the most effective way of doing it is to assign the person a goal or task. Nevertheless, it is

equally important to acknowledge that instructions do not necessarily nor automatically influence a person's goals or behavior (Locke, 1968). The author suggests that instructions will only have an impact on a person's behavior if the instructions are consciously accepted by the persons, and then translated into precise goals or intentions. Moreover, it does not suffice that one knows that an order or request was made, one also must know if the person heard it and understood it, how it was evaluated and what was decided to do about it, before the effects can be predicted and explained (Locke, 1968).

In everyday life instructions, can be thought of as the most commonly used incentive, yet psychological research has mainly focused on other forms of incentives such as money, knowledge of results, participation, and so on (Locke, 1968). First topic under discussion is money. Through research it has been discovered that one outcome of a well-executed incentive system is that it will inspire the employees to take on tasks and set goals they would not normally set or accept on their own (Locke, 1968). Therefore, in keeping with the author, money can be thought as serving to commit employees to tasks that they would not otherwise participate in.

Next is the knowledge of score. According to the author, the key thing about knowledge of score is not only if the knowledge of it is present, but also how a person interprets and evaluates it, and what goals are set consequently. Nonetheless, the form in which the knowledge of score is given can naturally have an influence on its effectiveness (Locke, 1968).

Time limits is also considered an aspect that can impact setting of goals and through that performance levels (Locke, 1968). In a previous research, it was found that when the participants were given extra amount of time they took longer to complete the task than those whose given time was limited (Locke, 1968). The author continues that the participants who had extra amount of time also directed themselves towards easier goals than those who were under minimal time limit. Once the time limits were removed both test groups set their goals on a same level, indicating that the effect of the different time limits seemed to play a part in the differing performance that followed, as this was non-existent when the participant could work on their own pace (Locke, 1968).

According to the author, participations by itself does not automatically imply higher output goal as this is dependent on the precise content of the participation process, i.e. the nature of the decision arrived at. It can be argued that the most direct effect reached with participation is to commit the participant to the decision that is reached, whatever it might be (Locke, 1968).

It is no secret that competition can act as a powerful motivator to increase effort in each task (Locke, 1968). Consistent with the author, this setting is visible in the world of sports as well as in business, and it is not unknown in academia either. In business setting, competition will boost the development of better and better offerings, given that there are firms who are interested in increasing their share of the market. Competition might also urge firms to increase their quality or lower prices to stay in business (Locke, 1968). The author continues that the effect of competition, be it between individuals or between groups, is contingent on the opponents of the competition as well as one's own

values. Like participation, competition might also bring about other effect besides goal setting, such as staying committed to goals that might be otherwise abandoned (Locke, 1968). For example, if Usain Bolt only ran against himself or a stopwatch the new world record might never have been set. Furthermore, competition prompts setting goals that might not even occur if there hadn't been any competition (Locke, 1968). For example, if Nokia had never developed a lower cost mobile phone, Sony Ericsson might not have thought about developing a similar model of their own.

In summary, it can be noted that there is evidence to support the position that goals and intentions cannot be overlooked when observing task performance (Locke, 1968). The findings of the author also point out that goals and intentions arbitrate the effects that incentives might have on a behavior. Moreover, for incentives to affect behavior it is required that a person recognizes and evaluates the incentive and based on this evaluation develops goals and intentions (Locke, 1968). The incentives discussed above are usually presented as a combination in real-life work situations (Locke, 1968). A person is hired and then instructed on what to do and how fast results are expected to be produced; he or she usually receives knowledge of performance either from the task itself or from people around him or her; he or she competes with other for promotion or bonuses; he or she is compensated with money for the work that he or she performs; he or she is evaluated by supervisor and sometimes can participate in the decision-making process (Locke, 1968). These incentivizing factors can be thought of as both getting a person to set and/or accept work goals and then ensuring commitment and persistence over time (Locke, 1968).

For managers, there is an important message in the theory. Managers should strive towards providing their employees with clear and specific goals (Terpstra, 1979). In addition, the goals should be challenging enough to be comprehend as challenging, but not too challenging to make them seem impossible. It can be noted that setting an overly difficult goal might be worse than not setting any goals at all (Terpstra, 1979).

Research regarding goal setting has been carried out in organizations to test the propositions of Locke (Terpstra, 1979). One of the most successful reviews has been that of Latham and Yukl (1975). The research discovered that the acceptance of goals and the motivation to achieve these goals is higher when the employees can participate in the goal setting process. Moreover, the authors discovered that the increase of productivity following from participative goal setting did not require monetary incentives or special prizes for setting these goals or attaining them.

Even though the research has been influential in the field of motivational research, some potential pitfalls have been discovered in subsequent research. Ordóñez et al (2009) asserted that goal setting should not be regarded as "over the counter" solution for increasing productivity, but used selectively and observed closely. The authors also claim that well-known corporate disasters which have been caused by reckless goal setting have received far too little attention in the management literature. Ordóñez et al (2009) in their research state that goals can cause the narrowing of the focus of attention which then might



blind an individual to important issues that might seem unrelated to the goal. The authors continue that when the time horizon for reaching goals has been set inappropriately, it might cause employees to only focus on short-term gains and forget the potential destructive long-term effect on the organization. Moreover, the authors also raise a point regarding the harmful effect that goal setting has towards intrinsic motivation, as the main aim of goals is to enhance extrinsic motivation. Along with Ordóñez et al (2009), Latham and Locke (2006) have also discussed the potential drawbacks of goal setting. The first notion by the authors is that if a person lack the needed knowledge and skill to reach a performance goal, giving that person a difficult goal might lead to worse performance than just telling that person to do their best. Moreover, the authors also state that sometimes goals can be regarded as a threat, instead of a challenge. A further problem that can be linked to goal setting is that it might cause stress in an individual, especially if the goals are challenging and there is an unreasonable amount of them (Latham & Locke, 2006). Finally, the authors also found that sometimes by reaching, or even exceeding, hard goals the expectations to reach even harder goals surface from the management's side. In other words, the employee is punished for his or her success (Latham & Locke, 2006). The authors continue that, this not only leads to subordinates being stressed, but can also lead to people leaving the organization altogether. Nevertheless, the authors remind that the effectiveness of setting goals is contextual, and therefore can have potential drawbacks. With sufficient farsightedness, the potential problems can be defeated or prevented entirely (Latham & Locke, 2006).

In relation to participative goal setting discussed above, proactive goals should be discussed. According to Parker et al (2010) motivation theories in the past have mainly regarded employees as passive and only reactive respondents. Nevertheless, there has been increased attention directed towards the role that employees themselves possess in actively shaping their environment (Parker et al, 2010). In essence, proactive goal generation involves an individual foreseeing and planning the goal to achieve a new and different future through making changes to oneself and/or the environment (Parker et al, 2010). The authors continue that, once a proactive goal has been set, proactive goal striving also must occur, otherwise no change to self or environment will occur. Moreover, individuals need to feel confident in their abilities to both initiate a proactive goal, as well as handle the consequences before acting (Parker et al, 2010).

In addition, it was discovered by the authors that individuals are more likely to both set and aim towards proactive goals when they perceive their tasks enjoyable, intrinsically motivating or as a source of a flow. Another reason, then the ones mentioned previously for aiming to fulfill a proactive goal, is to fulfill important life goals or to express important values (Parket et al, 2010). The authors also say that; an individual is also more prone to strive towards a proactive goal when they recognize that the envisioned future outcome is such that proves to be of importance for the individual themselves or for others. Finally, if an individual believes that he or she is capable of implementing an improved work method, and has a powerful reason to do so, he or she is more

likely to engage in proactive goals to better organizational functioning (Parker et al, 2010).

### **2.1.5 Work Motivation and Job Design**

Job design is an aspect that has established its importance for all kinds of organisations (Tims & Bakker, 2010). A well-designed job can have many pros for both for the company and for the employee. When a job is well-designed it may lead to an increase in employee well-being. This in turn can lead to thriving, which can be said to occur when an individual outdoes their existing challenges and transfers the experience into personal growth, wisdom and in the end for more meaningful life (Strümpfer, 2006).

Job design can be defined as the way jobs, tasks and roles are formed, executed and modified and how these formations, executions and modifications affect the individual, group and organizational outcomes (Grant & Parker, 2009). Job design is usually characterized as a top-down process where the organization creates the jobs and then selects the people with right knowledges, abilities and skill set for the specific job (Tims & Bakker, 2010). The authors continue that job redesign in turn, is a process where the supervisor or manager decides to alter something in the job, task or the role of the individual doing the task. However, through time, a new perspective of job redesign has been adapted, one that focuses on the individual. Ergo, employees are hired into the company and after a time the employee begins to change the job to ensure a better fit with one's abilities and preferences. When this takes place, the employees can be said to be responsible for their own work outcomes (Tims & Bakker, 2010).

In 1967 Hackman and Oldham conducted research on the aspects of work design and motivation. Based on this research a model of the possible motivational effects of work design was developed. The core of the model was formed by three distinct psychological stances; experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the work and knowledge of the results of the work activities (Hackman & Oldham, 1967). According to the authors, it should not be overlooked that self-generated motivation should be at the highest when all the before mentioned psychological states are present. If an employee truly feels responsible for the outcomes produced of a meaningful task, but never receives any feedback on how he or she is performing, it is doubtful that the employee can receive the level of internal reward that incites self-generated motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1967). Likewise, the authors continue, if an employee is aware of the results of the work but the task itself can be characterized as trivial, or if the employee feels no personal responsibility for the outcomes of the work, internal motivation is likely not going to be high. So, as a summary, according to job characteristics model, the overall potential for a job to internally motivating all the following should be true: first the job is high on at least one of the three job dimensions, these being identity, task significance and skill variety, that leads to the experienced meaningfulness of a job. Second the job should be high on autonomy, and finally the job should be high on feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1967). Moreover, in relation to the

previously discussed proactive motivation, Parker et al (2010) discovered that work design plays a key role in advancing proactive work behavior. The authors state that jobs characterized as enriched, which have the element of autonomy and complexity, have a major role in creating perceptions of control of the work environment and like so influence proactive motivation.

Berg et al. (2007) have researched the phenomenon of job crafting and the possible motivational effects of it. According to the scholars, it has been proven by previous research that employees across industries and job descriptions engage in job crafting. According to the authors, jobs that can be characterized as being high autonomy and discretion naturally offer more possibilities for job crafting, but even jobs appearing very rigid and constrained allow for some degree of crafting. An example of job crafting, in a job where the degree of autonomy is low, is a machine operator who works on an assembly line. One would assume that there is very little crafting that can be involved in this situation, as the work assignments are rigid and must be done per specifications. What the machine operator can do in terms of job crafting, according to Berg et al. (2007), is to form enjoyable social relationships at work, or to utilize his or her talents, and come up with a shelving system for all the important tools needed in the process. This is to say that job crafting is something that can take place with or without management initiation (Berg et al, 2007). The authors assert that even though job crafting does not have to be initiated by the management, managers cannot turn a blind eye to the role that job crafting plays in their organizations. All the more reason for managers to understand the effect of job crafting, is, according to Berg et al. (2007), the fact that it has potential to greatly influence the company's success or failure. Job crafting influences which tasks get completed, how these tasks are completed, and the interpersonal dynamics in the workplace. Therefore, managers simply must be aware of the situation. The authors conclude that, as the phenomenon, itself is complex, the task of understanding it might sometimes seem burdensome to the managers.

According to Berg et al. (2007) job crafting in its most basic form can be said to have three stages. First of these includes the employee being motivated to crafting of his or her job by one or more factors. This might occur due to many different reasons; such as desire for a different meaning of work, human connection or fulfilling a passion. Second, the employee discovers the crafting opportunities available and executes in one or more ways, for example thorough altering the set of tasks assigned to them or their thoughts about work. Finally, these crafting techniques are correlated with outcomes that might occur for the job crafter, such as altered belief about work or a whole new identity at work.

There are many considerable benefits of job crafting for the employee. According to Berg et al. (2007) if the job crafting is executed properly it can be a way to improve an employee's life significantly, while making important contributions to the workplace. As every individual at workplace is different it is challenging to create a job description that fits individual needs (Berg et al, 2007). According to the scholars, if the job designs are flexible and there is room to craft, jobs can be adapted over time to fit the employee's changing and

unique backgrounds, motives and preferences. Job crafting can also provide benefits, as well as occasional headache, for managers. According to the authors, for job crafting to be successful, managers should design jobs in a manner that leaves room for employees to tailor their own jobs in accordance with their motives, strengths and passion, while also meeting relevant organizational goals. Managers should take into consideration that highly restrictive job design may limit employees from positively influencing the way in which they perform tasks and taking on additional tasks (Berg et al, 2007). However, the authors state that for all this to be successful managers must ensure that it is understood that job crafting is acceptable and even encouraged as long as it is in line with organizational goals.

In conclusion, it can be stated that job designing is not just something that occurs in a top-down manner, employees can and will participate in designing their own jobs. Therefore, job crafting should be regarded as an essential factor in how employees conduct and experience their work. It must also be taken into consideration that job crafting can be beneficial as well as costly for both the individual as well as the organization. Therefore, in front of the manager lies the challenge of how to foster beneficial crafting while avoiding harmful crafting (Berg et al, 2007). Finally, to overcome this challenge manager need to recognize that effective job crafters are the ones using their jobs as resources to achieve advantageous outcomes, so unlocking and supporting this kind of ingenuity is the key to harvesting the benefits of job crafting (Berg et al, 2007).

## **2.2 Women and Work Motivation**

### **2.2.1 Women, Family and Work Motivation**

Throughout time it has been of interest to researchers why women and men have equivalent levels of job satisfaction even though women's jobs can be regarded as less satisfying both intrinsically and extrinsically (Lambert, 1991). Previous research has developed and assessed two different hypotheses related to this matter: the expectation hypothesis and value hypothesis. The expectation hypothesis considers that although men and women are equally attracted by the same job features, women possess lower expectation of their workplace and therefore feel more satisfied than men would in similar jobs (Lambert, 1991). Consequently, women seem to feel equally satisfied with their jobs as men do when differences in the job conditions are not controlled and more satisfied when they are controlled (Lambert, 1991). The value hypothesis in turn disagrees with the notion that men and women are equally drawn to a job with similar features. The value hypothesis argues that satisfaction with one's job depends less on whether one receives what is expected and more if one receives what is valued (Lambert, 1991). Therefore, the author states, on average women seem as satisfied with their jobs as men do, because women place more value on some job conditions than men and less value on others.

When these hypotheses have been investigated in the past, the researchers have found mixing evidence regarding the job-satisfaction of men and women (Lambert, 1991). Previous research has asserted that men place greater importance on extrinsic features of a job, such as pay and security, and to things such as advancement, self-determination, autonomy, accomplishment and achievement (Murray & Atkinson, 1981). In comparison, women seem to place greater value on social aspects of the job, and the relationships established with supervisors and the company itself. There have been some indications that women also place value on the importance of interesting and varied work (Murray & Atkinson, 1981).

It has been proposed by many authors in the past that family responsibilities and roles is one dimension of extra-workplace determinants which may influence how a worker perceive one's job (Lambert, 1991). A research conducted by Pleck (1977) suggests that the penetrable boundaries between work and family roles are asymmetrical between men and women. For women, the demands of family-life are more likely to intrude their working role than it would for a man, the author asserts. This vulnerability of the women's work role to family is a major stressor for women on their job, since the "sex role norm" is that women assume the prior responsibility for the family, conflicts with the norms of women's job role (Pleck, 1977). At this point, it must be noted that this divide might not be as visible any more in the year 2017 as men and women have become more equal on who assumes the responsibility of the family, but it is still a valid point for this thesis, as family related matters still today might cause stress for women, when considered against their role in the family and at work. Therefore, it might be that the difference of the perceived effects of family responsibilities, as well as family roles can in part help explaining similarities and differences of men's and women's involvement in a job and intrinsic motivation (Lambert, 1991).

### **2.2.2 Gender Differences and Job Satisfaction**

In the study conducted by Lambert (1991) it became evident that men and women are similarly affected by the intrinsic aspects of their jobs. Moreover, it was discovered by the author that, as previous research also suggests, social relationships prove to be of significance for women workers only. Having supportive relations with co-workers is an important factor when determining women's job satisfaction (Lambert, 1991). Furthermore, according to the author, having supportive supervision has a positive connection to women's intrinsic motivation. This implies that supervisors can help indicate the non-economic rewards of women's job, perhaps through ensuring that these rewards are there and are also accessible (Lambert, 1991). In general terms, the results of Lambert's study (1991) strongly stress the importance of meaningful work for the determination of how women and men experience their jobs. The author asserts that, regardless of sex, jobs that provide an opportunity for task variance and

chance to do work that is personally meaningful increase job satisfaction, job involvement and intrinsic motivation.

Clark (1997) also found in his study that men tend to prefer the extrinsic aspects of work whereas women tend to place higher value on the intrinsic aspects of their work. It was also discovered by the author that job security and relations at work have a significant effect on women's work motivation but have virtually no effect on men. Research conducted by Brown and McIntosh (1998) agrees with Clark (1997) in their discovery that women report higher job satisfaction with social relations. The authors conclude that this proves to be one of the reasons why women present higher rates of satisfaction than men. A paralleling view of job satisfaction asserts that women find satisfaction in jobs that allow them to interact with others in a supportive and cooperative manner, even though their jobs might not be characterized as demanding or challenging (Mason, 1995). The key message of this view is that women's socialization is based on values, attitudes and behaviors that can be characterized as being communal in nature, contrary to men whose socialization reflects agentic values and behaviors (Mason, 1995).

A general observation made by Clark (1997) was that women report their job satisfaction to be significantly higher on most kinds of job satisfaction than men do, despite controlling a large number of individual and job characteristics. A general interpretation implies that the reason why women report higher job satisfaction may be a so-called "transitory phenomenon" caused by the improved position of women in the labor force compared to their expectations (Clark, 1997). The author claims that after the labor market rewards of women will not improve any longer, the job satisfaction of men and women should be more identical, and there should be no gender differences in regards to rewards relative to expectations. This point might be the reason why more current research has some degree of difficulty finding differences between the job satisfaction of men and women.

Research conducted by Varca et al. (1983) found that differences in job satisfaction between men and women are in conjunction to organizational rewards and the differences are mediated by the level of occupation. It was discovered by the authors that upper level men and lower level women tend to be more satisfied with their pay and promotions. The research could not find an explanation as to why women on the lower levels of the organization reported fairly high pay satisfaction despite receiving smallest salaries (Varca et al, 1983). It was deduced by the authors that pay satisfaction might be contingent on other factors than purely income. One explanation also offered by the authors was that women in the lower levels of the organization might appear to be more satisfied even though their salaries are low, because they make pay related comparisons with others in the same group, and therefore their expectations remain low.

In summary, more and more attention has been devoted to work motivation and satisfaction between the genders, and even though there are some conflicting results, much of the research in this area seems to conclude that the difference in the amount of job satisfaction and motivation between men and

women seem to be fairly non-existent. The satisfaction, and consequent motivation, is simply found from different aspects.

## **2.3 Pay and Work Motivation**

### **2.3.1 Importance of Pay**

Few things are regarded as vital to individual's well-being and standard of living as income (Leana & Meuris, 2015). It is often said that we "work to live", entailing that we want to support a satisfying life for ourselves and the "nearest and dearest" to us, yet, income often is more than just a way for satisfactory quality of life. For many of us "living to work", which refers to our jobs and the income that follows, is often important part of our lives and self-identities (Leana & Meuris, 2015). It can also be stated that income plays an important role in major life decisions, such as occupational choices, job changes and even marriage and family decisions (Leana & Meuris, 2015). Moreover, the authors continue, income is a way to denominate social status and is even used by policy makers as an indication of the well-being of individuals, demographic groups and even entire societies.

Previous research has shown the importance of pay from many different angles. A study conducted by Guzzo et al. (1985) on 98 reports assessing productivity, revealed that compensation programs, when applied right and in the right situations, can have a noticeable positive effect both on productivity and output. In his turn, Jurgensen (1978) researched over 57 000 job applicants of Minnesota Gas Company during a 30- year period of 1945 to 1975 on their job preferences. The results derived from his study, indicated that the answers of men and those of women are quite different. The author discovered that for women the type of work was by far the most important factor whereas the benefits stood alone in the last place. The author also noted that the importance of pay remained constant for women across all the different age groups studied during the 30-year study period.

It has also been noted in research conducted by Trank et al (2004) that when asked people are more likely to underreport than over report the importance of pay as a motivational factor. The author states that, if employees underreport the motivational importance of pay, and HR practioners take their answers as face value, there is a risk of seriously underestimating the motivational potential of pay. This underestimation of pay as a source of motivation can stem from the fact that people might misjudge their reaction, for example, to an offer of a higher paying job. Or, due to dominant social norms that regard money as a less dignified source of motivation than things such as challenging work or one that contributes to the society (Trank et al., 2004). The authors review on a previous research related to pay and motivation found strong evidence for the fact that pay is a powerful motivator and even stated that pay is the most powerful motivator of performance. Furthermore, the authors state

that the extensive usefulness of money, as well as its wide range of symbolic meanings, implies that money is definitely not a low-order motivator. Instead, it can aid in reaching practically any level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, including social esteem and self-actualization (Trank et al., 2004).

The authors also state that; it is important to recognize the type of individuals that most likely are motivated by pay that is dependent on performance. Previous research has shown that individual pay for performance systems, such as merit pay, individual incentives or bonuses, are most important to those characterized as high achievers, high performers and people with high self-efficacy and need for achievement (Trank et al, 2002; Trevor et al, 1997; Turban & Keon, 1993). Moreover, it has been shown by previous research conducted by Lucas et al. (2000), that people that can be characterized as extroverts place greater importance on pay than people characterized as introverts. It must be noted however, that even though pay can be taken as a powerful motivator, its actual effectiveness for motivational purposes is dependent on a range of individual and situational factors, also including the way how pay and the different pay schemes are administered on a practical level (Trank et al., 2004).

### **2.3.2 Money Attitudes and Pay Satisfaction**

When considering the concept of pay, according to previous research, it always needs to be considered in the context of attitudes a person has towards money, and through which money influences the life in general (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006). It can be noted that money attitudes play a significant role all throughout our lives and not just our spending habits (Roberts & Sepulveda, 1999). Money attitudes can be said to influence our work performance, political ideology, charitable giving, and attitudes regarding environment, these being just a few important situations that money attitudes influence (Roberts & Sepulveda, 1999).

There is also the so-called "fundamental dilemma" of pay satisfaction which entails the triangular relationship between the level of pay, satisfaction with the pay and the wider role that job satisfaction plays (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006). Four principal issues that are involved with the triangular relationship that will be examined next in relation to low paid workers. The first issue relates to the question whether the individuals in question perceive their pay as low. This question contains two components: the perception of target wage and how this target has entered the mind of the individual (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006). Mirowsky (1987) found in his research that people tend to feel more underpaid than overpaid, and that benchmarking your pay against others in the group is common.

The second issue is related to the assessment of job satisfaction factors within the job that counterbalance pay dissatisfaction (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006). According to the authors, despite individual differences, the chance for being compensated through the job satisfaction process provides one possible explanation to the combination of low-pay and high satisfaction. Moreover, the au-



thors state that there are two arguments related to this. First, workers with higher pay might decrease the importance of pay in their satisfaction equation, and as a consequence become unsatisfied by more important aspects of their work. Second, low paid workers have a possibility to easily see the threshold point to “target earnings” and once those earnings are reached, be they however low, other job related factors enter the job satisfaction equation.

Third issue is concerned with separation, more specifically whether person sees pay as a holistic part of job satisfaction or merely as a separate entity (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006). In the general line of research pay is usually seen to be part of job satisfaction and not a separate entity (Thozhur & Szivas, 2006; Brown & McIntosh, 1998). The authors affirm that, if pay is to be seen as part of job satisfaction then the high level of job satisfaction together with low-pay becomes harder to explain.

In keeping with the research, the fourth and final issue is related to organizational factors and more specifically to the role of pay system and structure. In a study conducted by Heneman et al. (1988) it was discovered that pay-for-performance conception is significantly related to pay-level satisfaction.

### **2.3.3 Motivation and Pay Satisfaction**

The topic of employee's satisfaction with pay and other comparable benefits has been an area of long-time interest for psychology researchers (Curall et al., 2005). The issue has also been a primary concern for employees and employers along with researchers (Williams et al, 2006). Why the area has been such an “interest magnet” for years for both researchers as well as organizations? One explanation might be that pay satisfaction may be viewed as a necessary condition for an organization to reach the goals of their compensation systems, mainly employee retention and motivation (Williams et al, 2006). More importantly, per the authors, if the employers understand what affects pay satisfaction, they can influence the level of pay satisfaction that the employees experience.

In the research conducted by Igalens & Roussel (1999) on the relationship between compensation package, work motivation and job satisfaction, the authors discovered that under certain conditions individualized compensation of exempt employees can present to be a source of work motivation. The first condition for this, according to the authors, is that individualization must be brought forward through consistent pay rises and not through bonuses. The second condition is that these mentioned consistent pay rises must be linked to the individual efforts of the said employees, because if the link is not perceived the employee might end up being less motivated (Igalens & Roussel, 1999).

A research conducted by Williams et al (2006) revealed that among the core job characteristics, discussed in the study conducted by Hackman and Oldham (1967), autonomy and task feedback were found to be most strongly related to pay satisfaction. The found relation between autonomy and pay level satisfaction can be thought of as an example of a relation that is likely to occur due to the variation between job characteristics and the actual pay (Williams et al, 2006). Moreover, according to the scholars, employees might be more accept-

ing with the level of pay received if their job offers them performance feedback or task-provided feedback. This might establish realistic expectations for pay levels. The authors state that pay levels that are at par with expectations usually lead to higher pay level satisfaction. Finally, it can be noted that the results derived from the research of Williams et al (2006) are consistent with job redesign literature, stating that the presence of core job dimensions' affects job satisfaction and therefore also pay satisfaction.

In addition to the presence of core job characteristics and their effect towards pay satisfaction, Ruiz-Palomino et al (2013) also stated that employers should consider other elements of work, such as enriching job characteristics which might make employees more satisfied with their pay. The characteristics used for enriching jobs and increasing job's motivating potential might also satisfy human needs that pay is not able to satisfy, and therefore can further compensate possible pay dissatisfaction (Ruiz-Palomino et al, 2013). Finally, as noted by the research conducted by Brown & McIntosh (1998) lower-paid employees appear to be no less satisfied with their work and their long-term expectations than their well-paid fellows. The authors state that this indicates that people might be willing to give up short-term gains, if there is a possibility for long-term future with the company. This could be one of the reasons why low-paid workers still present high levels of work motivation, despite their pay.

## 2.4 Summary of Key Theories

Before moving on to the method section, it is necessary to summarize the discussed theoretical aspects. Starting from motivation, as has been stated many times, it is a concept that has been researched through time in many ways, from many different angles and from different stakeholder's interest in mind. In this thesis motivation was firstly observed through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The theory focuses on satisfaction of simpler needs, before moving on to more demanding needs. The very basic needs start from the need to food and water and progress all the way to the highest need, concerned with an individual becoming the best version of him or herself. This particular theory provides a good foundation from which motivation can be primarily regarded. The second theory presented was Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory which more deeply dives into the concept of motivation and helps to better understand what different aspects of work and organization can be grouped as dissatisfactory and what can be grouped as motivators for employees. After Herzberg, concepts that are also instrumental to the discussion of motivation were discussed. These are extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation entails that an individual is motivated simply by the task itself, while extrinsic motivation asserts that an individual is motivated by the reward gained from performing an activity. Following this motivation related to goal setting was discussed. This theory is more specific in terms of motivation and focuses on how different goals can affect employee productivity and performance. Moreover, aspects relating to

proactive goal setting and the requisites for employee led change at work. Finally, job design and job crafting was discussed. This section focused on how jobs should be designed to be the most motivating for employees. In addition, the requisites for employee led job redesign and crafting were covered and their effect on employee work motivation. These different motivation theories will be utilized for analysis of the empirical data and provide interesting points to focus on for the interviews as well.

The second bigger theoretical aspect is focused on women and their researched work motivation. It should be noted that more and more attention has been devoted to job motivation and satisfaction between the genders and, even though there are some conflicting results, the majority of the research in this area seems to conclude that the amount of job satisfaction or motivation between men and women seem to be fairly non-existent. The satisfaction or motivation is simply directed toward different things, as women seem to present more intrinsic characteristics towards work motivation in comparison to men who seem to be more extrinsic in their work motivation factors. Another aspect that has been researched quite a bit in relation to women's work motivation is the effect of their family roles, their possible conflicting nature with women's work role and how this affects women's job motivation. Previous research has found that family roles and the impact of family altogether can influence women's job-motivation. This is especially the case if women's family role and job-role are conflicting.

Finally, aspects of pay and motivation were presented. It goes without saying that pay is an important aspect of our lives and has a significance in many different aspects in our lives. Money has powerful potential as a motivator and, according to previous research, employers need to recognize that effect, apply their pay systems accordingly. Furthermore, it is important to recognize from their staff, based on their personality, which compensation system works best for whom. Moreover, previous research has also found the connection with the existence of core job characteristics and their effect towards pay satisfaction. It has been proven that pay satisfaction has a connection with employee's job motivation and this connection in some cases might be remarkable.

The economy, and the world, that we live in is under a constant change and development, therefore the need for updated employee motivation practices also exist. Moreover, the subject of employee motivation will never go out of demand, since, as mentioned, motivated workforce is a signature of a well-functioning organization. Like has been noted, there is plenty of previous research related to work motivation and the different viewpoints of it. The topic has been researched plenty by different authors representing different interest points of business. Furthermore, previous research also exists in relation to women and their work motivation, but less than about work motivation in general. Also, previous research exists on the relation of job motivation and pay. However, the combination of work motivation of women employed in low-paying job has not received sufficient attention in the previous literature. The current research attempts to fill this gap and from there stems the purpose for

this research, which is to explore what motivates women in low-paying jobs in Finland.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design & Research Strategy

The research design chosen for this research is exploratory research. Exploratory research can be defined as research that focuses on finding new viewpoints to a phenomenon, to ask questions and thus, to evaluate the phenomenon from a new viewpoint (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 670). This design was appropriate as the purpose of this research was to find new viewpoints on the phenomenon of work motivation of women in the low-paying jobs. Through qualitative interviewing, which will be discussed later, questions regarding the phenomenon were asked from participants, who were selected due to their capacity to give insights on the topic. This was done to be able to evaluate the phenomenon of women's work motivation in low-paying jobs, in a new light.

The reason why exploratory research design was chosen for this research was that the aim of the thesis was to research the phenomenon of job-motivation in women working in low-paying jobs. As all the components of the present research's aim have been covered in some form or another in previous research, the aim was to find new viewpoints of this phenomenon. Therefore, the exploratory research design was best suited for reaching the aim of the research and to find answers to the presented research question.

Stemming from the research design, and the general aim of the research, the research strategy chosen for conducting this research was qualitative research strategy. Qualitative strategy entails that the research is predominantly more interested in words and what people are saying, than the quantification of the answers in the collection and analysis of data (Bryan & Bell, 2011, p. 27). In addition, qualitative research places emphasis on the inductive approach to the relationship formed between theory and research, and implies that the emphasis is placed on generating theories from the research (Bryan & Bell, 2011, p. 27).

Why then was the qualitative research strategy chosen as the primary way for executing this research? Like noted by Bryman and Bell (2011, p. 27) qualitative research focuses on words and the experiences of the participants instead of quantification of the data collected. In order to reach the aim of this research, it would not have been feasible to mainly see if there is a relationship between work motivation, women and low-pay. The aim of the research demanded to see what kind of relationship there is and how these three just mentioned aspects truly relate to one another. Therefore, by using qualitative research strategy it was possible to examine the true view points and experiences that the participating women have regarding their work motivation. Furthermore, it was possible to examine the things that positively affect it, as well as, what role does pay has when considering their work motivation. To be able to truly fulfill the aim of the research and to answer the research question presented, it was important to hear the stories of the women who participated and to analyze their

words, experiences and their stories, instead merely trying to quantify their answers into numbers or numerical representations of the phenomenon. Furthermore, to be able to follow the explorative research design and to be able to evaluate the phenomenon under research in new light, it was necessary to utilize qualitative research strategy.

### 3.2 Sample

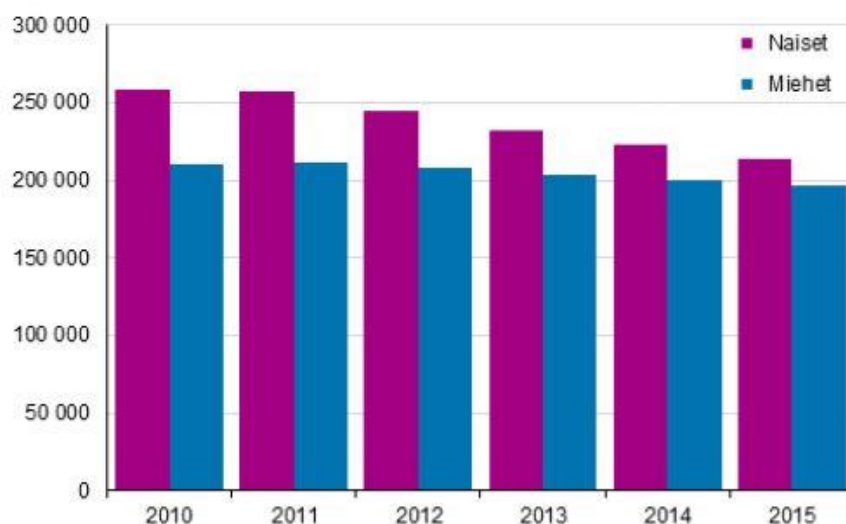
The sample chosen for this research was women who are currently employed in jobs that can be considered as being low-pay. The age of the participants varied from mid- 20's to mid-60's. The age of the participants was not a dominating factor when choosing the participants, although it was preferable that the participant had at least some working experience in their profession. What led to the inclusion in the sample, was that the participant is a female and currently employed in a low-paying job in Finland. The professions of the participants varied greatly and represent many different job descriptions. Some participants represent the same industry, but even then, some differences, such as time in the profession or work assignments were present. According to Suomen Virallinen Tilasto (2016), in a family of two kids and two adults, one adult can earn approximately 2400 euros a month to be considered low income. In this study the participants were not asked how much they earn a month, as this might have bordered to be too personal. Based on their known profession, their approximate salaries were investigated from official websites, such as Suomen Virallinen Tilasto, after which the final inclusion of each person in the sample was decided on.

Stemming from this, the sampling technique utilized for selecting participants for the sample was a mix of purposive sampling and convenience sampling. By definition, purposive sampling represents a form of non-probability sampling, and the sample is chosen strategically in a way that is relevant from the point of view of the research question (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 442). As the purpose is to understand what motivates women employed in low-paying jobs in Finland, the participants were chosen so that they were relevant from the research question's point of view, as well as their relevance for trying to understand the phenomenon under investigation. Additionally, convenience sampling is a sampling method that utilizes participants that are available to the researcher due to accessibility (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 190). The participants were familiar to the author from before, for example from previous workplaces. Nevertheless, the participants were primarily chosen for the research because of their relevance for the research question and not simply because of their accessibility to the author.

Like said before, the sample consist only of women and the research does not aim to make comparisons between the work motivation of women and men. The reason why this choice was made was that currently in Finland the low-paying jobs tend to employ more women than men. This setting is likely to

change in the future, but as of right now the situation is that women represent the majority in these types of jobs. Therefore, it is important to attempt to understand the aspects relating to the work motivation of the majority and then with subsequent research, and with more time, to also focus on the men also employed in these types of jobs. Moreover, the interest to research only women also stems from the researcher's own personal interest to, after working with fantastic women in many of these different jobs characterized as "low-pay", see why they choose to remain in these jobs and what motivates them in their day-to-day tasks. Furthermore, it is also fruitful for the managers who are in charge of companies operating in these industries to understand what motivates their women employees. Through the knowledge of this, they can evaluate their current motivational practices and, if necessary, alter these practices.

Figure 1 below by Suomen Virallinen tilasto (2016, p. 7), presents the amount of protractedly low incomeed women and men in 2010-2015 according to whole income statistics. In figure 1, blue bars represent men and purple women. As can be seen from the graph women that are considered as being low income has been greater than the amount of men for the past 5 years. Even though the difference has somewhat evened out during the observed time period, the number of women still exceeded that of men even in the year 2015. It also must be noted that in this graph everyone who earns less than 60 % of the median income, indicating that women who are unemployed, are represented. Nonetheless, working women are equally represented in it, and therefore it is justified to try uncover their sources of work motivation, and reasons why they choose to stay on these jobs that yield them low income.



*Figure 1:* Amount of protractedly low incomeed women and men in 2010-2015 according to whole income statistics.

### 3.3 Data collection

The data collection for this research was conducted through interviews. The reason why interviewing was decided to be the most suitable option for collecting data, was that the aim of this research was not to find out if there is a relationship between job-motivation, women and low-pay. Instead the aim was to see what kind of relationship there is and what factors influence the relationship between these three aspects. Moreover, interviewing provided the type of data that was needed to answer the presented research question. Through interviews it is possible to access deep and rich data regarding the phenomenon under research, which would not be possible to reach through surveys (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad, 2010, p. 100). Moreover, interviewing is a flexible and adaptable method of data collection. The data is collected on the participant's terms, which increases the chances of getting participants to do the interviews, as well as getting authentic answers and stories from them (Krishnaswami & Satyaprasad, 2010, p. 101).

The type of interviews conducted were semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviewing entails that the researcher has themes and some specific questions to cover, but their use might vary from interview to interview (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 374). Semi-structured interviews were chosen over fully structured interviewing because it gives more leeway to the researcher to ask questions that are not specified on the interview guide, but still includes some questions that will be asked from all participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 467). Moreover, the interviewee also has more leeway in how to response then he or she would in a fully structured interview or when completing a survey (Bryman& Bell, 2011, p. 467). Semi-structured interviewing was also chosen due to its flexible nature, and because through them the emphasis can be on what the interviewee sees as important when explaining events, patterns and forms of behavior (Bryman& Bell, 2011, p. 467).

In this research, the interview guide consisted of 11 questions (see Appendix 1) that were asked from each participant. Some additional questions were made for each participant based on their answers and/or to clarify some points that were made. The questions were structured with the help of the theoretical framework, and with the research question in mind. It goes without saying that the main aim of the questions was to be able to gather suitable data to answer the research question. Moreover, the interview guide was conducted so that the terms used in the questions would be understandable for the interviewees. Therefore, unambiguous terms were used to ensure that the participants could understand what was asked of them and then to answer. Different mix of questions ranging from introductory to specifying questions, depending on each individual interview, were utilized. The questions were pre-tested on a person not included in the sample, to make sure that the questions were understandable and to see if modifications had to be made.



Altogether 14 interviews were conducted and they lasted from 20 minutes up to one hour. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, when possible. On few occasions this was not possible, mostly due to distance, so in these cases the interviews were conducted via telephone or Skype. All the interviews were recorded on two different devices to ensure that the recordings would remain safe and additional notes were made during the interview itself. Afterwards the interviews were transcribed to facilitate the analysis later.

Before the start of the interview the interviewees were told what the interview was about, that the interview will be recorded, and if some questions seemed unclear clarification should be asked. Like said, it was explained that the interviews would be recorded, but that only the interviewer had access to the recordings and the transcripts made from the recordings. Also, the interviewees were told that the transcripts could be sent to them for inspection in case errors or misinterpretation had happened, or if something wanted to be added or clarified.

### **3.4 Qualitative Thematic Analysis**

The method of data analysis utilized in this thesis was qualitative thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, along with grounded theory and the development of cultural models, asks more involvement and interpretations from the researcher's side (Guest et al, 2012, p. 11). The authors state that thematic analysis shifts away from the counting of explicit words or phrases and turns the attention to identifying and describing the implicit and explicit ideas within the data, these being the themes. Codes generated in the process are usually developed to identify the themes and linked to the raw data as summarizing elements for later analysis (Guest et al, 2012, p. 11).

The reason for why thematic analysis was chosen for the main method of data analysis for this research, was that thematic analysis can be said to be the most useful method for catching the complexities of meaning in a textual data set (Guest et al, 2012, p. 11). Moreover, it is also the most common method of analysis utilized in qualitative research (Guest et al, 2012, p. 11), which is why it was also utilized in this research. Furthermore, the process of thematic analysis allows for guideline-oriented, problem-centered, and focused interviews and many types of data such as focus groups and other forms of interviews (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 70).

The basic process of thematic analysis is divided into seven different steps. The process begins by initial work with the text, which indicates that the text produced from the interviews is carefully read and particularly important passages of it are highlighted (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 71). In the next phase the coding process begins, and the second step is to develop the main topical categories. These topics usually stem from the research question and have already impacted the way in which the data has been collected (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 71). According to the author, in the first coding process the researcher works through the

text in a sequential manner and assigns text passages to categories. After the main coding process the text passages should be compiled to each of the main categories, and subcategories should be determined for categories that the researcher wants to differentiate (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 75). Once the sub-categories have been defined, the second coding process can begin. Here, coded text passages within each main category are now assigned to newly constructed subcategories (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 79). The final, and important, phase of the process is the analysis and presentation of results. (Kuckartz, 2014, p. 84).

In practice the process was executed as follows. Firstly, the transcripts were reviewed and important sentences or phrases, in relation to the research question were highlighted. Then, all the highlighted sentences were organized under each question to be able to review their similarities and differences. Following from this, the data was reviewed again to construct first order concepts (Figure 2). Some of the first order concepts include, for example customer contact, increased responsibility at work, et cetera. After this, the data was viewed again to see what second order concept could be derived from the found first order concepts and to see if more first order concepts would be found (see Figure 2). After the formation of the second order themes, the aggregate dimensions were formed based on what would simply describe each theme found.

As the form of analysis is thematic analysis, the first order concepts, second order themes and finally aggregate dimensions are closely related, and constructed, based on what surfaced many times from the data. The concepts presented in Figure 2 are also only related to that of work motivation, as it is the core of this study and of the research question. Nevertheless, in relation to other aspects of the study, such as pathway to profession and educational background, similar technique was used to look for, and construct, the final themes in these sections. After the final themes, or aggregate dimensions, were decided, the presentation of results and subsequent analysis was constructed around them.

### Non-monetary motivators

#### **First order concepts**

Customer contact  
Co-worker support and interaction

Not anxious about going to work  
Been doing the same job for years  
Time at work goes by quickly

Influence on job design  
Possibility to craft one's job  
Freedom to execute

Customer comments  
Increased responsibility at work  
signaling appreciation  
Full working hours

Customer comments  
Co-worker feedback  
Manager comments

#### **Second-Order Themes**

Interaction with other people

Enjoy going to work

Job Design

Your effort is being noticed

Comments on the quality of work

#### **Aggregate Dimensions**

Quality of work

Appreciation

Challenging oneself  
Turning customer experience from negative to positive  
Feeling of success  
Setting harder challenges

Chance to participate in training  
Learning new ways of doing things

Overcoming challenges at work

Chance to develop oneself

Personal Development

### Monetary motivators

Demanding nature of the job  
Means to achieve an end

Importance of money recognized  
Motivation found from other sources

Money as a primary motivator

Money as a second order motivator

Overall motivational effect of money

**Figure 2:** Data Structure

## 4 FINDINGS

### 4.1 Participant Backgrounds

The participants represent a large variety of industries ranging from care to retail. Generally, in Finland, people employed in these types of jobs as the participants, can be characterized as receiving low-pay, when compared to other industries. Surely, some pay related differences might be present between a person employed by the municipality or a person employed by an entrepreneur or private corporation, but these differences are not likely to be substantial. Among the participants of this study about half were employed by the municipality and the rest by a private entrepreneurs or private corporations. The participants' experience in their respective fields ranged from less than one year in the job to over 30 years of experience.

Interviewee	Time at occupation	Industry
A	7 years	Care
B	~ 30 years	Nourishment
C	3 years	Beauty
D	> 1 year	Beauty
E	14 years	Retail
F	30 years	Care
G	30 years	Nourishment
H	1 year	Travel
I	15 years	Retail
J	2 years	Care
K	30 years	Manufacturing
L	4 years	Travel
M	15 years	Nourishment
N	3 years	Education

Table 1: Participants' industry and time at occupation

The participants' educational background ranged from being educated on the secondary school level, indicating the vocational level, to having a degree from university of applied sciences. However, majority of the participants held a secondary school level degree. In figure 3 by Official Statistics of Finland (2015) presented below, the median earnings per educational level are shown. The median income of a person educated on the secondary school level equals roughly the same as the amount that can be considered as low-pay in Finland.

Therefore, it is possible that the level of education can be one of the explaining factors to why some women are employed in these low-paying jobs.

Median of total earnings of full-time wage and salary earners by level of education in 2015

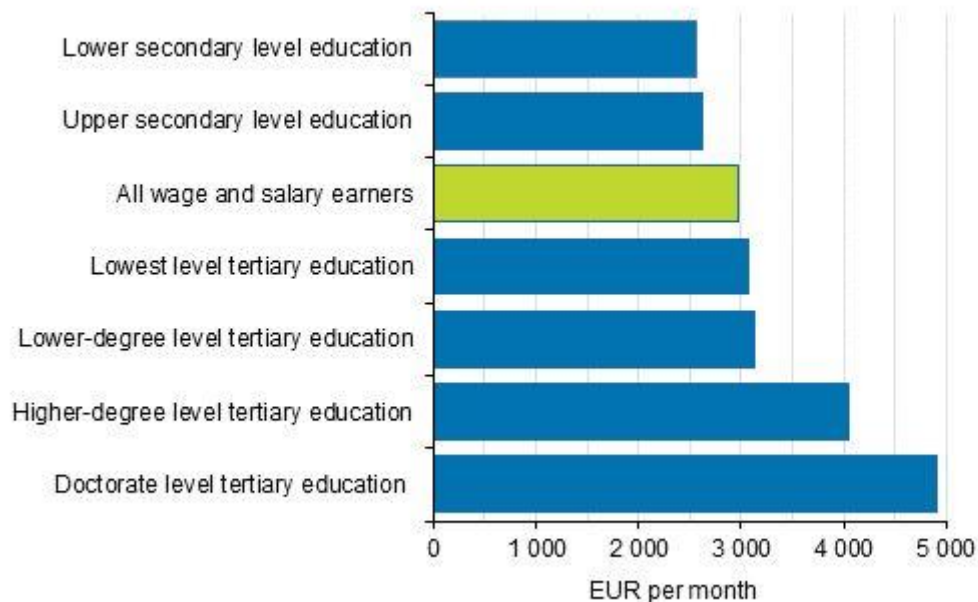


Figure 3: Median of total earnings of full-time wage and salary earners by level of education in 2015

## 4.2 Pathway to Profession

The pathways to the profession that the participants held are somewhat different, but amongst them four distinct themes could be found. Firstly, a portion of the participants had ended in their profession since it had been one that they had been wanting to pursue from early age. As the desired profession, was one that had been set since early age, also the education and other aspects of life had been arranged so that this career related dream could be realized.

*"I have always wanted to be a hairdresser. I have wanted to be a hairdresser ever since I was a child. Always wanted to be one, there has never really been any other options"*

Within this theme it was emphasized by the participants that ending up in their profession can be related to a one sort of dream come true. The connection between the experienced work motivation was not directly stated by the participants. Nevertheless, it is likely that it only positively contributes towards their work motivation, as being in their respective professions fulfills a dream that originates from a while back.

The second pathway to profession the participants possessed was that entered to because of a coincidence or some other compelling circumstance. On

most occasions the coincidental pathway was not considered as negative, but something that has produced something positive for the lives of the participants:

*"I just drifted, because I had to acquire a job quickly and through connections I got the job that I have now and then I just stayed."*

*"I went to see if the hospital would have a job for me for a month and well.. I have had a long month since it was August of -76 when I went to work there for a month."*

Whatever the overall emotions towards this pathway to profession, the participants in general seemed happy to have acquired a job, even if it had not been one imagined since early childhood. Nonetheless, if some motivational comparison between the participants whose profession was something that they had actively pursued since childhood to those who just drifted into their profession was made, it could be assumed that maybe the fulfillment of a childhood dream would contribute extra towards work motivation than knowing that one just drifted into a job. Nonetheless, no comment regarding this was made by the participants.

The third alternative route to profession was through someone else's recommendation. This recommendation may have come from a teacher or guidance counselor from early on, or alternatively from a colleague or even from a supervisor at a previous job or profession.

*"My guidance counselor in junior high told me that, listen you can go to high school but in your certificate, all of your theoretical subjects are satisfactory and all of the practical subjects are excellent. So, she thought I should go to vocational school and gravitate to a profession where it is possible to do things with your hands. I have been very grateful for that advice because I like my job very much."*

In connection to this pathway, the participants emphasized the positive outcomes that these recommendations have produced in their work-lives. Gratitude towards the people who gave these recommendations was also something that surfaced from the data. It was also emphasized by the participants that without these recommendations they might have gone somewhere entirely different in their careers, and might not have ended up in the professions they are right now. Moreover, the participants who had found their career paths through someone else's recommendation seemed very motivated in their jobs and emphasized how much they like their current jobs.

The final theme found in relation to pathway to profession was the path through career change. The reason for the career change may have been the unsuitability of a former occupation. Equally, the reason for changing could have been after realizing that the employment potential within that field is not profitable in Finland, or to increase skill set to be able to provide more varied services to customers in the future:

*"I am sort of a profession changer. I wanted to try something new, based on my own strengths and career aptitude tests it showed that this would be a good fit for me. And I wanted to change the office world to a more humane profession."*

*"First I completed a confectioner degree, after which I studied to become a make-up artist and did that work for a while. Then I realized that in Finland you can't support yourself with that so then I studied to be a hairdresser too."*

This route to profession was also not considered as a negative but a needed and welcomed change. The change usually had been initiated by the participant herself, therefore it can be assumed that the change had been well thought over and necessary, and through that contributory towards creating work motivation. Also, when the change had been initiated because the previous profession was experienced as unsuitable, or the earning potential narrow, the change was also indicated to have positively contributing towards the overall quality of living for the participants. Therefore, the participants' answers reflected positive attitudes towards the change.

### **4.3 Work Assignments and Motivational Effect**

The work tasks of the participants ranged, naturally, due to the requirements of their respective industries, organizations and job titles. Even though the job titles and corresponding job assignments varied greatly, they all possessed some commonalities as well. Firstly, each of the jobs included in this study involved customer service in one form or another. The customers were not necessarily the common type which might come to mind when one hears the term "customer", but nevertheless can be thought of as customers. When asked about the job assignments the following was said:

*"It is mostly about keeping up the store in general, depending of course on how busy we are, but now that it is not so busy, we maintain, clean, organize, unpack merchandise, do laundry and of course take care of the customers. I guess for the pay level it is what you can expect. In that sense, yes, I like that the job is varied. I could never do the same work from morning till night every single day. I like variance."*

Variance and the desire for it was emphasized by participants throughout the interviews. To emphasize, not a single participant who mentioned this aspect of their job, said that it is something negative or motivation decreasing. Therefore, its importance simply cannot be overlooked. The participants stated that they enjoy variance because it brings something different to each workday, and keeps their jobs interesting. The participants also stated that it is the different job assignments, as well as the encounters with different kinds of customers, that bring this wanted variance to their workdays.

Another aspect that rose from the participant's answers relating to work tasks was that they value the opportunity to focus on their assigned tasks and not being asked to divide their attention amongst various different tasks. It was regarded as important to be able to focus on the core work and not worry about the added-on tasks that might cause the job description to seem fragmented:

*"If I could just focus on making the food. That I would be able to prepare the food of the day in peace and I wouldn't have to focus on cleaning or anything like that, which is included in our job assignments. That I could focus the time to just making the food and when the food of the day is prepared then I could move on to the next day's food in peace, and the making and measuring of it."*

Even though women seemed to enjoy variance in their jobs, they still valued the opportunity to be able to focus on the task at hand without having to split their focus between many different tasks, as is evident from the quotation presented above. It could even be deduced from the data that splitting focus between tasks that are perceived as important and the tasks perceived as less important, could to some extent decrease women's work motivation.

## **4.4 Sources of Work Motivation**

The participants were asked questions relating to what produces happiness at work, what makes the participant feel that the job that they do is right for them and what has produced the feeling of success at work for the participant during the last year. The emergent themes will be discussed next in keeping with the themes presented in Figure 2. The sources of work motivation discussed in this section are all non-monetary in nature, and later findings related to monetary motivations will be presented.

### **4.4.1 Quality of work**

Under the aggregate theme "quality of work", secondary themes such as interaction with people, job design and being able to enjoy going to work, were summarized. First theme under discussion is interaction with people. This theme was present in some form or another in nearly all the answers provided by the participants. The interaction with people was related to both establishing good interaction and relations with customers and even more than that, having good relations with colleagues:

*"You could say that it is my thing when I see the customers. I could not imagine myself sitting in a room alone with a laptop, it would suffocate me quickly. I have to see the customers and that is the thing for me, I love to see thankful and happy customers."*



*"Colleagues are really an important part, and you can rely on them for support if things get tricky or if you are not completely sure about what to do in some situations."*

The participants emphasized on many occasions how much relationships at work impact the enjoyment derived from work and consequently the amount of work motivation felt. It was not specifically stated by the participants, but it seems logical, that dysfunctional relationships at work would also cause dissatisfaction which would, in time, most likely affect their overall sense of work motivation. From the interviews, it became evident that having interactions with customers is an aspect that brings the wanted variance to their workdays, but it is the colleagues that really have an impact on the thriving at work and the establishment of one's place in the group. As one participant put it:

*"Compared to my old job where we had a super team, I have to say that it [relations with coworkers] has a pretty big meaning. After all, you see these people every day."*

Second theme in relation to quality of work was thriving/enjoying going to work. It must be noted that thriving or enjoying coming to work might not be the first thing to be pinpointed as a source of work motivation. Nevertheless, amongst the respondents of this study, it surfaced on many occasions and therefore proved to be an issue of importance for work motivation:

*"Generally that I enjoy going to work. I never think that I would want to do something else. I have never thought that I would only do this work for a little while."*

Even though it might be easy to ignore thriving at work as a source of work motivation, the importance of it should not be overlooked. In all its simplicity, by thriving at work and enjoying walking through the doors of the workplace can be a tremendous source of motivation. The participants did not explain in detail what it specifically is that makes them feel like they are thriving at work. It might be that they cannot pinpoint exactly what those factors are, or it can also be a combination of things, such as the ones discussed in this thesis.

Final motivational source related to the quality of work was job design. The job design of the jobs that are characterized as low-pay are generally rather rigid, and at the first glance seem like they do not allow for much design or job crafting. The amount that one could influence the job design and the possibility to engage in job crafting was very much dependent on the job that the participant was in. Some jobs allowed for more discretion in terms of how one performs their jobs and in what order, whereas others had more restricted tasks and task order, sometimes even mandated by law. Nevertheless, most of the participants felt that they had substantial control over their job design and regarded it as important in terms of their motivation. Job design can be regarded as a holistic part of the factors that create motivation at work. Especially, in the cases where job design was executed well and allowed for some modification and discretion from the employees' side.

*"I get to influence [my tasks] very much. And it does have an impact on my work motivation. I am very pleased with the fact that I can have free hands and use my head. It would not be fun at all to have everything designated exactly."*

The desire to be able to influence your own doings and to have even some degree of control over the work assignments that you perform daily was stressed in most the participants' answers. Some, however stated that they do not get to influence their tasks at all. The ones who did not have the need to influence their own job description, over the years, had come to terms with their inability to influence their job designs, and stated that it does not affect their work motivation:

*"No we don't get to influence the tasks, our tasks are determined beforehand and we have no other choice. When you are in terms with the nature of this job it does not affect your motivation."*

Even though the participants who did not have the chance to influence their job design stated that it does not affect their work motivation, it was difficult to assess whether this actually is the case. Maybe if these employees would be given a chance to influence their own job designs, they might notice an increase in their work motivation resulting from this new chance. Moreover, they could get an added sense of responsibility of their own work, which also would contribute towards their overall work motivation.

The interviews revealed that nearly all the employees felt like they were on the right profession, largely due to the reasons discussed above. Liking what you do and thriving at your job were one of the most common responses when asked for the reason why the participants felt like they were on the right job/profession. One of the participants even considered her job to be more of a hobby than work:

*"Even though I feel like my job is like a hobby, I mean I could do this as a hobby as well, I also feel like it's a real job too."*

Even though the clear majority of the participants felt like the job they are at right now is the most suited for them, there still were few respondents who felt like this was not the case. A few of the respondents felt that they were whether not at all on the right job or profession, or that they were in the right profession but the job they were at right now is not the one they would want pursue for years. A few were in the middle, in the stage that could maybe be characterized as "settling for your faith".

*"No I don't really feel like this job is right for me. Somehow this feels like a stepping stone, that somehow during this point of my life it feels like a good passage."*

*" Sometimes I feel like could change [jobs], but then I think that I am in a certain age and if I leave now I will lose all the benefits."*

*"No I don't feel like this job is for me. Well, because it is not what I actually want to do."*

These above presented quotes were the three themes amongst the ones that did not feel like they were on the right job. The participants were clear on what the main reason is why they do not feel like their job is for them. The first two quotes presented above are self-explanatory, but the final quote could be explored further. The participant did not provide any further explanation to why she does not feel like what she currently does is not actually what she wants to do. She noted that she does not really know herself what she would like to do, but knows that what she currently does is not it. She also indicated that the job she is currently at has been acquired because of family obligations and something just had to be acquired quickly. It was not stated by the participant whether this is among the reasons why she is not feeling like her job is for her. Nevertheless, it is possible that the conflict between her family-role and the consequential occupational choices impacts her work motivation. However, only three out of the fourteen participants experienced these emotions, therefore they remained a minority. The rest felt like they were exactly where they were supposed to be, even if the current workplace did not feel the most suitable, the profession that they were in nevertheless does.

#### **4.4.2 Appreciation**

The second bigger overarching theme combining the two subthemes of one's work effort being noticed and comments on the quality of one's work, was named appreciation. Firstly, a theme that was very strong within the responses was the desire to receive feedback on the work conducted. The desired feedback could come from either the customers, or from a supervisor and/or colleagues. Nearly all the respondents emphasized the importance of receiving feedback when considering their sources of work motivation. The amount of feedback received varied of course from work place to work place, as others received it less than others. But the perceived importance of it remained constant:

*"When a customer gives public feedback [on company Facebook page] it makes you feel good. And, if your colleague has said that wow that looks amazing, how did you do that and could you teach it to me too."*

A consensus among the participant was voiced accordingly:

*"I couldn't do the sort of work where you just work alone, it is very numbing. And then when you work on just one project alone, you become critical towards your own work."*

The final quote further proofs the importance that feedback has, not just for work motivation, but also for conducting the work itself. From the very basic standpoint, one must know if the work is even being performed according to

plan or specification and therefore, feedback acts as a key component in performing one's everyday work.

In addition to feedback received from supervisors, customers and colleagues, the importance of getting the feeling that one's effort is being noticed and appreciated at work also surfaced. The need to feel appreciated seemed to be tied to the supervisor showing their appreciation towards the effort and work of their employees, more than the appreciation received from customers or co-workers. Usually those women who did not receive any positive feedback, or other indications of appreciation, emphasized the need for this more than those who felt like appreciation towards them was indicated sufficiently.

*"We are low-paid and it is definitely not the pay that makes me happy, but right now what makes me really happy is the fact that I am very appreciated. I know that I am appreciated and if I was not, they would not come and ask me when can we come go lunch. I am liked and I have been told on several occasions that I take care of my job and 600 kids at the same time."*

As is evident, majority of the participants do receive thanks from their supervisors, but there are also ones that seldom or, in the worst case, never receive indication of appreciation from their managers. As can be deduced from the quote below, even when the employee perceives that she never receives thanks from a manager, it is still regarded as tremendously important, and perhaps these employees would appreciate verbal recognition even more than those participants who are used to receiving it.

*"It would be important [to receive thanks] but that doesn't really happen. They don't do that in our organization. Now that I think about it, it is kind of like you have to sort of praise yourself and remember to "tap yourself on the shoulder" and say good job."*

Within the presented quote there is a strong emphasis on the motivational effect that seldom, or never, receiving thanks from your manager has. Even though the participant herself did not explicitly comment on the motivational effect, it can be clearly deduced from her answer.

#### **4.4.3 Personal Development**

When going through the material collected from the interviews, the third overarching motivational aspect was related to personal development. The two sub-themes that together constructed the theme of personal development were overcoming challenges at work and the chance to develop oneself. These aspects also proved to be of significance when considering work motivation:

*"Succeeding. When you have set yourself a challenge and you beat that challenge and when the customer experiences it too."*

Challenging oneself, and wanting to be challenged, seemed to be a topic that motivated women across industries and job descriptions. The challenges of course are unique and dependent on the person setting them, but the sensation that follows from overcoming the challenges and its implications towards work motivation is something that is common. It was also stated that the participants want to be involved in setting the challenges for themselves. Moreover, it can be deduced that beating a challenge you have set for yourself could contribute towards your motivation even more than beating a challenge set by someone else.

The desire to improve oneself and to acquire new skills was very much present in the participants answers as well, and its importance towards developing work motivation was inevitable:

*"You get to develop yourself. I am not stuck in one place, doing what I have been doing for the past 20 years. And I always think about how some dish could be prepared differently and then when you suggest it to others and they agree that yes, it can be done successfully like that too."*

*"I have been able to participate in training and received the training I have asked and then get to do those things I have been trained to do. I have been able to progress and plan what I want to do. And I am very grateful for it."*

The participants did not make a distinction between developing oneself through formal training or just development that followed from gaining experience in one's job, and the motivational effect gained. Therefore, it can be assumed that all kinds of chances for personal development lead to increased work motivation. The participants also highlighted the positive emotions that being able to develop yourself in one's job creates towards the manager and the company itself. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for managers to recognize these development needs in their staff, and in accordance with resources to offer access to possibilities and pathways that facilitate the feeling of personal growth.

## **4.5 What Can a Manager Do?**

The participants of the study were also asked what they think that their supervisor/manager could do to further increase their work motivation. The participants of this study for the most part seemed very motivated in the work that they do and therefore some skepticism existed from the author's side whether suggestions would surface, but they did. Generally, four distinct themes rose from the data in relation to this issue.

First of the four themes, was that the supervisors should voice their appreciation towards their employees more. This aspect was already discussed previously, but it surfaced in relation to this theme as well, further proving its importance. The voicing of appreciation, according to the participants, could come

in the form of an activity that the employees can engage in outside of their work, such as Christmas party or other types of recreational activity that is possibly sponsored by the company and that occurs outside of normal working hours:

*"All the things done together with the staff, like recreational days and the sorts that ensure good team spirit. If sometimes you have something to do together that is not job related, and they motivate and cheer up in their own way even though they are not strictly work related."*

Another way for the manager/supervisor to voice their appreciation is simply to say it out loud. According to participants a simple "thank you" in the midst of ordinary working life usually is the way to go if interested in boosting employees' work motivation:

*"The phrase Thank You. Small but tremendously important, and you hear that way too seldom. I am good at my job but I am never thanked for it. That would be it, to hear "thank you", I would not need bonuses or nothing but to get thanked. It would mean so much to me that someone would just pat me on the shoulder and say thank you, you did a great job."*

The voicing of appreciation was the strongest theme that emerged from the answers provided by the participants as a thing that managers could do to further increase the work motivation of their employees. Saying thank you and encouraging the employees in the midst of everyday tasks rose in the interviews more often than having the company throw a Christmas party or other recreational activity. Even though events organized by the company outside of working hours, and giving the opportunity to engage with your colleagues in events outside of normal work were also seen as important in terms of boosting work motivation. Still, they were not regarded nearly as important as voicing appreciation in everyday situations. It could be assumed that receiving personal thank you, and through that indication that one's work is appreciated and effort valued, is hoped for from manager because it gives a sense of personal motivation. Instead recreational activities are usually directed towards the whole staff, therefore providing less personal sense of accomplishment and motivation.

The second very strongly indicated desire in relation to what the manager can do to increase work motivation, was that the employer would increase the employee's working hours to the amount that can be considered full working hours. In Finland that amount is usually 40 hours a week. This aspect naturally did not influence those participants that were already working the full amount a week. For many of the participants who highlighted their desire for full working hours, having these hours would represent continuity and consequently financial security. Moreover, it would also show the employers appreciation towards the employees and the work that they do. It must also be stated that among younger participants, it was more common not to reach the desired 40 hours a week, but there were also a few participants who had longer careers within their respective industries and still did not have full hours a week. The

older participants who did not have full working hours voiced their need for this and its motivational effect more than the younger participants. This theme is closely related to the quality of work perceived by the participants who do not have these full working hours. Therefore, in Figure 2 this aspect is also presented in conjunction to one's effort being noticed at work.

The third theme that emerged from the responses was the desire from the employee's side to receive more goals from their managers and/or supervisors:

*"It always motivates when a goal is set and then when you receive it you receive some sort of a reward."*

This desire also paralleled the motivational factors of the job and the motivational boost one gets for overcoming challenges set. Therefore, it is no wonder that this is also expected or wished for from the employer. This theme was not as strong among the data as was the firstly mentioned voicing of appreciation, but it surfaced enough times to be included.

The final theme that rose in the interviews in relation to what the manager can directly do to improve the work motivation was to increase job rotation within workplaces. Again, it must be stated that this desire is very much in line with the variance factor that the participants of this study appreciate in their jobs. Therefore, it is no wonder that this too is desired from the employer's side:

*"There could be more job rotation, but since everyone does not how to do everything yet that is not possible."*

It is interesting to note that where job rotation was already a practice the wishes for its continuance and increase was still present, but in those workplaces where this was not a practice the need for job rotation did not surface. This is most likely because you simply cannot miss something that you have never experienced. Yet, even the women who did not have the possibility for job rotation appreciated the quality of variance in their work. Therefore, it sounds logical that they would find motivational aspects in job rotation, if provided a possibility for it.

## **4.6 Money and Work Motivation**

The final bigger theme within the data addressed the issue of money and its effect on the work motivation that the participants experienced. As the amount of pay received by the participants was principally low, the participants were asked how influential they perceive their pay to be when considering the factors that impact the amount of work motivation that they feel.

All the participants acknowledged the importance of receiving pay from the work done, and the meaning that receiving pay has for one's everyday life. Also, all the participants acknowledged that the pay that they receive is from

the lower end of the pay scale. It was not mentioned by any of the participants to what they benchmark their pay against, or if it is just a general perception gained from media or some other forum. Furthermore, it was a consensus among the participants that the main motivation towards their work does not come from pay but from other meaningful things within their work.

*" This sounds terrible to say but it would mean more to me if I was thanked than if I received extra 500 euros."*

*"[money] is one motivator. But the amount received does not affect my motivation as I have taken on this profession because of interest and since the job is so varied. If other aspects are in line then pay fades to the background. Mental aspects of work are just as important as the physical ones. When the mental side is taken care of, it helps with the physical sides as well and gives extra boosts to it."*

It became evident when analyzing the data gathered that instead of finding work motivation from pay, the participants instead, again, named aspects such as receiving praise and having the mental aspects of work in good condition as the main motivators in their work. The participants also emphasized the importance of variance within their work and how having that aspect present offsets the importance placed on pay in their motivation equation.

In the few instances where some of the participants experienced money as an important motivator was when the job was perceived very physically demanding and receiving pay was seen as a compensation for that.

*"When you think about the nature of this work it [money] is pretty important as it is pretty demanding."*

Another instance where money was a great contributor towards work motivation was when the money received was "means to an end". This usually indicated that pay was a way to gain financial independence from, for example, one's parents, or a way to save up to buy a house. This viewpoint was more common among the younger participants who did not have such long careers behind them, and were generally more in the beginning of their life's path. As the years in the work-life added up, the way of viewing their work changed and the work was something more than "means to an end".

*"At this moment my motivator is that I want to purchase an apartment and I'll take every shift that there is to offer because I just want to get the money saved and buy that apartment."*

Finally, none of the participant mentioned a pay for performance scheme or its existence within their workplace and therefore its effectivity for boosting motivation cannot be evaluated in relation to low-paid women. It can also be assumed that, when considering the type of job the women are engaged in, pay for performance schemes are not that widely utilized, which can be the reason



why this aspect did not surface. This aspect was not asked from the participants in the interviews either, as it was assumed that these types of pay schemes are usually not utilized in the lower paying jobs in Finland. Moreover, as money proved to not motivate these women, it can be further assumed that these types of pay schemes would not increase their motivation.

## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Work Tasks

As was presented in the findings section, the job tasks of the participants vary according to their different job titles and industries. What was common about the jobs though was that they included customer interaction, either in its most usual form, or in a form that might not at first strike as being customer service but in fact is.

Like was discussed in the analysis section, a strong theme that rose from the gathered data was that the job tasks of the participants', even if different, all included the element of variance. Similarly, it became clear from the results that this aspect is highly valued. This finding is in line with the research conducted by Murray and Atkinson (1981) who found that women place value on variance and interesting work. Similar findings were also present in Lambert's (1991) study, where it was discovered that despite of gender, jobs that provide an opportunity for task variance and chance to do work that is personally meaningful increase job satisfaction, job involvement and intrinsic motivation. The findings of Lambert, along with the findings of Murray and Atkinson, and the findings of this research together highlight the importance of having variance in work tasks when trying to achieve higher work motivation, especially when women workers are concerned. It was also common among the participants to say that they would never want to be caught in a boring job that just includes sitting in front of a computer repeating the same tasks day in day out. This further highlights the importance of variance and its direct effect towards work motivation.

A second characteristic relating to work tasks was the appreciation towards being able to focus on the core tasks and not having to divide attention between things that seem trivial in relation to the core work. This finding slightly contradicts the one discussed immediately above. The women in this research seem to want variance but not too much of it, so that they are still able to focus on what they consider as key activities. This aspect could be compared with Herzberg's (1966) Motivation-Hygiene theory, where it was discovered that one of the things that cause the most dissatisfaction at work are working conditions. It can be assumed that not being able to focus on your core tasks are part of one's working conditions. Therefore, it would be clear as to why women find it de-motivating having to split their focus to things that do not seem important. A further explanation to why being able to focus on core tasks presented as important was that the mentioned hygiene factors, according to Herzberg (1966), do not have the possibility to provide a person with sense of growth, which plays a key role in the development of motivation. Moreover, to achieve the feeling of growth a person must gain sense of achievement from tasks that one considers as meaningful, and since the hygiene factors do not relate to the core task, they fail to provide that meaning to the individual (Herzberg, 1966, p.

78). Therefore, it can be assumed that since the “extra tasks” do not relate to the perceived core tasks, they fail to produce the sensation of self-growth, which in turn directly impacts the amount of work motivation felt. As they fail to produce work motivation the participants valued more the chance to be able to focus on those meaningful tasks that do. Even though it is often thought that “multitasking” is natural for women, managers should not fall victims to this “wisdom”.

## 5.2 Work Motivation

### 5.2.1 Theoretical Implications on the Quality of Work

As was discussed in the results section, the first overarching theme in relation to work motivation was named the quality of work. The first sub-theme presented in relation to sources of quality of work among the participants was the social aspects that are present at work.

The positive effect of having good interaction and relations at work to work motivation surfaced from the data. This is consistent with Maslow’s (1943) Hierarchy of Needs and the notion that belongingness needs, namely the need to form affectionate relations and the need to find one’s place in a group, are an important source for work motivation. Nearly all the participants mentioned that establishing good relations with customers is something that brings them joy or other positive emotions when reflecting their work. Even more than that, the importance of having good colleagues and the relations established with them was stressed in nearly all the interviews. This even further proves the validity of Maslow’s (1943) findings and the notion that belongingness needs have a big role in the work motivation equation. Moreover, as Herzberg (1966) also found in his study that the factors that cause the most dissatisfaction at workplace are, among other things, interpersonal relations and how the lack, or poor quality, of them can cause extreme dissatisfaction at work. Relating to this, it can be assumed that if the relations at work would not be functional, the work motivation received from the job would decrease substantially. This is an important aspect that the managers must acknowledge in everyday work situations and strive towards maintaining good relationships and when needed, resolve conflicts as swiftly as possible.

These findings are also consistent with the findings of Murray and Atkinson (1981), Mason (1995) and Clark (1997). Murray and Atkinson (1981) in their research discovered that women tend to place more value on the social aspects of the job, which then positively contribute towards their work motivation. As nearly all the participants named the importance of social relationships in one form or another, be it with customers or with co-workers, and by judging their overall levels of work motivation, the relationship between the two cannot be questioned. Mason (1995) found that women find job satisfaction in jobs that allow them to interact with others in a supportive and co-operative manner.

This is also evident from the data and from the participants' answers presented in the results section. Women rely on their coworkers and their knowledge in tricky situations regarding work assignments and in other aspects of life as well. Clark (1997) found that relations at work have significant effect on women's work motivation, but in turn have practically no effect on men. Relating to this finding Mason (1995) found that women's socialization is based on values, attitudes and behaviors that can be described as communal in nature, whereas men reflect agentic values and behaviors. Men were not included in the sample of this research so no interpretation can be made of their values, but it can be said that the findings of both Clark and Mason can be proved to be accurate in relation to women, based on the findings made from the data of this research. The participating women of this research seem to be very motivated by the good relationships established with the people around them. Their answers regarding the sources of their work motivation reflect communal values and the importance of having people around and establishing well-functioning relationships with them.

The second sub-theme that surfaced in relation to quality of work from the participants' answers was finding work motivation from simply thriving at work and/or enjoying what you do. It can be assumed that if one does not thrive at work, or even at some level enjoy going to work, there are very slim chances at being able to motivate these employees. However, among the participants of this study, for the most part, this was not an issue. This notion should at least put their managers' minds at ease. A further assumption that can be made is that if one achieves the sense of thriving and enjoying the work they do, then the work must be important and meaningful for them. According to Lambert (1991), a chance to do work that one experiences as meaningful has a direct impact on the amount of job satisfaction and through that job-motivation, that an employee feels. From this it can be deduced that the participants do feel that their jobs are meaningful to them as they get the sense of thriving in their work and enjoy going to work, even on the "bad" days. It goes without saying that it is not possible to enjoy or thrive at work every single day, but the general aim should be that the employees would have that feeling for most of the time. As can be deduced from the quotations presented in the findings section, having the sensation that you enjoy being at work and the sense of thriving at work is an important link within the work motivation equation, maybe even a fundamental aspect of it. It could be even stated that achieving work motivation is nearly impossible without feeling like you are thriving at work.

However, it must be understood by the managers that not all the employees will be motivated in their jobs, no matter what the quality. Nonetheless, the reasons for why an employee cannot find motivation in their work is something that can be considered by the manager. Like shown in the results section, an employee could see the job as a stepping stone for something else, which can be assumed to be more common with younger workers who are in the start of their career paths. The motivation of these employees could be helped by offering them developmental opportunities in the form of education or job rotation, to gain various skills that could be utilized later. The impact of each job assign-

ment and the skills gained towards their career goals could be emphasized so that the employees can find their motivation from that.

Employees, whose age impacts their motivation to stay at their current job, could be motivated through expressing the appreciation from the management's side that the employee has stayed with the company for so long. As was shown in the analysis section, the desire to get praised and feel appreciated at the workplace was of utmost importance to participants. The employee whose age and the possibility of lost benefits hinder them from seeking other options could find motivation in the work that they do, if they felt increased appreciation of their professional abilities and the years devoted for the company. This showing of appreciation could come from their immediate supervisor and even from higher ranking managers of the company.

Finally, if the employees feel like they are in a job that is just not for them, a manager could help them to find "their own thing" and to support their desire to look for the profession that truly is "for them". In the long run both the employee benefits as she feels like the company does not want to hold her hostage, but encourages her to find herself, and the company can find a new employee who maybe feels more like the job is right match for her.

Moreover, as the focus of this research is women and their job motivation, an employer could dig deeper to the reasons as to why the chosen field does not feel "right" for someone. For women family responsibilities, can many times be the reason why they end up in the profession they are currently at. Women might perceive that they are primarily responsible for providing for their children and might therefore settle for a profession that can be obtained quickly, instead of getting to fulfill their dreams and aspirations. This aspect has also been researched by Lambert (1991), who found that family responsibilities and roles are an extra workplace determinant which can have an influence on how a worker views one's job. What is more, according to Pleck (1977), for women the demands of family-life are more likely to impact their working role than it would for a man. Moreover, this vulnerability of women's work role to family is a major stressor for women on their job as it is assumed that women take the prior responsibility for the family, and this conflicts with the role that a woman has at their job (Pleck, 1977). This aspect was also revealed by the interviews, especially in the context of not feeling like the job one is doing is for feels right. Moreover, this is also an aspect that a manager could consider. By emphasizing that both roles can exist at the same time and the company empathizes with the two roles, a woman worker who has this role conflict could feel more motivated as the strain caused by the role conflict will be lessened.

Ultimately, the manager can always resort to motivating his/her employees with extrinsic methods. This usually involves money or other prizes that will be gained upon successful completion of a task. This method of motivation will not work forever and can create conflicts among the employees, especially if others are motivated through monetary means and others are not. Therefore, it is more advisable to try to motivate the types of employees presented above through different means than prizes/money.

### 5.2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Appreciation

The second bigger theme found within the data relates to appreciation. First subtheme under this category was the desire to receive feedback from the work that has been done. Maslow (1943) distinguished that people have esteem needs that need to be fulfilled before moving on to the higher order needs. These needs originate from the fact that all individuals have a need for receiving a high evaluation of themselves, need for self-respect and need for the esteem received from others (Maslow, 1943). The esteem needs can also be divided into two categories, the second of which is according to Maslow (1943, p. 381) "the desire for reputation or prestige, recognition, attention, importance and appreciation." Moreover, Herzberg (1966) also found that among the five strong determinants of job satisfaction receiving recognition from the work done was very important. These findings are also visible in the answers of the participants of this research. It seems that women value the feedback received from people around them and this is especially highlighted in the context of work. Therefore, it appears to be important for women to gain recognition and appreciation, in order to feel satisfied and motivated at work. This aspect is directly comparable to the findings of Maslow (1943) and to those of Herzberg (1966).

Also, the type of feedback received, or the lack of feedback altogether, can be one of the primary determinants of how motivated women feel in their jobs. Ryan and Deci (2000) in their research on the classroom learning found that positive performance feedback has a positive impact on the amount of intrinsic motivation that a person possesses, and that negative or non-existent feedback has a decreasing effect on intrinsic motivation. As intrinsic job motivation is the "desirable mode" of work motivation, it is important for managers to understand the importance of positive performance feedback towards achieving that. Moreover, as Maslow (1943) also determined, if esteem needs are neglected it leads to feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness and consequently motivation will not surface. This lastly mentioned was also readable from the answers of those participants who felt like they did not receive adequately or at all feedback from their work. Their comments reflected the sense of inferiority and the direct negative effect that the lack of feedback had on their work motivation. One participant even stated that in her organization she must give feedback to herself as she does not receive feedback from her supervisors or anyone else. She indicated that it would have a tremendous effect on her work motivation to receive feedback, especially from her supervisor. Therefore, to influence the amount of work motivation that women feel in their jobs, the importance of giving positive feedback should be considered by managers.

As is evident from the results, the knowledge of the fact that positive feedback is not something that "the company does" negatively impacts the amount of motivation that the employee feels towards the job and organization. If the company and supervisor will not engage with providing positive feedback that the employees need to feel motivated, in the long run this most likely results in employees feeling inferior and de-motivated. This in turn will have direct consequences for the company as the productivity and engagement of the

employees will decrease. If the manager notices employee's need for esteem at workplace he or she can emphasize the possibility for reaching this need through increased effort given at work (Terpstra, 1979). Furthermore, Latham & Pinder (2005) also asserted that in the ordinary working life the esteem needs can be satisfied by providing employees with recognition. However, the manager cannot expect that the employees will increased performance endlessly in the hopes of receiving praise and recognition, but it must be provided as a steady stream to reach the full motivational effect. Moreover, giving praise just for the sake of giving praise is not the way to go either. A careful balance must be established to extract the full motivational effect.

The third theme discovered somewhat parallels the one discussed above, the voicing of appreciation from the employer's side and its important effect on women's work motivation. Again, those participants that had received appreciation in their work continue to value this and emphasized the positive connection that this has on their work motivation. The ones who strongly indicated that appreciation towards them was never shown at their place of work hoped for it and even stated that receiving appreciation would be more valuable than additional monetary compensation. The need for receiving appreciation is also closely related to the fulfillment of the esteem needs (Maslow, 1943). The importance fulfilling this need becomes very evident from the data, and the direct impact of the fulfillment of this need on the perceived work motivation cannot be denied.

### **5.2.3 Implications on Personal Development**

Personal development was the third aggregate dimension constructed in relation to sources of work motivation. Under this dimension the theme of overcoming challenges at work surfaced often. As is highlighted from the participants' answers presented in the analysis section, the need to have challenges at work, the chance of beating these challenges, and the sensation that follows from when an employee overcomes the challenge has tremendous motivating potential. Again, referring to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) the highest level of motivation that we all strive for is self-actualization, to be the best version of ourselves. In working-life the need for self-actualization can be considered in the working place by giving employees the chance for creative and challenging jobs and tasks (Latham & Pinder, 2005). When these types of challenging tasks are provided to the employees, and the sensation of succeeding that follows greatly impacts the level of motivation that women get from their work, as became clear from the data. Like Herzberg (1966) suggests in his research, managers should look for job enlargement when trying to find ways to provide employees with the possibilities for reaching the sensation of success through setting challenges. One of the aspects relating to Herzberg's (1966) proposal for enlarging jobs is to have an open end to a task description. By doing this it allows for creativity from the employee's part which then facilitates psychological growth (Herzberg, 1966). It could be deduced that by giving employees an opportunity to form their own job description a little, would also help them set

challenges for themselves and consequently when beating challenges, they have set for themselves, their motivation towards work would increase. It can then be assumed that motivated employees in turn will perform more effectively.

Moreover, according to Amabile (1993), an individual can be said to portray intrinsic motivation when one looks for enjoyment, satisfaction of curiosity, or personal challenge from the work that he or she is doing. As the participating women in many occasions named that overcoming challenges at work brings them tremendous motivation, a connection could be made that their motivation, at least in this respect, is intrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is defined as motivation which results from performing the task itself and not from the possible rewards gained from it. Therefore, it is the kind of motivation that employers should strive towards. So, to have employees that are looking for challenge at work is nothing less of a positive sign for the employer, and this should be facilitated as far as possible.

Moreover, as was noted by the research of Parker et al (2010) an individual is said to portray proactive goal setting when one is actively envisioning and planning a goal to achieve a new and different future through changing the self and/or the environment. As the participating women often emphasized the need to have goals and to be able to participate in goal setting, they can be said to be proactively motivated in their goal setting. It was also noted by the authors that individuals are more prone to set and aim towards proactive goals when they feel like their tasks are enjoyable, intrinsically interesting or are a source of flow. The data revealed that the participating women, for the most part, felt like their tasks are enjoyable and intrinsically interesting. Therefore, it is no wonder that the women want to set goals for themselves to better their work environment and their own future. Therefore, proactive goal setting and the mentality for it seems to be present in the participants.

Nonetheless, there is a word of caution for the managers in relation to goal setting and the possible motivational effect. Managers need to pay attention to the fact that the goals set are clear and specific, as well as challenging enough to be perceived as challenging but not challenging to a point where they seem impossible to reach (Terpstra, 1979). The challenges set at work for the participants of this research seemed appropriately challenging to create that desired motivational effect. Employee involvement in the goal setting should also be considered from the management's side. In the research by Latham and Yukl (1975) it was discovered that acceptance and motivation to reach a goal is higher when the employee can participate in the goal setting process. This fact was also evident from the data gathered. Many of the participants were very glad and motivated when the challenge they beat was something that they had set for themselves. This also indicates that the participants have been a part of the goal setting process. Therefore, it is evident that employees, and especially women, should be included when setting challenges that are related to them.

The participants of this research also valued the opportunity to develop themselves at work and in life in general, and for them it was one of the key components of work motivation. In every situation in life, especially in one that lasts as long as your time spent working, one is naturally looking for opportuni-



ties to develop oneself further. People in general do not want to stay the same all their lives, but to become the best versions of themselves by developing themselves in all aspects of life, work being no exception. This desire for personal development and the appreciation to the possibility to develop oneself further is very much in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the top level of the pyramid, called self-actualization. Like previously discussed, the need for self-actualization, per Maslow (1943), stems from the desire to reach one's full potential, and to reach the full level that one can reach. The reaching of the highest level of the pyramid will facilitate the employee to feel increased level of motivation, which in turn will show on the work efforts.

Moreover, the employee should take the lead when wanting to improve their situation at work, as was noted on the theoretical section regarding job crafting. From taking responsibility of bettering one's situation, the employee gets the sense that they have the possibility to impact their own work and job role by improving the level of know-how. Moreover, it has also been proven by prior research that when an organization provides the employee with an opportunity for self-development, the employee becomes prosocially motivated and in turn wants to benefit the organization as well with the newly acquired knowledge (Lock & Dysvik, 2009). Therefore, by offering the employee a chance to develop, not only does the organization contribute towards the employee as a person but also towards the whole organization and its performance. There are several reasons as to why investing in employee development can result in increased job satisfaction, and through that increased work motivation, in the workplace. Firstly, employees may view the offering of the development program as a representation that the organization is concerned for their long-term growth (Hoon Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Secondly, by training employees the organization also gives the employee a sense of control over their own career as they have a chance to update existing skills, and at the same time develop new ones (Hoon Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Finally, having employee development programs in place impacts the perception that the employees have about their employer and positively impacts their feelings towards their employer. This in turn can positively impact the amount of job satisfaction felt (Hoon Lee & Bruvold, 2003). These points can be agreed on based on the data gathered for this research. The participants of this research who had received support and possibilities for professional development from their organization, seemed to be satisfied with their jobs and had positive feelings towards their employer as well. They also valued the know-how gained from training provided and the opportunities it had provided for them when considering life outside of work as well. Therefore, it is proven that it is well worth the cost to invest in the development of one's staff.

### 5.3 Job Design

The effect of job design towards work motivation can also be proven through the interview data of this research. In figure 2, the aspects of job design were grouped under the aggregate dimension “quality of work”, yet the author feels like this aspect must be analyzed on its own due its impact on the entire organization. Nevertheless, this aspect can be thought of being an essential part of the employee’s perceived quality of work.

The effect of job design towards the overall work motivation and the possibility to participate in the designing process of your own job description was discussed in the theoretical framework section from the point of view of previous research. Many researchers have found that the effect of these two aspects is substantial when considering employee’s work motivation. Generally, job design process is considered something that happens in a top-down manner at the workplace, and the employees are then hired to a set role designed by the upper management of the company. Nowadays, the process of job design, and the increased employee involvement in the process, has received increased attention. Previous research, along with the findings of this research, have shown that employee involvement in the job design process is a great source of work motivation.

First and foremost, a well-designed job can have many benefits both for the company and for the employee. When the job in general is well designed, it can lead in a rise in the employee well-being, which can then ultimately lead to improved quality of life (Strümpfer, 2006). The interviews revealed that the job descriptions of most of these women are well designed as they seem mostly pleased with their jobs, and the tasks that are related to them. Solely based on the data it is hard to make assessments whether the job designs have improved the quality of life for these participants. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that if the job descriptions of the participants are developed as the employees’ capacities develop, then there should be no reason as to why it couldn’t also have a positive effect of the quality of life of the employees as well.

As was noted on the results section the job descriptions of the participants seem, as is characteristic for jobs that can be described as low-pay, to be very rigid and do not allow much in terms of job crafting. As can be expected, the job tasks are very different and vary per respective industry. Nonetheless, the overall impression is that the day-to-day tasks are fairly set, and follow the same pattern throughout the days. Despite this, the participants, for the most part, felt that they had significant influence over their own work tasks and how to carry them out. What is more, this was a very important aspect and perceived as motivating amongst the participants. This has also been discovered by previous research. Berg et al (2007) discovered that even jobs that seem very rigid in their tasks can offer some room for job crafting. Something that managers should also understand is that very restrictive job descriptions can hinder the development of the employee and might ultimately cause job dissatisfaction

(Berg et al, 2007). Many of the participants also stated that in the long run, it would be extremely de-motivating having someone exactly tell how to do one's job, and to exactly mandate the ways that tasks should be carried out. Therefore, findings of Berg et al. (2007) can be said to be applicable based on the data of this research.

Job crafting is a phenomenon that must be initiated both from the employee's side as well as from the management's side. First and foremost, the employee must be proactive in wanting to change something in their jobs (Berg et al, 2007). From the data, it became evident that majority of the participants have the desire to develop the way their work is done and the task order. Otherwise, they would not feel the need to be able to influence their own job designs. Therefore, the first prerequisite for successful job-crafting exists. Secondly, the employee discovers that crafting opportunities are presents and executes them one way or another (Berg et al, 2007). For the participants to be able to say that they have an influence over their work assignments signals that in the past they have been able to recognize opportunities to craft and have also executed them. Finally, crafting techniques utilized are in correlation with outcomes that might occur for the job crafter, such as whole new identity at work (Berg et al, 2007). It can be assumed that after the participants had exercised job crafting, and see the changes both in their daily working life as well as in themselves, their work identity has also changed for the positive. Moreover, as their job identity has developed for the better, it can be assumed to have had a positive influence on their work motivation as well.

Like was also noticeable from the quotes presented in the findings section, it is greatly appreciated by women if they can make their jobs fit their personalities and abilities. Moreover, the participating women had a strong desire to influence their own jobs and to have freedom to execute their tasks in the manner they find to be the best. This also sends a message to the employers. Along the lines of Berg et al (2007), job crafting will not be successful if the managers do not initiate it through designing jobs in a manner that leaves the possibility for an employee to tailor their jobs according to their individual motives, strengths and passions, while also keeping in mind the relevant organizational goals. It can also be expected that this process is on-going, especially if the organization is simultaneously giving the employee chance to develop (Berg et al, 2007). As the employee's skills and knowledge increases, due to the development opportunities offered by the organization, the need to craft their job to meet these new skills surfaces. As the employee, can utilize the new skills acquired and sees that the skills can be applied to their jobs in a new way, it ought to have a positive impact on the work motivation levels of the employee as well.

## 5.4 Money

The final topic of analysis is money and the effect it has on the participant's work motivation. Firstly, it must be noted that money did have a significant

meaning to all the participants, from the point of view of their overall quality of life. Like Leana and Meuris (2015) noted on their research: few things are as significant to individual's well-being and standard of living as income. Therefore, as can be expected, money holds meaning to women that are low paid as well.

Trank et al (2004) found that people are more likely to underreport than overreport the importance of pay as a motivational factor. This is an aspect that must be taken into consideration within this section of the analysis. The participants could have been underreporting the importance of pay in their motivation equation in their answers for the interview questions as well. Even if this is the case, it will not influence the study substantially, as money is just one part of the equation that is under observation. Nevertheless, it is an aspect that must be taken into consideration, both within this research as well as within the companies where the participants work. From the organization's point of view, it is important to understand the true emphasis the women place on their pay and the motivational significance of it. This must be considered for the managers to be able to know what principally motivates their women employees. Whether the main motivator for them at work is money or other aspects entirely.

Trank et al (2004) stated in their research that pay is the most powerful of the motivators. This is an aspect where the data from this research differs from Trank et al.'s (2004) research. Trank et al (2004) also stated that money should not be treated as a low order motivator, and that it could help reaching practically any level on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, including the higher order needs. This statement is also controversial when considering the data collected for this research. Surely, if paid significantly more suddenly, the participating women might feel more motivated or to the very least think that they feel more motivated. Motivating women with only money would create artificial motivation and would most likely not last for a substantial amount of time. So, in one sense, Trank et al (2004) can be right when saying that money can help reaching practically any level of Maslow's pyramid, but it can also be assumed that the effect would only be temporary. The company's ability to motivate with solely money or other monetary means would meet its limits at some point, and then other sources of motivation would have to be considered. Moreover, as could be deduced from the data, these women value other aspects of their work far higher than money. Many of the participants stated that receiving more money would not substitute the other motivating factors, and that receiving increased amount of money would only motivate them to a certain point. Pay was even stated to fade to the background if the other aspects are in order at the workplace. Therefore, it is possible to say that the results of this research differ from the results derived by Trank et al (2004), and when considering motivating factors of the participants, money is not the way to approach motivation.

Thozhur & Szivas (2006) in their research discussed the combination of pay satisfaction and overall satisfaction with one's job. The first issue according to the authors considers whether the individual perceives their pay low. This issue includes two sub components which are the perception of target wage and

how the target has entered one's mind. It can be said that all the participants perceived their pay as low, there is no question about that. How the perception of the target wage has entered their mind was not clear from the data, but something must have happened for the participants to perceive their pay as low. The point of reference could be their friends and family or the general media/news. Second issue in Thozhur and Szivas' (2006) pay satisfaction and overall job satisfaction equation, was the assessment of job satisfaction factors within the job that counterbalance pay dissatisfaction. The authors also state that workers with low-pay have the possibility to easier see their target earnings and as they are reached, other factors enter the job satisfaction equation. This aspect could be somewhat seen in the participants of this research. The target earnings of the participants were not discussed but possibly they have been reached as clearly other factors have entered the participants' work motivation equation. Or, the case could be that there are no target earnings but other factors, through time, have replaced the importance of pay in the motivation equation. A further explanation could be that women might not perceive higher paying jobs being within their reach, and have settled for what they perceive as reachable. Therefore, the need for reaching target earnings has been replaced with other motivating aspects that are easier to reach. Third and final applicable issue within the research of Thozhur and Szivas (2006) was if the person perceives pay as holistic part of job satisfaction or a separate entity. The participants of this research most definitely saw pay as a part of their motivational equation, but also considered other aspects to be more important. All of these aspects combined could in part explain why these women, despite having low-pay, still feel very motivated at work.

Williams et al (2006) in their research discovered that within the core job characteristics, discussed in the theory section, autonomy and task feedback were found to be strongly related to pay satisfaction. This aspect could also be found in the data gathered. Many of the participants stated that feedback and being able to influence their own jobs was contributing more towards work motivation than pay. They also saw that receiving feedback and having control over their own jobs, made the smallness of their pay "fade away", which in some sense can be regarded as pay satisfaction. Therefore, it is true that receiving feedback and having task autonomy are related to pay satisfaction. Furthermore, Williams et al (2006) also found that pay level might be accepted more easily if the job offers task related feedback that establishes realistic expectations for pay levels. This was also visible in the results. Many of the participants stated that they acknowledge that their pay level and the tasks they must conduct mirrors each other appropriately. Although, it can be wondered whether this knowledge is a positive aspect, or even something that positively contributes towards employees work motivation, even though woman might be in terms with the pay that is received. Moreover, the women who received task related feedback and appreciation often stated that it is much more important than pay. Even those women who do not receive task related feedback seemed to think that they would much rather receive positive feedback and apprecia-

tion than extra compensation. Therefore, the findings of Williams et al. (2006) can be proved to be accurate in light of the data of this research as well.

Finally, Ruiz-Palomino et al (2013) stated in their research that employers should consider tools, such as job enriching, to make their employees more satisfied with their pay. The participants of this research many times emphasized how variance in their jobs and the possibility for development would positively influence their work motivation and would contribute towards the factors that make the possible dissatisfaction with their pay shift to the back of their minds. Enriching jobs then would influence the satisfaction that the participants feel about their pay, as their motivation towards the job itself would increase.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 Key Findings

The aim of the present study was to reveal what motivates women in low-paying jobs in Finland. After collection and analysis of data with the help of previous research, some conclusions can be drawn. An overall conclusion drawn is that the participants seem to have a high level of work motivation, and very much like what they do. Hardly anyone could imagine a situation where they would ever regret the career path they have taken and profession they have chosen. What is more, many of the participants presented intrinsic motivation towards their job, this is to say that they are motivated by their tasks themselves, and not the possible reward. This fact is something that the managers should be very pleased about and keep reinforcing with the best of their abilities. Moreover, money did not prove to be among the top motivators for these women. It was stated many times that when other aspects are in order, money has very little motivational impact.

However, there are eight distinct conclusions that can be drawn in relation to the sources of work motivation. First of them is that women in low-paying jobs in Finland are very motivated by social aspects at work. The socialization can be with customers and/or with colleagues, and equal importance is placed on both kinds of socialization. Throughout this research, as well as within previous research, the importance of this aspect has been proven.

Second conclusion that can be drawn is that feedback is tremendously important for motivating women. Women tend to value the feedback received from their colleagues, managers and even from their customers. Feedback is also very closely related to the amount of work motivation that women feel. Feedback indicates how they are doing their work. and without indications of this work motivation is harder to achieve.

Third factor that presented to be of importance for the work motivation of women employed in low-paying jobs is that, namely, managers voice their appreciation towards their employees. This aspect was valued very highly, even among those women who felt like they never receive praise from their work, or whose managers simply do not show their appreciation towards their staff. This was in some cases valued even more than receiving additional compensation. The participants who had received appreciation, continued to appreciate it and acknowledge its impact on their work motivation.

Overcoming challenges is also something that greatly motivates women in low-paying jobs. The sensation following a beaten challenge proved to be significantly important for achieving and sustaining work motivation. Also, being involved in setting work related challenges, and then being able to overcome them, was named as a influential source of motivation.

Fifth, a situation that might be easily overlooked when considering work motivation, but proved to be of significance, is simply thriving at work. Enjoying what you do and principally enjoying going to work is something that proved to be important for achieving work motivation. It can be said that thriving at work might be a result from other aspects being “in order”, but generally enjoying going to work is something that affects the overall sensation of work motivation.

Possibility for development was also an important element when considering work motivation. Being able to develop within the work that you do, through job rotation or courses, was named as one of the primary motivators among the participants. The theoretical framework also supports the importance of personal development when trying to achieve work motivation. Therefore, the importance of possibility for development cannot be overlooked.

Variance is also something that was named as a quality within work that motivates women. Not wanting to do same tasks and things day after day was strongly indicated. Job rotation, varied job tasks and - situations were named to be especially motivating. Also, prior research supports this notion, especially when women are in question. Variance is closely related to the final conclusion made relating to this research.

Finally, women found it to be important to have an influence on their work design. Especially regarding the way in which tasks are carried out. The job designs of the participants, which is characteristic to jobs that can be described as low-paying, overall seemed to be fairly set. Nevertheless, it was greatly appreciated and experienced as motivating to be able to influence the work that you do and to be able to carry tasks out the way that fits best for the individual.

## 6.2 Managerial Recommendations

From the results and conclusions of this research, some managerial recommendations can be made. In general, it can be recommended for managers to truly reflect on the importance of motivated workers. Moreover, to also reflect on the effect unmotivated workers might have on the company image and the overall productivity. Work motivation and motivating your workers has been a topic of discussion for years, so the information and tools are there, but a manager must take it upon him or herself to familiarize with the resources that are provided.

In relation to this research, the first notion that can be made is that the participants of this research seemed, for the most part, to be very motivated in their jobs. Yet, something could always be improved. In general, the things that could be improved from the manager's side were linked to the issues that the participants named as sources of work motivation for them.

The first managerial recommendation stemming from this research is that a manager gets to know his/her employees and what motivates them. Whether it is money, or if it truly is other aspects. This should be done to know how to



go about motivating a particular employee, so that one does not attempt to motivate in a wrong way, which might even result in de-motivation. Furthermore, a manager should also understand that employees are individuals and therefore they should not be attempted to be motivated using “one size fits all” solutions.

Secondly, it is highly recommended that managers do not primarily try to motivate through monetary means, as it is proven by this research that women in low-paying jobs do not seek work motivation from their pay, but from other aspects entirely. The aspects that surfaced throughout the research are usually the kind that can be executed with minimum costs. Therefore, by understanding what motivates women in low-paying jobs, managers can motivate their women employees in ways that are substantially less resource consuming than motivating through monetary means and incentives.

Thirdly, managers should focus on voicing and showing their appreciation towards their employees, especially when low-paid women are in question. The motivational effect of this surfaced so many times in this research that managers simply cannot turn a blind eye to it. Saying thank you, or showing appreciation through other means, is likely to take managers further than showing up with a fist full of cash. Women want to know that they are appreciated and that their effort is appreciated. Through the knowledge of this they will feel more motivated at work. Moreover, saying “thank you” is totally, one hundred percent, cost free. No costs incur for the company when a manager thanks and shows appreciation towards his or her subordinates. This might even offset some other costs, as motivated workers are proved to be more effective. Therefore, a company with motivated employees is bound to produce more and act more efficiently. In addition, as the data presented, sometimes recreational activities occurring outside of workhours could be considered as a motivational tool, along with day-to-day voicing of appreciation.

Additionally, if the company has extra money to spare, a motivational boost could be offered to those who do not currently enjoy full working hours, by offering them the desired 40 hours per week. This will of course hold some costs for the company, but the motivational potential is also very strong. This has the potential to show the employee that her work effort is appreciated, and as was already discussed above, appreciation has been proven to positively affect work motivation. Through this an employer can also emphasize the feeling of continuity of the job, which will increase the feeling of safety and will ultimately contribute positively to work motivation.

Fourthly, managers should understand the importance that social aspects of work have. Especially women value the social aspects and relationships established at work, as this research shows and previous research has shown. Therefore, managers should make sure that fruitful relationships and socialization can take place, while keeping in mind that organizational goals must be reached. Managers can emphasize more teamwork and encourage consulting co-workers in problems that arise. Moreover, the socialization with customers should also be encouraged. Encouraging and facilitating socialization is a motivational technique that can be executed with relatively little monetary invest-

ment. Executing might require some resources, but costs can be said to be in minimum.

Fifth aspect that managers can take with them from this research is the motivational effect that varied work has on the work motivation of women. By making sure that job descriptions are varied and that jobs are not created to simply follow routine-like tasks, increased motivation can be achieved. Variance can also be increased through job-rotation, which was also noticed to hold motivational potential. Job-rotation, and increasing variance in general, is also a cost-effective way to increase work motivation. In the best-case scenario, it might lead to the improvement of company practices and ways to do work, as different employees get to try different work stations and apply their pre-existing knowledge to them. Moreover, as became evident in the findings section, women also appreciate having challenges in their work. Along with variance, manager should also ensure that appropriate challenges are set for women. Moreover, women themselves should also be included when designing these challenges.

Finally, managers should also familiarize themselves with the other motivating aspects that were covered within this research. Then see which one's work for their employees, and that are possible to carry out in their organizations. Motivating employees is not something that can be outsourced or to put aside for "more suitable times". It must be one of the key operating principles of any company. Employees represent the company, and if not motivated, they will also represent the company accordingly. Motivating employees can be done with costly programs, but it can also be done amongst every day work with small and costless gestures.

### **6.3 Limitations and Future Research**

No study is without limitations and therefore, the limitations of this research should be discussed. First limitation of the study is that it only focuses on women, and therefore might not give the full picture of the factors that affect the motivation of people employed in low-paying jobs. Therefore, more research will be needed in the future.

Another limitation that could be found within the research is that more questions relating to work motivation factors could have been posed to extract more details from the participants. Less questions relating to participant background could have been asked, since they did not produce information that is of the essence when considering the research question. Therefore, some of the questions and the information revealed from the questions could be regarded as slightly irrelevant from the research question's point of view, and therefore could be regarded as a limitation. Nevertheless, the question utilized provided sufficient data to be able to answer the research question and to fulfill the purpose of this thesis. Moreover, the questions were asked in Finnish and the answers of

the participants then translated to English. Some information might have gotten lost in translation and therefore, this can be regarded as a limitation for this study.

The sampling method could also be regarded as a limitation. The participants, for the most part, were familiar to the researcher from before and therefore the authenticity of the answers provided could have been endangered. The positive aspect of this is that the participants seemed more willing to talk about their working lives and were willing to participate in the research altogether. But, one could argue that the previous connection that the researcher has had with majority of the participants could be a limitation for the study.

Nonetheless, the limitation of this research did not pose a hindrance to answering the research question and fulfilling the purpose of this research. Furthermore, the information gathered from this research contribute to the understanding of the issue of work motivation of women employed in low-paying jobs in Finland. What is more, despite the limitations present, the research has increased the author's understanding of the issue of work motivation and of the principles of conducting scientific research.

This research also opens fruitful sources for further research opportunities. Like has been noted many times over, work motivation has received plenty of attention in past research. Nevertheless, more research in this, always current topic, is needed. Times have changed, and continue to rapidly change, due to increased digitalization and globalization. This will also change the ways and needs of employee motivation. Therefore, updated research is required in this area, as the need for motivated workforce will never go out of demand.

A potential pathway for further research is to add men to the sample. Future research could compare what motivates men and women in low-paying jobs in Finland. Even though this research only focused on women and their motivation, there are also men who are employed in low-paying jobs in Finland, and it is important to also research their sources of motivation. It could also be a possibility for future researchers to focus solely men, like this research solely focused on women.

Further research could also be conducted in other countries than Finland to see if the results are similar or whether culture or other aspects also influence what motivates women in low-paying jobs. A possibility could be to first research Nordic countries, as they somewhat parallel each other, and then expand the research to other countries and continents, to truly extract the possible cultural differences. Moreover, case studies could be conducted to see if differences between industries or organizations in general exist. One possibility would be to compare which industries hold the most motivated workers or if some motivational tricks are more used or are more useful in some specific industry. The research could also be done by using quantitative methods to see if the aspects found, have a quantifiable relationship with one another, and to describe the phenomenon through statistic means.

## 6.4 Quality Criteria

When conducting qualitative research, the quality of it must be assessed as well. This research's quality will be assessed with the help of Trustworthiness and Authenticity, originally imprinted by Guba and Lincoln in 1994 (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395).

Trustworthiness is constructed from four distinct criteria, which parallel those established for quantitative research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). First criterion under discussion is credibility, which parallels internal validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). In a nutshell, according to the authors, credibility is concerned with the research following the rules of good research conduct as well as submitting the research findings to the participants to make sure that the researcher has correctly understood the social world under investigation. Within this research this criterion was considered through designing the research itself in a way that follows good research practice from the start. Moreover, no one was forced to participate or share information about themselves or their job that they felt uncomfortable with. Also, all the participants were informed about the purpose of the research as well as the fact that only the researcher has access to their interview data and that possible quotations used from their data would be anonymous. Moreover, the participants were offered a chance to see their transcripts if they wanted to still add something or in case misunderstandings had occurred.

Next criterion under observation is transferability, which parallels external validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). This criterion is concerned with producing thick descriptions and detailed accounts of a culture, for others to make judgements about the possible transferability of the findings to other circumstances (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). Within this research, transcripts were made of all the interviews, in order for others, if requested, to make assessments of the transferability of the research. Moreover, the description of the data included in the actual research was intended to be as rich and descriptive as possible without compromising the anonymity of the participants.

Dependability of the research must be considered next. Dependability can be considered paralleling reliability in quantitative research and relates to researcher keeping complete records of all the phases of the research in a manner that is accessible for an outsider as well (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). Within this research, like was mentioned earlier, transcripts were made in a manner that makes it possible for an outsider to understand them. Other phases of the research have been documented in the research itself with as much detail as was seen necessary, but in a way, that would ensure that anyone could re-do the research, if they so wished. Therefore, it is possible to say that the research fulfills the dependability criterion.

Final aspect of the trustworthiness criteria, is confirmability. This criterion aims to make sure that the researcher has acted in good faith, this is to say that the researcher has not excessively let his or her own values or theoretical incli-

nations influence the conduct of the research and the findings derived from it (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). Even though complete objectivity is not possible in any research, letting own values excessively influence the research must be avoided (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 398). Even though the topic of this research is one that is close to the author's heart, own values were kept at a distance from the research. Issues were taken as they were presented and not twisted how the author would have wanted to see or present them. This criterion was the hardest one to achieve since many of participants were familiar to the author from before and therefore, the issues described by the participants were the same ones that the author has personally experienced. Even so, distance to the issues were remained, and it aided the fulfillment of this criteria to reflect how through this research the issues can be made known to other as well.

The other bigger category for assessing qualitative research is as mentioned authenticity. There are also four subcomponents of this aspect; fairness, ontological authenticity, educative authenticity, catalytic authenticity and tactical authenticity, and these four criteria concern the wider political impact of the research. (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 399). As the research, is only recently made accessible to the public, its wider political impact is hard to assess. What is more is that this criterion has not been influential and its impact on research is controversial (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 399), therefore it will not be discussed further at this point. The hope, however, is that this research would have even some wider political influence and would aid in making situations better in organizations which employ majority women and within a low-paying scale all over Finland.

Overall, it can be said that the research fulfills the quality criteria set for qualitative research. The participants, their safety, and their anonymity was ensured throughout the process and detailed records were kept of the steps taken. The research is possible to replicate in nearly any point of the process. Therefore, the quality criteria can be regarded as fulfilled to the best extent possible.

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## 8 APPENDIX 1

### 8.1 Interview Questions

1. Kertoisitteko taustoistanne ja ammatistanne  
(Tell me about yourself and your profession)
2. Miten päädyitte valitsemallenne alalle?  
(How did you end up in the industry that you are currently in?)
3. Kerrotteko hieman työtehtävistänne?  
(Tell me about your work tasks)
4. Mitkä asiat työssäsi tekevät sinut onnelliseksi? miksi?  
(What aspects about your work make you feel happy? Why?)
5. Viimeisen vuoden aikana mitkä asiat ovat saaneet sinut tuntemaan onnistumisen tunnetta työssäsi? (During the past year, what things have made you feel like you have succeeded in your work?)
6. Mitkä asiat työssäsi saavat sinut tuntemaan, että tämä työ on sinua varten?  
(What things about your work make you feel like this job is for you?)
7. Koetko olevasi oikeassa työssä? Miksi/miksi ei?  
(Do you feel like this is the right job for you? Why/ why not?)
8. Saatteko vaikuttaa itse työtehtäviinne? Jos kyllä/ette miten koette, että se vaikuttaa työmotivaationne?  
(Are you able to influence your own work tasks? If yes/no, do you feel like this affects your work motivation? How does it affect?)
9. Oletteko joskus katunut uravalintaanne? Millaisessa tilanteessa olette tunteneet näin?  
(Have you ever regretted your career choice? When have these thoughts surfaced?)
10. Mitä työnantajasi voisi tehdä, jotta työmotivaatiosi paranisi entisestään?  
(What could your employer do to further increase your work motivation?)
11. Jos mietitte asioita jotka vaikuttavat työmotivaationne, kuinka tärkeä motivaattori raha/palkkaus teille on?  
(If you think about things that affect your work motivation, how important is money/pay in terms of your motivation?)