JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST
AS ANTECEDENTS
OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
IN FINNISH AND ESTONIAN SMEs

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Abstract

This empirical study examines three well-known leadership themes – organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust – from the perspective of Finnish and Estonian small and medium –sized enterprises (SMEs). The object of the study is to increase knowledge about organizational commitment and job attitudes affecting the formation of commitment. The study is cross-sectional, using previously gathered SME survey data.

Organizational commitment is understood as a multidimensional construct. The study is interested especially in its affective component, which is considered to be the deepest form of organizational commitment and usually related to desirable behavioral outcomes.

According to the employees' experiences the three themes correlate positively. When SME organizations engage in development projects trying to enhance their employees' affective commitment especially job satisfaction and the possibilities for growth (feeling of worthwhile accomplishment from doing the job, challenge and independent thought and action exercised in the job) are important issues to attend to. Just as important is to build and enforce affect-based organizational trust (sharing relationships and emotional investments in working relationships). Managerial implications are very sensible and practical, such as maintaining an open and supportive athmosphere, involving employees in decision making and encouraging the employees to communicate their expectations towards their jobs.

Keywords	
Organizational Commitment, Affective Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Trust, SME.	
Location	
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1   INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment is one of the most discussed and researched topics in the field of organizational attitudes. Commitment to an organization has been connected with desirable organizational behavior and organizational success in several studies and is thus of great interest to both scientists and practioners. The objective of this study is to look into the concept of organizational commitment and factors related to it. Specific focus is on examining job satisfaction's and organizational trust's relationship with organizational commitment in small and medium size organizations (later SMEs) using empirical quantitative research methods. By exploring the connections between the work life phenomena it is possible to increase knowledge about the factors connected to the formation of organizational commitment. This knowledge, for its part, might help SME managers in finding new ways to strenghten their employees' commitment.

1.1   Purpose of the Study

In this study organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust, as well as their relationship, are examined utilizing previously gathered cross-sectional survey data. The three themes have been popular topics in leadership research, but there are not many studies about their interrelations, especially in the SME sector.

The data were collected in a cooperative research project "Sustainable organizational practices and leadership for the wellbeing of employees" (SOLWE) between University of Jyväskylä School of Business and Economics and Estonian Business School. The main results of the Finnish data have been described in a form of a project report (Koponen, Lämsä, Kärkäs & Ekonen 2012) and each organization's results have been reported directly to the attending organizations.

SOLWE project's object was to gain information about different leadership themes and recognize the essential areas of development in each organization's leadership practices, in order to enhance the well-being of the employees.

(Koponen et al. 2012, 9.) The themes of the survey were: suction of work, work strain and control, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, working ability, leader-member relationship, organizational trust, possibilities to influence, equality in the organization, preparedness for the work, continuing work and functionality of the work community (Koponen et al. 2012, 18–19).

In this study three of the SOLWE survey's leadership themes have been chosen for more specific examination. These themes, as variables, are analyzed with statistical methods, in order to test the well-known theories and to produce new information about the themes and their relationship, especially about job satisfaction and organizational trust as antecedents of organizational commitment.

1.2   Background of the Study

There is a vast amount of international research material concerning organizational commitment, but in Finland and Estonia organizational commitment in the SMEs is a very scarcely researched subject. Based on the earlier research it can, however, be assumed that there is a connection between job satisfaction, organizational trust and organizational commitment, and that these phenomena are potential antecedents of good employee performance and organizational success.

There are many different definitions about the concept of organizational commitment. The definitions are quite various, but all agree upon that organizational commitment is a psychological state characterizing the employee's relationship with the organization and is also connected to employee's decision about staying with the organization (see Meyer & Allen 1991, Lämsä & Päivike 2010).

Organizational commitment can take different forms and can be directed at different constituencies within the organization. It is important to distinguish among these different forms and foci because they relate somewhat differently to behavior (Meyer & Allen 1997, 107). In this research the theoretical focus will be on examining the form, or nature, of the organizational commitment.

Meyer and Allen (1991) categorized various definitions of organizational commitment and introduced the Three-Component Model of commitment, classifying the forms of commitment into three categories: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment is the deepest form of organizational commitment referring to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a stong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they *want* to do so. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they *need* to do so. Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees

with a high level of normative commitment feel that they *ought* to remain with the organization. (Meyer & Allen 1991, 67.)

Meyer and Allen (1991) also noted, that to gain a clearer understanding of employee's relationship with the organization the researchers need to consider the strength of all three forms of commitment together. Affective, continuance and normative commitment should be seen as components, rather than types, of organizational commitment. The multidimensional model of organizational commitment (see Figure 1) was presented by Meyer & Allen in 1997, and it is considered as the theoretical background for the concept of commitment in this study.
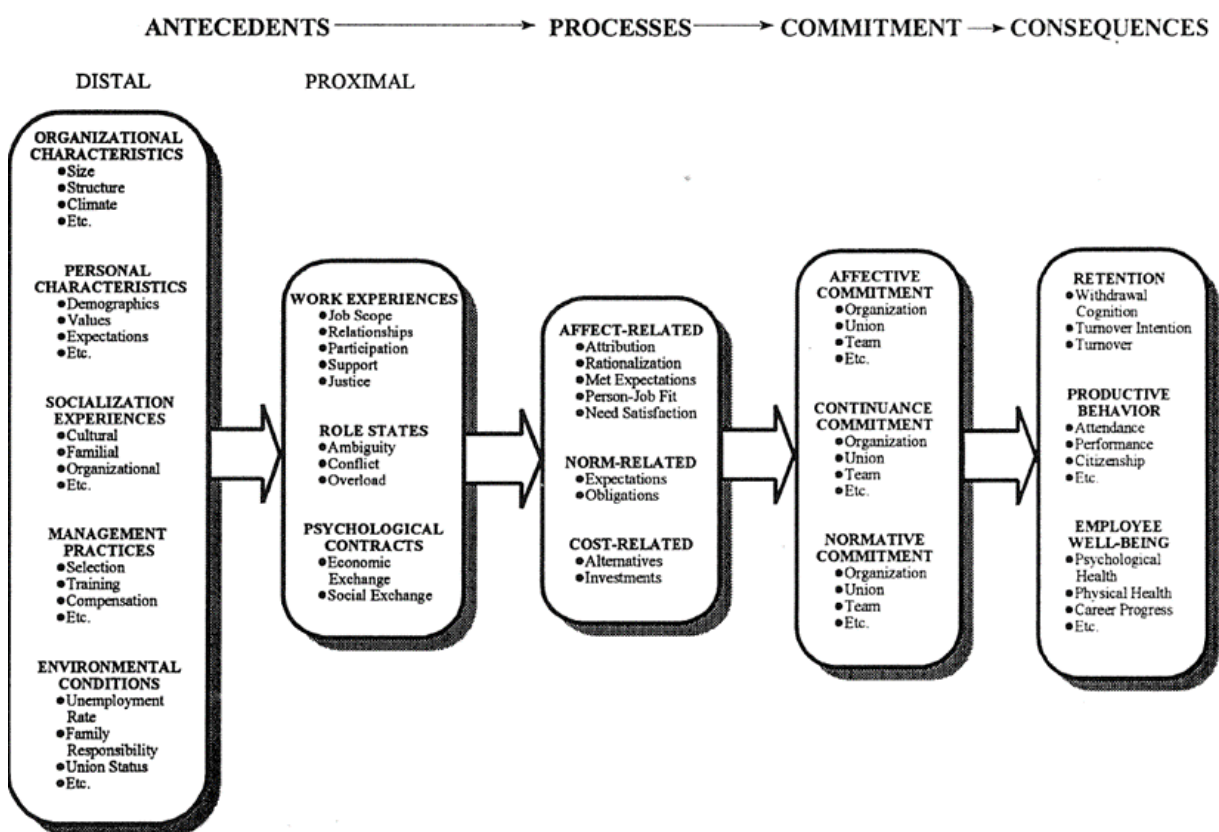
FIGURE 1 A multidimensional model of organizational commitment, its antecedents, and its consequences (Meyer & Allen 1997, 106)

The multidimensional model describes the "bigger picture" of organizational commitment; distal and proximal antecedents, as well as processes through which commitment develops and consequences that different forms of organizational commitment might lead to.

Job satisfaction can be considered included in the multidimensional model of commitment and these two job attitudes are indeed very close with each other. Job satisfaction is one of the oldest and most researched themes among the

organizational attitudes. The data used in the study has been gathered using Hackman and Oldham's "Job diagnostic survey", evaluating five areas of job satisfaction: security of the job, social relationships, pay, supervision and growth possibilities. (Hackman & Oldham 1975, Koponen et al. 2012, 29.)

Trust in organizations has been defined as a belief that the trusted party will and can act according to the agreed norms and commitments, not taking advantage on the other party even if there was a chance to do so. (Koponen et al. 2012, 33.) There are many ways to categorize forms of trust. This research uses McAllister's (1995) division between affect- and cognition-based trust. Cognition-based trust is rational judgement about the existence of trust. Affect-based trust, for its part, is based on experienced feelings in organizational interaction situations and relationships.

The theoretical background of the three main phenomena of the study will be presented and defined more precisely in chapter two.

1.3   Rationale for the Study

The whole Europe has faced major challenges with regard to its competitiveness, resulting from changes in the age structure of the population and in methods of production. Also globalization and digitalization have increased organizations' pressure to develop their personnel's competence and traditional ways of working. (See e.g., Finnish Working Life 2020, PK-yritysbarometri 2/2015.)

Many countries have launched national development projects (often co-financed by the European Union), in order to increase the employment rate, work productivity and the quality of working life, as well as well-being at work. Only well-functioning and profitable workplaces can ensure national competitiveness and good working life in general. According to the Finnish Working Life 2020 report competitive and productive enterprises enjoy financial success and provide good customer service, are agile and responsive to personnel needs, create new products, services and operating practices – improving both quality and productivity at the same time. Working Life 2020 project has recognized four building blocks of a good working life: innovation and productivity; trust and cooperation; health and well-being at work; and competent workforce. The project report states that when these factors are combined in a balanced way at workplaces, the quality and productivity in working life will improve.

Achieving these challenging goals of national development, every workplace has to do their share, even the smallest ones. As the prerequisitions for operation change at an accelerating speed also SMEs have to constantly develop in order to succeed and retain their competitiveness (see PK-yritysbarometri 2/2015, 32). The SME sector has a key role in achieving the national development goals, as SMEs are very important to both Finland's and Estonia's business economy. According to EU Comission's SBA Fact Sheets 2014, SMEs account for 99.8 % (EST) and 99.7 % (FIN) of all enterprises and 74.4 % (EST) and 59.4 % (FIN) of value added. 78.1 % of Estonian and 63.2 % of Finnish private

sector employees work in SMEs. Defined by the European Comission, SME is an enterprise that has fewer than 250 employees *and* either annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million *or* balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million. These ceilings apply only to the figures for individual enterprises. An enterprise that is a part of a larger group may need to include staff headcount/turnover/balance sheet data from that group, too. (The up-to-date definition of SME can be read from the European Comission's website: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition/index_en.htm.)

SOLWE project's object was to, by its part, respond to these societal challenges and help SMEs develop sustainable organizational practices and leadership for the well-being of their employees. Based on the survey results the areas of challenge are different for each participating SME, but the data provided also interesting opportunities to examine SME employees' job attitudes and different working life phenomena in general.

All of the themes chosen for this study are very basic and fundamental constructs of working life that have been found to have several desirable behavioral consequences (as well as have the lack of organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust been found to have negative behavioral consequences). All three themes are also closely related to the previously mentioned building blocks of a good working life.

Committed employees are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviors and better organizational citizenship. Affective commitment has been positively related to willingness to suggest improvements, accepts things as they are and on the other hand negatively related to passive withdrawal from dissatisfying situations. (Allen & Meyer 1996.) Affectively committed employees also recognize the importance of their work (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001). Satisfied employees are more likely to be cooperative and willing to help the organization be successful, as well as more likely to maintain good health and positive well-being (see e.g., Spector 1997). Organizations depend on the discretionary contributions of their members to maintain efficiency and coordination. According to McAllister (1995, 32) organizations must depend on employees to use their skills and energies wisely, so that they work not only harder, but smarter. As organizations become leaner, they still must maintain the core people who need to have a greater variety of skills and ability to adapt to different situations (see Meyer & Allen 1997, 4-6). Affectively committed employees state a willingness to go beyond minimum requirements and make the change work, even if it requires some sacrifice on their part (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal & Topolnytsky 2007, 205-206). High levels of organizational commitment can also help to buffer the effect of change-related stress on employee health and well-being (Herscovitch & Meyer 2002, 485).

In order to maintain their competitiveness despite of the constant societal and structural changes the SMEs have to find ways to develop their organizational processes and leadership practices. All of the three themes studied here are closely related to leadership practices, so the good news is, that there are

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many ways to enhance these attitudes. For SMEs the suitable leadership practices might not, however, be quite self-evident due to the heterogeneity and different mindsets of the organizations. Traditionally, many SMEs are family-owned, so the decision making has been very centralized and processes have been informal. Sometimes the attempts to manage the (multidimensional) employee attitudes might even have lead into opposite results than expected, suppressing the crucial development ideas.

Sydänmaanlakka (2011) has presented a modern model of balanced leadership. The model advices, that all areas of leadership have to be in balance for an organization to be effective, innovative and fostering the employees' well-being. (For more traditional definitions about leadership, see e.g., Yukl 2010 and Northouse 2013.) Striving for the common goals and development requires both competent management and competent employees, not to forget about the constructive ways of cooperation and communication. This study aspires to provide some basic conclusions about the most plausible relationships between organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust – as well as their antecedents and behavioral consequences – to increase knowledge and aid SMEs in their development projects.

1.4   Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter presents a brief introduction to the research and its background. The second chapter describes the theoretical framework of the study, explaining the chosen variables more thoroughly and reviewing previous study concerning them. In the third chapter the research methodology, including the survey methods, statistical analyses and their realization is explained. The fourth chapter focuses on the results of the study, as the results of the statistical analyses and the relationship between the variables are presented in detail. The last, fifth chapter, is about considerations and conclusions based on the results. That is, discussion about the results and implications, providing some development ideas for SME leadership practioners for their future work.

2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The theoretical framework of the study is based on research material and literature about the three leadership themes: organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust. All themes, their dimensions and relations are described in Figure 2 and presented in the following chapters.
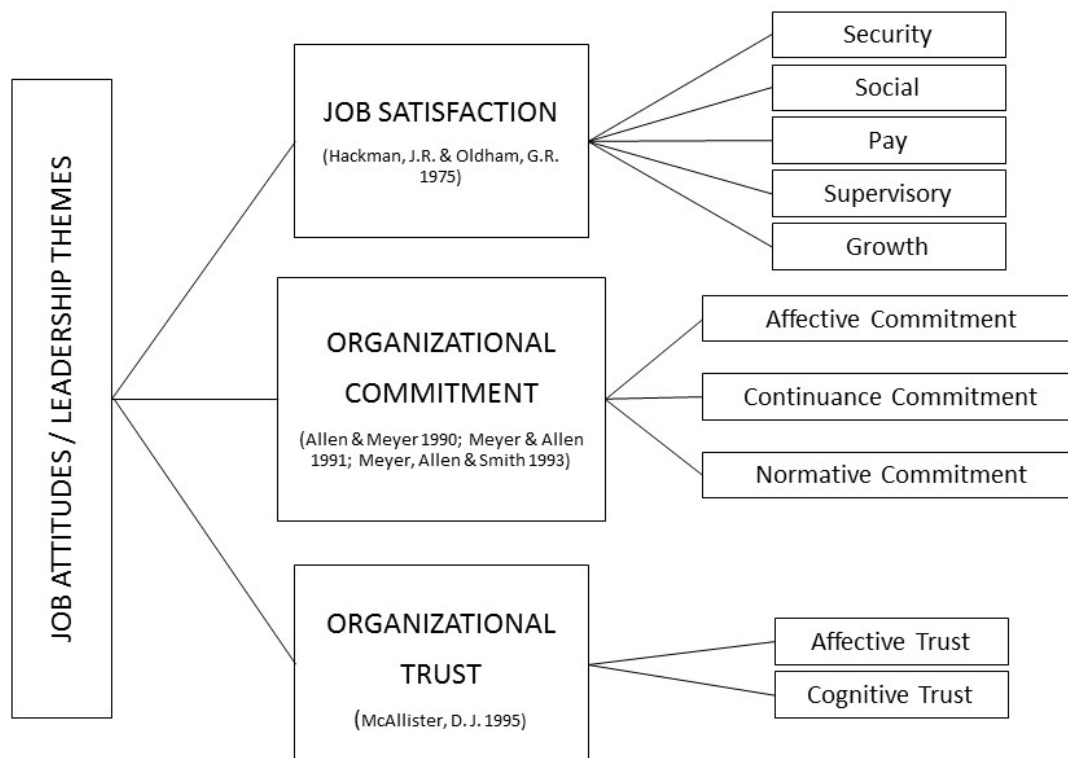
FIGURE 2 Leadership themes (variables) studied and measures used in this research

2.1   Organizational Commitment

According to past research commitment is a complex construct that can be studied with various different approaches. Efforts to clarify the meaning of commitment have taken two distinct directions. The first involves attempts to illustrate that commitment can take different forms, meaning that the *nature* of the relationship between the employee and the other entity (e.g., an organization) can vary. The second involves efforts to distinguishing among the entities, *foci*, to which an employee becomes committed. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 8-9.)

It is also important to acknowledge another, more long-standing distinction that has been made between attitudinal and behavioral commitment. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 7-8.) Attitudinal commitment can be thought of as a mind set in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization. Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into the organization. (Mowday, Porter & Steers 1982, 26; for a strictly attitudinal definition of organizational commitment, see Solinger, van Olffen & Roe 2008; for more construct definitions, see Klein, Molloy & Cooper 2009.) Meyer & Allen (1991, 62) contemplated, that a complementary set of processes may be involved in the commitment-behavior link. In the attitudinal approach, the behavioral consequences of commitment might influence on the conditions that contribute to stability or change in commitment. As well as in the behavioral approach, attitudes resulting from behavior might affect the behavior occurring again in the future.

The existence of different frameworks and the use of different terms to mean the same thing (and the same terms to mean different things) have created some confusion (Meyer & Allen 1997, 111). Researchers have sought alternative ways to understand commitment in both theory and practice. Each of the approaches have contributed to the development of the concept of commitment (see e.g. Becker 1960; Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian 1974; Mowday, Steers & Porter 1979; Mowday et al. 1982; Meyer & Allen 1984). The traditional approaches have been challenged by multidimensional approaches arguing that people in the workplace are exposed to more than one commitment at a time. Therefore, the multidimensional approaches have the potential to better explain the concept of commitment and also provide better prediction of behaviors by commitment. (See e.g. O'Reilly & Chatman 1986; Meyer & Allen 1997; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky 2002; Herscovitch & Meyer 2002; Cohen 2003; Cohen 2007.)

2.1.1   The Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment

Meyer and Allen have noted that common to the various definitions of organizational commitment is viewing commitment as a "psychological state" characterizing the employee's relationship with the organization and having implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization. Committed employees are thus seen more likely to stay with the organization, regardless of the differences concerning the definition. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 11.)

There have been several attempts to define and measure commitment (e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman 1986; McGee & Ford 1987), but this study's framework is based on the three-component model introduced by Meyer and Allen (1991, 67). Definitions of commitment differ particularly in the nature of the psychological state being described. To acknowledge the differences between the natures of the psychological states Meyer and Allen applied different labels to the three

components (later referred to also as forms and dimensions) of commitment: affective, continuance and normative.

Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment because the *want* to do so. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they *need* to do so. Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they *ought* to remain with the organization. (Meyer & Allen 1991, 67.)

Several studies have supported the three-component model (e.g. Meyer & Allen 1993; Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf 1994; Dunham, Grube & Castaneda 1994; Allen & Meyer 1996), but the model has also been critiqued for its limited predictive validity and conceptual ambiguity (e.g. Cohen 2007, Solinger et. al. 2008). Some findings have suggested the need for further refinements in the conceptualization and measurement of commitment. Most notably, the continuance commitment scale has been found to comprise two related dimensions – one reflecting lack of alternatives, and the other reflecting high personal sacrifice (see e.g., Hackett et al.1994). Studies have also revealed stronger than expected correlations between the Affective Commitment Scale and the Normative Commitment Scale, suggesting that feelings of affective attachment and sense of obligation to an organization are not clearly independent of one another (e.g., Hackett et al., 1994; see also Bergman 2006).

2.1.2 Behavioral consequences of Organizational Commitment

Commitment to an organization has been shown to contribute uniquely to the prediction of important outcome variables. Although organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct, it can be clearly distinguished from other forms of workplace commitment and therefore worthy of study for its own sake. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 17; Morrow 1993.) The interest of many researcher has been to determine whether employees who are strongly committed to their organizations differ from those with weak commitment in terms of turnover, attendance at work and job performance – and whether organizational commitment has implications for employee well-being (Meyer & Allen 1997, 23).

As can be expected, affective, continuance and normative commitment are all related to employee retention. Several reviews report consistent negative correlations between organizational commitment and both intention to leave the organization and actual voluntary turnover behavior. Correlations are strongest for affective commitment, but significant relations have been found for all three conceptualizations of commitment. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 26.) However, the three components have quite different consequences for other work-related behavior, such as attendance, job performance or organizational citizenship behavior

(meaning the willingness to go "above and beyond the call of duty"). (Meyer & Allen 1997, 24.)

Affective commitment is positively related to attendance, except in the case of involuntary absence (e.g., due to illness or family emergencies). Correlations have again been found when measuring voluntary absence ("didn't feel like going to"). It has also been accordingly reported, that affective commitment contributes to the prediction of absence frequency, but not the total-days measure. In contrast to affective commitment, absenteeism does not seem to be significantly related to continuance nor normative commitment, or the studies have led to contradictory results. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 27-28.)

In comparing the behavioral consequences of the three forms of commitment, affective commitment has been found to have the strongest and most favorable correlations with organization-relevant (attendance, performance and organizational citizenship behavior) and employee-relevant (stress and work-family conflict) outcomes (Meyer et al. 2002, 20). Results of several studies suggest that employees with strong affective commitment to the organization work harder in their jobs and perform better than those with weak commitment. Affective commitment has been positively correlated with various self-reported measures of work effort, higher level of compliance with strategic decisions made and overall job performance. Numerous studies have also included independent assessments of performance. There are, however, also studies in which the connection has not been found. Those cases serve nevertheless a valuable possibility to increase understanding of the conditions under which significant links between affective commitment and performance will be observed. Affective commitment will most likely find expression in those aspects of job performance that employees believe are important, indicator reflects employee motivation and employee has adequate control over the outcomes in question. Also, the assessments made by supervisors require for the supervisors to take the ratings seriously. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 29-31.)

Several researchers have reported continuance commitment, for its part, and various performance measures correlating negatively or not correlating at all (see Meyer, Allen & Gellatly 1990). Only a few studies have examined normative commitment and in-role performance indicators. Relations have been parallel to, albeit weaker, than those found with affective commitment. The results of the studies have been somewhat contradictory, as some studies have shown no significant relations between normative commitment and independently rated performance indicators. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 33.) According to Meyer, Allen & Parfyonova (2010) normative commitment has "two faces" - one reflecting a sense of moral duty and the other a sense of indebted obligation. The behavioral implications of these two faces can be expected to be different.

As many managers have suspected, employees with strong affective commitment seem to be more willing to engage in organizational citizenship behavior than those with weak affective commitment. Significant relations have been found in studies using both, self-reporting and independent assessment of behavior. The relations between normative commitment and extra-role behavior

have been weaker than those involving affective commitment. Both affective and normative commitment are positively related to how broadly employees define their jobs and what is the tendency to engage in these behaviors. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 34-35.) Commitment has also been found to be related to the way employees respond to dissatisfaction with events at work. Affective commitment has been found to correlate with willingness to suggest improvements and to accept things as they are, and negatively correlated with neglect (tendency to withdraw passively from or ignore the dissatisfying situation). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, increases the likelihood to respond by neglecting from the dissatisfying situation.

According to Meyer and Allen (1997) it can be argued that there are also personal benefits associated with strong affective commitment, or at least it "feels better" to work in an environment about which one feels positively. Several studies have also reported significant negative correlations between affective commitment and various self-reported indices of psychological, physical and work-related stress. Like affective commitment, normative commitment has shown to be negatively correlated with stress-related variables, but no significant correlations have been found between continuance commitment and the measures. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 37.) Ruokolainen found in her study (2011) that organizational commitment proved to function as a strong precursor of work characteristics: the more affectively and normatively committed the employees were in 2003, the less job insecurity and work-to-family conflict they experienced in 2005. The findings concerning organizational commitment as an antecedent of work characteristics indicated, that affective and normative commitment could be functioning as positive resources. Thus, high organizational commitment might protect employees against negative job demands or at least help assessing them as less harmful. (Ruokolainen 2011, 84.)

Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe (2004) integrated organizational commitment and motivation, stating that commitment is one form of motivation and, by integrating theories between the constructs a better understanding of the two processes and of workplace behavior can be gained. Like commitment, motivation is multidimensional. It can take forms on the basis of the nature of the accompanying mindset. Compared with employees with lesser affective commitment, those with stronger affective commitment to a target experience greater intrinsic motivation. Highly committed and motivated employees also seem to set and accept more difficult goals.

Although the magnitude of the relations between affective commitment to the organization and work behavior might be quite low, there are some reconsiderations to be made. Sometimes the measures are vague and relevant behavior can not be observed. Many links between commitment and behaviors might also be moderated by other, situational factors (e.g., employees' level of financial need, or their career stage). It should be recognized, however, that even small changes in employee performance can have a significant impact on the organization. Additionally, there is some consistent, even though limited data

that affective commitment might have some positive consequences also for the quality of life beyond the workplace. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 38-40.)

2.1.3 Antecedents of Organizational Commitment

Several conceptualizations have been made upon the mechanisms involved in creating commitment. Meyer & Herscovitch (2001) propose, that any personal or situational variable that contributes to the likelihood that an individual will (a) become involved in a course of action, (b) recognize the value-relevance of association with an entity or pursuit of a course of action, and/or (c) derive his or hers identity from association with an entity, or from working toward an objective, will contribute to the development of affective commitment.

Antecedents of Affective Commitment

A wide range of affective commitment antecedent variables can be categorized between organizational characteristics, person characteristics and work experiences. The ways in which organizational level policies are designed, fairness of the policies, and the manner in which the policies are communicated have all been linked to affective commitment. Research on person characteristics has focused on two types of variables: demographic (e.g., gender, age, tenure) and dispositional (e.g., personality, values) variables. The results have been somewhat controversial and the causalities hard to conclude. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 42-45; see also e.g. Mowday et al. 1982.) Meyer et al. (2002) found that correlations with the demographic variables were generally low, although age and tenure did correlate with all three components of commitment (Meyer et al. 2002, 28).

The vast majority of commitment studies have focused on work experience variables. Several studies have reported strong correlations between job satisfaction and affective commitment. Specifically, affective commitment has been positively correlated with job challenge, degree of autonomy and variety of skills used. Employees who experience role ambiguity or role conflict are likely to have low levels of affective commitment.

Evidence that organizational supportiveness might play a role in the development of affective commitment comes from several studies. The role of supportiveness is also illustrated in research that is focused on characteristics of the leader. Affective commitment has been linked to measures of leader consideration, supervisor supportiveness, transformational and transactional leadership and leader-member exchange. Affective commitment is stronger among employees whose leaders allow them to participate in decision making and who treat them with consideration and fairness. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 45-46, Meyer & Allen 1991, 79.) Employees' perceptions about the fairness of the procedures used has been found to influence employees' affective commitment more strongly than satisfaction with their own personal outcomes. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 46-48.)

Ruokolainen (2011) found in her study, that affective commitment can be enhanced by emphasizing a humanistic organizational culture and humanistic HR practices. As organizational supportiveness can be viewed as a manifestation of humanistic organizational culture, it may be useful to foster features associated with it (e.g. fair treatment, supervisor support and favorable job conditions). Ruokolainen emphasized that managers play an important role in fostering employees' commitment. Managers should concentrate on giving adequate information about the organizational targets and visions, and behave as role models. Managers' interpersonal communication skills are also essential in enhancing employee commitment. Managers should be clear, consistent, truthful, open and honest in what they say. (Ruokolainen 2011, 91.)

Still another theme emerging from the antecedents literature involves the extent to which employees are made to feel that they make important contributions to the organization. For some employees, the importance of their contributions is communicated through the trust the organization appears to place in their work-related judgements. Also relevant are the experiences that contribute to employees' perceptions of competence. Employee perceptions of their own competence have been found to be strongly linked to commitment, and competence-enhancing experiences have been reported to promote affective commitment. Affective commitment has been related in many studies to job challenge, promotion within the organization and use of performance-contingent rewards. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 48-49.)

The main process involved in the development of affective commitment is the fulfillment of personal needs. Affective commitment will thus develop on the basis of psychologically rewarding experiences. Some emotional attachment to the organization might develop unconsciously, but most employees are likely to reflect explicitly on the pros and cons associated with various aspects of their working life. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 50-51.) Given that individuals differ in various ways (e.g., personality, values, needs, expectations), it seems likely that the personal characteristics will moderate the strength of the relation between a particular work experience and affective commitment. The findings suggest also, that conformity between the person's expectations and experiences influence in the development of affective commitment, as well as the quality and the person-job fit of the experience. Due to the complexity of the commitment construct, various different processes translating behavioral commitment into affective commitment have been studied. These processes, e.g. retrospective rationalization or justification process usually occur very quickly and without employee's awareness, and might be eclipsed by other processes in complex settings. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 49-50.)

Literature also suggests, that causal attributions might play an important role in the development of affective commitment. If employees believe that organizational practices are motivated by concern and respect for employees, they tend to report stronger affective commitment. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 52-55.)

Antecedents of Continuance and Normative Commitment

Continuance commitment refers to the employee's awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Thus, continuance commitment can develop as a result of any action or event that increases the recognized costs of leaving the organization. Investments, or side-bets (see Becker 1960) would be lost, if employee were to lose the organization. The other hypothesized antecedent of continuance commitment is the perception of employment alternatives. Such cues as employment rates, currency of skills, results of previous job search attempts or family factors serve as base for considering personally viable alternatives. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 56-58.) Because continuance commitment is unrelated, or even negatively related, to desirable on-the-job-behavior, interest in its development might be stimulated more by a desire to avoid creating continuance commitment in attempts to foster affective commitment (Meyer et al. 2002, 42).

Normative commitment refers to an employee's feelings of obligation to remain with the organization. It has been suggested that normative commitment to the organization develops on the basis of a collection of pressures individuals feel during their early socialization (from family and culture) and socialization as newcomers to the organization. It has also been suggested that normative commitment can develop on the basis of particular organizational investments that seem difficult for employees to reciprocate (e.g., organization-sponsored tuition). Normative commitment might also develop on the basis of the "psychological contract" between the employee and the organization, bringing on the feelings of obligation and reciprocity. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 63; see also Meyer & Parfyonova 2010.)

Although the processes believed to be involved in the development of the commitment dimensions have been described separately, they occur to a large extent in concert (Meyer & Allen 1997, 65). To understand commitment at work, one must understand distinctions made with respect to both the nature of commitment and the focus of commitment; that is, one must recognize that commitment can take multiple forms, each of which can be focused on multiple entities, including the work group, the supervisor, top management, the occupation, and the union (see Figure 1, Meyer's & Allen's multidimensional model of organizational commitment, its antecedents and its consequeces).

2.1.4   Defining Organizational Commitment

Meyer's and Allen's research in the area of organizational commitment began with an attempt to illustrate how inconsistencies in the conceptualization and measurement of commitment might interfere with their understanding of the commitment process (Meyer & Allen 1997, 116). The early work (Meyer & Allen 1984; McGee & Ford 1987; Allen & Meyer 1990) led to the development of the three-component model of commitment and of measures of the three

components: affective, continuance and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen 1991). A revision of the three scales was undertaken in response to some of the confusing findings, being extensive in the case of normative commitment (Meyer et al. 1993). Allen and Meyer (1996) presented a thorough review of the research as it pertained to the psychometric properties of the measures.

As the concept of commitment, its dimensions, behavioral consequences and antecedes have now been introduced, it can indeed be stated that commitment is a multidimensional construct (see e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman 1986; Mathieu & Zajac 1990; Meyer et al. 1993; Morrow 1993; Allen & Meyer 1996; Meyer & Allen 1997). There is, still, less agreement about what the dimensions of the commitment are (Meyer & Allen 1997, 16). Meyer & Allen (1997) have restated their early conceptualization of commitment as follows:

> "Affective, continuance, and normative commitment are psychological states that characterize the person's relationship with the entity in question and have implications for the decision to remain involved with it. "

Also the focus of commitment can vary and an individual may be committed on several entities (e.g., the work group, the occupation, the organization). Commitment can thus take different forms and can be directed at different constituencies within the organization. The importance of distinguishing among these different forms and foci of commitments is illustrated by the evidence that they relate somewhat differently to behavior (Meyer & Allen 1997, 107).

What makes studying commitment even more complicated is that each employee's commitment profile can change over time and reflect varying degrees of different forms of commitment to different foci (Meyer & Allen 1997, 20). Meyer & Herscovitch (2001) pointed out, that despite the increase in attention given to the study of workplace commitments, there still appears to be considerable confusion and disagreement about what commitment is, where it is directed, how it develops and how it affects behavior. As an answer, they integrated the existing conceptualizations into a general model of workplace commitment, arguing that commitment should have a "core essence" (see Figure 3) and proposing that:

> "Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to target and can be accompanied by different mind-sets that play a role in shaping behavior."
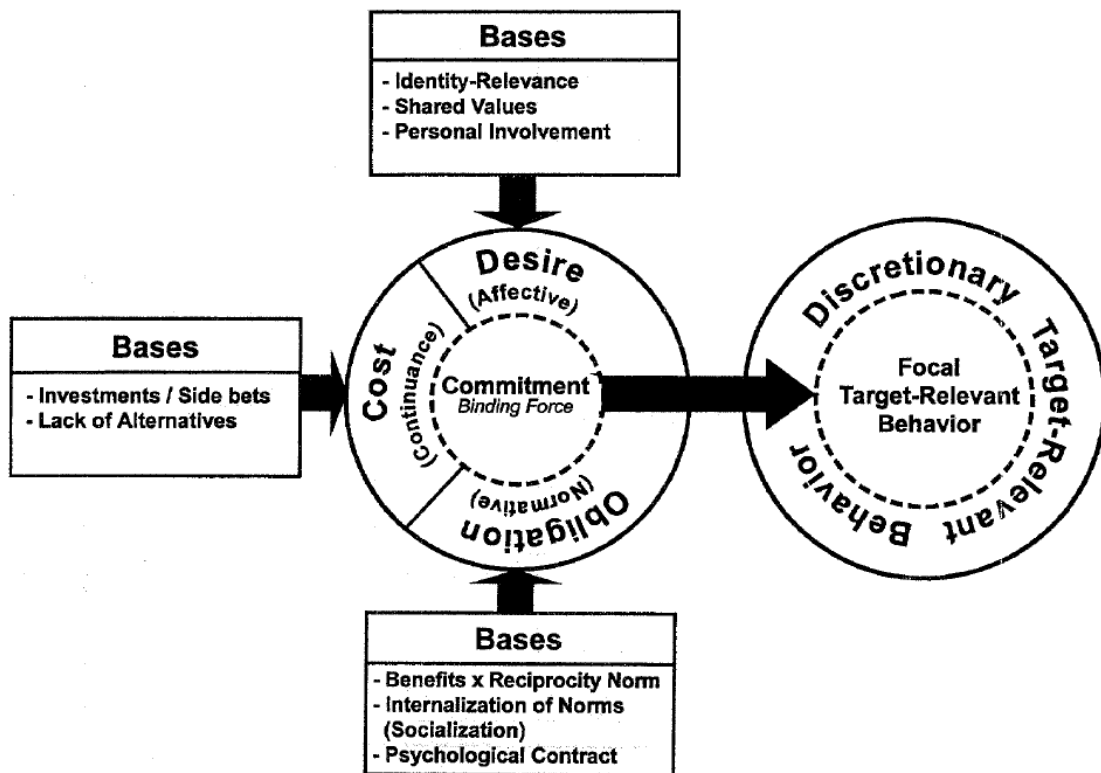
FIGURE 3 A general model of workplace commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 317)

The inner circle of the model reflects the core essence of commitment – the sense of being bound to a course of action of relevance to a particular target. The outer circle represents the different natures of commitment, mind-sets, that can characterize any commitment. A commitment can reflect varying degrees of all three of these mind-sets. According to the model, the focal behavior will occur with a high degree of probability, because employees feel bound to engage in the behavior. Commitments can vary in strength, and employees might have multiple commitments with conflicting implications on behavior. (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 317-318.)

The bases for the mind-sets characterizing affective, continuance and normative commitment reflect the process involved in the development of the three commitment mind-sets. There are also many, more specific factors (e.g., personal, job and organizational characteristics) that can influence the development of commitment mind-sets. However, these factors are likely to exert their influence on commitment indirectly, through the identified bases. (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 319.)

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is commonly described as an employee's attitude toward his or her job. Job satisfaction has been associated with many different behavioral outcomes and also employee well-being. There are several theories that have tried to measure job satisfaction and understand the antecedents, as well as consequences, of job satisfaction construct (see e.g., Juuti 2006). The pioneering theory of work redesign, the Herzberg two-factor theory of satisfaction and motivation (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman 1959) has prompted a great deal of research, and inspired several successful change projects involving the redesign of work (Hackman & Oldham 1976, 251). The aim of work redesign is to improve job satisfaction and productivity by responding to the employees' intrinsic needs.

2.2.1 The Job Characteristics Model

Hackman and Oldham (1975) developed the Job Characteristics Model to diagnose existing jobs to determine if (and how) they might be redesigned to improve employee motivation and productivity, and to evaluate the effects of job changes on employees. The primary data collection instrument is the Job Diagnostic Survey, an instrument specifically designed to measure each of the variables in the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham 1976, 259). The model can be used as a conceptual basis for the diagnosis of jobs being considered for redesign. The model focuses exclusively on the relationship between individuals and their work, and it is designed to apply to jobs that are carried out more-or-less independently by individuals. (Hackman & Oldham 1976, 276-277.)

The Job Diagnostic Survey provides measures of the five core job dimensions, critical psychological states resulting from these dimensions, and affective reactions of employees to the personal and work setting (Hackman & Oldham 1975, 159). The theory proposes that positive personal and work outcomes (high internal motivation, high work satisfaction, high quality performance, and low absenteeism and turnover) are obtained when three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the results of the work activities) are present for a given employee. All three of these psychological states must be present for the positive outcomes to be realized. (Hackman & Oldham 1975, 160.) According to the theory, these critical psychological states are created by the presence of five core job dimensions. *Experienced meaningfulness of the work* is enhanced primarily by the three of core dimensions: skill variety, task identity and task significance. *Experienced responsibility for work outcomes* is increased when a job has high autonomy. *Knowledge of the results* is increased when a job is high on feedback.

The three psychological states are the causal core of the Job Characteristics Model. The model postulates that individual experiences positive affect to the

extent that the employee learns (knowledge of results) that the employee personally (experienced responsibility) has performed well on a task that he or she cares about (experienced meaningfulness). This positive affect is reinforcing to the individual, and serves as an incentive to continue to try to perform well in the future. When the employee does not perform well, he or she does not experience an internally reinforcing state of affairs, and may elect to try harder in the future so as to regain the internal rewards that good performance brings. The net result is argued to be manifested as a self-perpetuating cycle of positive work motivation powered by self-generated rewards. The cycle is predicted to continue until one or more of the three psychological states is no longer present, or until the individual no longer values the internal rewards that derive from good performance. (Hackman & Oldham 1976, 256.)

The Job Diagnostic Survey provides measures of a number of personal, affective reactions or feelings a person obtains from performing the job. A number of short scales provide separate measures of satisfaction with job security, pay and other compensation, peers and co-workers ("social satisfaction"), supervision, and opportunity for personal growth and development on the job. (Hackman & Oldham 1975, 162.) Worth noticing is, that a job high in motivation potential will not affect all individuals in the same way. People, who strongly value and desire personal feelings of accomplishment and growth should respond very positively to a job which is high on the core dimensions. Individuals who do not value personal growth, and accomplishment, may find such a job anxiety arousing and may be uncomfortably stretched by it. This individual growth need strength is an important moderator of the other relationships. (Hackman & Oldham 1975, 160; see also Hackman & Oldham 1976, 274.)

2.2.2   Behavioral outcomes of Job Satisfaction

There are several behaviors and employee outcomes that have been hypothesized to be realized as a result of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. These include not only work related variables, such as job performance and turnover, but also non-work related variables, such as health and life satisfaction. Many of these effects have been shown to correlate with job satisfaction, but the causality has yet to be established. (Spector 1997, 55.)

Job satisfaction is found to correlate with job performance in several studies, although the results have been somewhat inconsistent and the interest to research the phenomena has varied during the past decades (see e.g., Iaffaldano & Muchinsky 1985; Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton 2001; on deconstructing job satisfaction and its measurement, see Weiss 2002).

People who are happy with their jobs might be more motivated, work harder, and therefore perform better. Although it is possible that job satisfaction leads to job performance, the opposite direction of causality is also equally feasible. There is stronger evidence that people who perform better like their jobs

better because of the rewards that are often associated with good performance. Also matching employee abilities to job requirements has found to enhance both, job performance and job satisfaction. People who tend to do their jobs well and perform well tend to have a higher job satisfaction. (Spector 1997, 56.) Job complexity may also moderate the job performance–job satisfaction correlation, because effective performance in complex jobs may satisfy many individuals' values for intrinsic fulfillment in their work. Thus, performance is satisfying because it brings success in the form of valued rewards. (Judge et al. 2001, 392.)

As was the case with organizational commitment, one of the behavioral outcomes linked to job satisfaction as well, is organizational citizenship behavior (behavior that goes beyond the formal requirements of a job). It could be that job satisfaction leads to organizational citizenship behavior rather than required performance. People who are happy with their jobs might be willing to go beyond what is required of them. (Spector 1997, 57.) Both theory and empirical evidence indicate, that positive affect is related to employee motivation and other positive aspects of organizational membership, as well as job satisfaction and job performance (Judge et al. 2001, 380).

Although little research has been reported on counterproductive behavior (the opposite of organizational citizenship behavior), available studies suggest an important role for job satisfaction here. Anything that an organization can do to make the workplace better for its employees has the potential of the enhancing job satisfaction and reducing counterproductive behavior. Often, actions as simple as offering reasonable explanations for decisions can help reduce unwanted behaviors. (Spector 1997, 67-68.)

Many theories hypothesize that people who dislike their jobs will avoid them, either permanently, by quitting or temporarily by being absent or coming in late. These withdrawal behaviors have been given more attention than any other behavioral consequence on job satisfaction research. Organizations are concerned with absence, because it is a phenomenon that can reduce organizational effectiveness and efficiency by increasing labor costs. Where absence rates among employees are high, also costs can be high. Because absence is a complex variable that can have multiple causes, correlation with job satisfaction is not quite apparent. Some studies have also suggested, that the "absence culture" of an organization or work group might determine absence. That is, the decision not to come to work is affected by the individual's knowledge about coworker's absence behavior. (Spector 1997, 58-61.)

Studies have been reasonably consistent in showing a correlation between job satisfaction and turnover. Furthermore, based on longitudinal designs, it seems certain that this correlation is causal. It seems that characteristics of the individual combine with characteristics of the job environment in determining the level of job satisfaction. If the job satisfaction level is sufficiently low, the person will develop a behavioral intention to quit the job. That intention may lead to job search activities, which if successful will lead to turnover. Alternate employment opportunities are important, because a person is not likely to quit without another job offer. (Spector 1997, 62-63.)

Hulin & Judge (2003) stated that job satisfaction includes multidimensional psychological responses to one's job and that such responses have cognitive, affective and behavioral components. Judge & Klinger (2007) point out that cognition and affect concepts could help us better understand the nature of job satisfaction, but it is very difficult to separate the measures of cognition and affect. In fact, there is no consensus on the roles of cognition and affect in job satisfaction research (Judge & Klinger 2007, 405).

The interplay of work and non-work is an important ingredient in understanding people's reactions to jobs. Behavior and feelings about non-work are influenced by experience on the job and vice versa. Life satisfaction refers to a person's feelings about life in general. Because work is a major component of life for people who are employed, it seems obvious that job satisfaction and life satisfaction should be related. (Spector 1997, 68-70.) Arguments have been made, that both physical and psychological health are influenced by job attitudes. Individuals who are not satisfied with their jobs could experience adverse health outcomes. These outcomes include both physical symptoms and psychological problems. Even though much of the evidence is circumstantial, it seems likely that job experiences have the potential to affect health. (Spector 1997, 66-67.)

Evidence indicates that job satisfaction is strongly and consistently related to subjective well-being and that the relationship is, indeed, reciprocal – job satisfaction does affect life satisfaction, but life satisfaction also affects job satisfaction (Judge & Klinger 2007, 403-404). Judge & Klinger state that job satisfaction is a "salient and inveterate attitude, permeating cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of peoples' work and non-work lives". The reciprocal nature of job attitudes and subjective well-being highlights the fact that a sound understanding of one domain is incomplete without due consideration of the other (Judge & Klinger 2007, 407).

2.3   Organizational Trust

Trust is a construct that has an enormous amount of different definitions. According to Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner (1998) trust in another party reflects an expectation that the other party will act benevolently. Second, trust involves a willingness to be vulnerable and risk that the other party may not fulfill that expectation. Third, trust involves some level of dependency on the other party. Trust is not merely an attitude, but it exists in the parties' relationship. The construct of trust can be examined on different levels and foci, e.g. global, national, inter-organizational or work-team level. This study is concentrated on organizational trust. Organizational trust includes attributes like trust in organization's strategy, vision and ability to produce competitive products and services, as well as trust on fair and functional processes (e.g. HR processes). Organizational trust complements the traditional construct of interpersonal trust (Vesterinen 2011, 113).

Organizational trust can be seen as an attitude held by one party, the trustor, e.g. an employing organization, towards the other, the trustee, e.g. employees. Organizational trust can be seen as the degree to which managers hold a positive attitude toward employees' reliability and goodwill in a risky situation and vice versa (Lämsä & Pučėtaitė 2006, 131).

2.3.1 Affect- and Cognition-Based Trust

Trust between actors is seen as a determining factor in whether interdependent actors work together effectively within complex systems of coordinated action. Under conditions of uncertainty and complexity, requiring mutual adjustment, sustained effective coordinated action is only possible where there is mutual confidence or trust. (McAllister 1995, 24-25.)

McAllister (1995) has defined interpersonal trust as "the extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions, and decisions of another". Trust is generally divided into two different forms: cognition-based and affect-based trust. Cognition-based trust means a choice to trust someone based on rational evidence of trustworthiness. According to past research, central elements of cognitive (or calculative) trust are competence, responsibility, reliability and dependability. Affective trust is based on emotional, reciprocal bonds that build affective foundations for trust to develop. (McAllister 1995, 25-26.) Some level of cognition-based trust may be necessary for affect-based trust to develop, but affective trust should be viewed as a distinct form of trust rather than as a higher level of trust. Once a high level of affect-based trust has developed, cognitive basis for trust may no longer be needed. (McAllister 1995, 30.)

Proponents of the strictly cognitive approach to trust would argue that while emotions may create a temporary "irrationality", after a period of time the perception will return to a rational perspective. Nonetheless, it appears to be clear, that emotions do influence the perception of the antecedents of trust and, therefore, the trust in relationships. It is also likely, that emotion does dissipate over time after a violation of trust. What is not clear is whether it ever completely dissipates and returns to a non-emotional evaluation. Alternatively, while emotions are being experienced, they may lead the trustor to update prior perceptions of the trustworthiness dimensions and trust such that even after the emotions dissipate, the effect on the cognitive evaluations remains. (Schoorman, Mayer & Davis 2007, 349.)

2.3.2 Behavioral outcomes of Organizational Trust

Research has indicated that organizational trust enables commitment, generates well-being and improves the overall quality of working life. Existence of trust in an organization is an important issue, because it has so many positive effects.

Employees feel better, want to develop their competence and adapt to change better, among other things (Vesterinen 2011, 112). Trust advances knowledge creation and sharing, as well as employee cooperation. People feel safe in a trusting work community. Atmosphere of trust makes new ideas easier to introduce and innovativeness increases. Solidarity between the members of the organization, increased knowledge and social resources, better diversity tolerance, decreased transaction costs, stronger attachment to the organization, faith in organizational procedures and deeper sense of security can also be strenghtened as a consequence of trust (Vesterinen 2011, 114).

Behavioral outcomes and antecedents of both, cognitive- and affect-based trust have been studied a lot. McAllister (1995) hypothesized reliable role performance, cultural-ethnic similarity and professional credential to be antecedents of cognition-based trust, but the claims were not supported. However, organizational citizenship behavior and the frequency of interaction between the parties were supported as antecedents of affect-based trust.

Where cognition-based trust is present, levels of monitoring and defensive behavior will be lower (McAllister 1995, 31). High level of affect-based trust, for its part, will engage the members of the relationship to respond to the needs of the other and direct a great amount of citizenship behavior toward the other member. Increased assistance may follow either from an increased awareness of the needs or from a desire to assist the other member in meeting their objectives and to express felt care and concern tangibly. (McAllister 1995, 31-32.)

In addition to organizational trust's direct effects on a variety of outcomes, trust engenders two distinct processes through which it fosters or inhibits positive outcomes. First, trust affects how one assesses the future behavior of another party. Second, trust also affects how one interprets the past (or present) actions of the other party, and the motives underlying the actions. (Dirks & Ferrin 2001; about the effect of context on trust, see Wicks & Berman 2004.)

Trust can be seen as a critical factor when talking about cooperation, communication and commitment in work (Vesterinen 2011, 121). Whitener et al. (1998) argue, that managers' actions and behaviors provide the foundation for trust and that it is management's responsibility to take the first step to initiate trusting relationships. Managerial trustworthy behavior consists of five categories that influence employees' perceptions of managerial trustworthiness: behavioral consistency, behavioral integrity, sharing and delegation of control, communication and demonstration of concern (for more precise description of the categories, see Whitener et al. 1998, 516-518). There are also a major set of variables identified at the organizational, relational and individual level that are believed to support or encourage managerial trustworthy behavior (Whitener et al. 1998, 518-523).

2.4 Relationship Among Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Trust

Now that the main variables have been presented, the next step is to take a look at how these leadership themes are interrelated and present the model as well as the research questions of the study. The relationship has been examined from the perspective of affective organizational commitment. Affective commitment has been chosen as the angle of incident, because the past research and literature have indicated, that (of the three commitment dimensions) it has the most consistent and straightforward outcome implications. Having affectively committed employees can thus be considered desirable for any organization.

2.4.1 Job Satisfaction as an antecedent of Affective Organizational Commitment

Workplaces and work experiences affect employees' thoughts, feelings and actions as well as the thoughts, feelings and actions affect the organizations in which the employees work (Brief & Weiss 2002, 280). Although job satisfaction has an "affective" tone, it is distinguishable from affective commitment (Meyer et al. 2002, 22). Mowday et al. (1979) suggested that job satisfaction is a more transitory and changeable attitude than organizational commitment. Job satisfaction has found to have stronger relationship with shorter-term measures of performance, and commitment may be more strongly associated with long-term measures of performance (Shore & Martin 1989, 634). Job satisfaction has also been described as a correlate of affective commitment, because there is no consensus concerning the causal ordering between the two constructs.

A variety of antecedents of affective commitment have been identified, including personal characteristics, structural characteristics, job characteristics and work experiences (Mowday et a. 1982). The intention of examining job satisfaction as an antecedent for affective commitment in this study is supported with findings by several researchers (e.g., Allen & Meyer 1990; Meyer & Allen 1991; Dunham et al. 1994; Hackett et al. 1994; Allen & Meyer 1996; Coetzee, Mitonga-Monga & Swart 2014). Meyer and Allen (1991) noted that by far the strongest and most consistent relationships have been obtained with work experiences. Employees whose experiences within the organization are consistent with their expectations and satisfy their basic needs tend to develop a stronger affective attachment to the organization than those whose experiences are less satisfying (Meyer et al. 1993).

Affective commitment has been positively correlated with job challenge, degree of autonomy and a possibility to use a variety of skills. Specifically, affective commitment is expected to be correlated with those experiences in, and characteristics of, the organization that make the employee feel "psychologically

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comfortable" and that enhance the employee's sense of competence. (Allen & Meyer 1996.)

2.4.2 Organizational Trust as an antecedent of Affective Organizational Commitment

As of the work experience variables, perceived organizational support has been found to have strongest positive correlation with affective commitment. Organizational support and organizational dependability were the two strongest correlated variables among the experiences of organizational support category reported by Allen & Meyer (1996). Yang & Mossholder (2010) found in their study, that affective trust in management and affective trust in supervisor significantly predicted affective organizational commitment. Spence Laschinger, Finegan & Shamian (2001) reported, that when employees feel they have sufficient access to support, resources and information to get their work done, they are more likely to have faith in their managers and feel that organizational policies are intended to benefit employees. Consequently, they will be satisfied with their work and more committed to accomplishing organizational goals.

Employee perceptions of organizational support build trust. Employees interpret managerial actions and decisions as well as organizational policies and procedures as demonstrating the organization's commitment to and support of them and reciprocate with positive attitudes and higher performance. Therefore, in order to obtain affectively committed employees, organizations must demonstrate their own commitment by providing a supportive work environment and treat employees fairly.

On the other hand, distrust and dissatisfaction with management might impact negatively on enjoyment and performance of the job. The lack of support and, hence, lack of management commitment might gradually lead to less committed employees. (Young & Daniel 2003, 150.) Insecurity related to the job and organizational characteristics was one of the most important factors associated with employees' weak organizational commitment in Ruokolainen's study (2011, 83).

The perceptions of organizational support have been found to affect attitudinal commitment, attendance, performance, turnover intentions and organizational citizenship behaviors. Employees would reciprocate their perceptions that the organization cares about and is committed to them with trust in the organization. An organization's strategic, innovative HR activities are likely to convey a message of organizational support to its employees. These practices move beyond the traditional HR activities by caring for and showing commitment to employees. Whether the activities affect employees' skills or motivation, they communicate commitment and support. Employees are likely to respond to the variety of HR activities that portray their perceptions of the organization's support with their own commitment and support. (Whitener 1997.)

There has been some indications, however, that job enjoyment and job satisfaction do not always depend on trust. That is, the performance will continue at the same quality level whether management is trusted or not. If an employee is very committed to his or hers work, it may be job satisfaction, rather than trust, what drives the performance. (Young & Daniel 2003, 152.) In another study Appelbaum, Louis, Makarenko, Saluja, Meleshko & Kulbashian (2013) argued, that employee trust in management is an important determinant of their willingness to participate in decision making. Participation in decision making will, in turn, improve employees' efforts and benefit their job satisfaction and commitment to work.

Lämsä and Päivike (2010) presented a concept of trust-based commitment. The formation of commitment based on trust requires that an employee feels emotional attachment to his or hers job and organization. Work brings sense and meaning to one's life. Trust-based commitment includes also moral ingredients, that is the sense of obligation an employee feels towards the job and organization. Building trust-based commitment in an organization calls for even and fair division between the rights and obligations. (See Lämsä & Päivike 2010, 96.)

Organizational support can also be seen as a mechanism through which other variables influence affective commitment. Hence, variables that contribute to perceptions of support (e.g., HR policies and practices) might indirectly contribute to the development of affective commitment. Identifying such mediating mechanisms there will be better possibilities to explain why the known relations exist. Because commitment is a multidimensional construct, and each component exerts an independent influence on a specific behavioral tendency, the correlation between any single component of commitment and a measure of that behavior will be moderated by the other components. (Meyer et al. 2002, 39.)

2.4.3   Examined relationships between the variables

The main variables – organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust – have now been presented in the previous chapters, as well as the theories behind them. Figure 4 presents the model of the study including the main variables and the background variables. All main variables are analyzed at two levels; at the construct level and at the dimensional level.
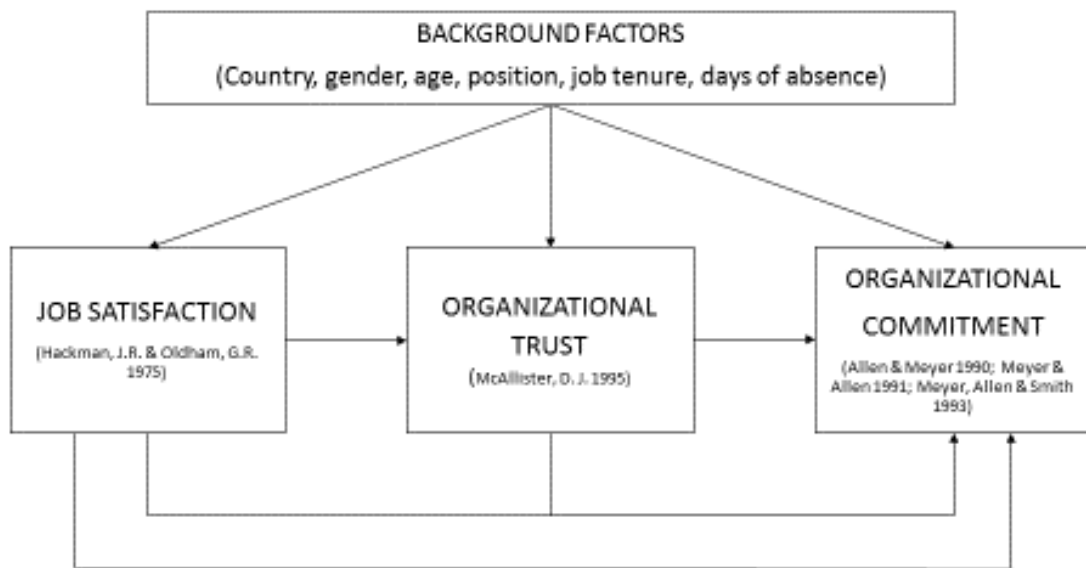
FIGURE 4 Examined relationships between the main variables and background factors

The participants of the survey study have answered the questions concerning the leadership themes based on their personal work experiences. The first research question is:

RQ1: How high do the participants estimate the level of their organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust? How do the background factors affect the evaluations?

Next object of interest is to examine if any signs of existing interrelation between the main variables can be found. Thus, the next reseach question is:

RQ2: How do organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust relate with each other?

Based on the previous research evidence and literature, three hypotheses are then presented:

H1: Job satisfaction relates positively with organizational commitment, especially with affective commitment.

H2: Organizational trust relates positively with organizational commitment, especially with affective commitment.

H3: The combined effect of job satisfaction with organizational trust on organizational commitment is stronger than the effects of job satisfaction and organizational trust as separate variables.

The main variables consist of different dimensions, or components (see Figure 2). Due to the distinct characteristics of these dimensions there is an interest to examine also the relations between the variable dimensions. The third research question will thus be:

RQ3: Which dimensions of job satisfaction and organizational trust can be determined as antecedents of organizational commitment and its dimensions?

Based on the previous research findings, it is hypothesized that:

H4: Different dimensions of job satisfaction and organizational trust predict affective organizational commitment than continuance and normative commitment.

3   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter's focus is to present how the research was conducted; the empirical methods, measures and statistical analyses. The cross-sectional survey sample is examined with a quantitative research approach to produce more information about the leadership themes, their relations and background factors' influence on the participants' experiences.

3.1   Conducting the survey

This study examines survey data that has been gathered earlier in an SME development project "Sustainable Organizational Practices and Leadership for the Wellbeing of Employees" (SOLWE project). The data was collected during the autumn 2011 between the spring 2013 by a survey method. Both electronic and paper questionnaires were used.

The background variables are presented in Table 1. There were altogether 535 participants from eight Finnish and twenty Estonian companies. 38 % of the participants were from Finland and 62 % from Estonia. The percentage of female participants was 66 %. The participants were genderwise very unevenly distributed between the countries: in the Finnish sample the share of women was 32 % and in Estonian sample the share of women was 86 %. Mean age was 39.4 years (median 36 years), and the participants were between 19-74 years of age (Finland 36.3 / 19-65, Estonia 41.2 / 21-74).

The participants were classified into age groups. 27 % were under 30 years (FIN 37 % / EST 21 %), 32 % were between 31-40 years: (FIN 34 % / EST 30 %), 21 % were between 41-50 years: (FIN 17 % / EST 24 %) and 20 % were over 50 years: (FIN 12 % / EST 25 %). Worth mentioning is the fact, that 59 % of the participants in this study were under 40 years old (FIN 71 % / EST 52 %).

The work positions were divided into four categories: 24 % were employees (FIN 62 % / EST 0.3 %), 52 % were officials (FIN: 23 % / EST 69 %), 23 % had managerial positions (FIN 12 % / EST 29 %) and 2 % had other positions than the previously mentioned ones (FIN 3 % / EST 2 %). The mean of the job tenure (meaning here the continuous employment in the same company) was 8.36 years, being anything in between 0-53 years (FIN 5.51 / 1-40, EST 10.07 / 0-53). Job tenure was again classified into four categories. 20 % had worked less than 1 year for the same company (FIN 30 % / EST 13 %), 34 % had 2-5 years experience in the current company (FIN 39 % / EST 31 %), 20 % had 6-10 years experience in the current company (FIN 14 %/ EST 24 %) and 26 % had over 10 years experience in the current company (FIN 16 % / EST: 32 %). Compatible to the fact of relatively young participants, 74 % of the participants had been working less than 10 years for their current company.

44 % of the participants reported having no days of absence due to illness during the previous 12 months (FIN 28 % / EST 54 %), 42 % had less than 9 days of absence (FIN 56 % / EST 33 %), 10 % had absence periods from 10 days to 1 month (FIN 12 % / EST 9 %), 2 % had absence periods from 1 month to 2 months (FIN 3 % / EST 2 %), 1 % had absence periods from 2 months to 6 months (FIN 1 % / EST 1 %) and 1 % had absence periods lasting more than 6 months (FIN 1 % / EST: 1 %).

Background factors	n	%
Country		
1) Finland	202	38
2) Estonia	333	62
Gender		
1) Female	349	66
2) Male	183	34
Age		
1) − 30	145	27
2) 31 − 40	167	32
3) 41 − 50	112	21
4) 50 −	107	20
Position		
1) Employee	126	23
2) Official	277	52
3) Managerial position	121	23
4) Other	11	2
Job tenure (current company)		
1) − 1 year	104	20
2) 2 − 5 years	180	34
3) 6 − 10 years	107	20
4) > 10 years	137	26
Days of absence due to illness (during the prev. year)		
1) None	235	44
2) − 9 days	223	42
3) 10 days − 1 month	53	10
4) > 1 month − 2 months	13	2
5) > 2 months − 6 months	4	1
6) > 6 months	5	1

TABLE 1 Description of the data

There were also some other background characteristics included, that were not further analyzed in this study. The mean of occupation tenure (experience in the

current occupation) was 10.58 years and the tenure under the current supervisor was 5.06 years. 91 % of the participants had permanent employment contract with their current organization, 19 % reported they were doing shift-work and 14 % were already part-time retired at the time of the survey.

3.2   Measurements

Theoretical background for all the measures used in this study is presented in chapter 2 (see also Figure 2). The viewpoint is organizational, as the measures indicate the individuals' (as participants) experiences of commitment, job satisfaction and trust towards their organization. The sample was studied as a whole, not specifically looking for or emphasizing possible differences between the two countries.

In the SOLWE project organizational commitment was measured with an abbreviated 14 item version of Meyer's and Allen's 24 item measure (Allen & Meyer 1990; Meyer & Allen 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith 1993; Meyer & Allen 1997; see also Koponen et al. 2012). Organizational commitment was measured for example with questions "I feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization" (affective commitment), "It would be costly for me to leave my organization" (continuance commitment) and "If I got a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization" (normative commitment). The scale for the measure was from one to five, where: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = slightly disagree, 3 = not disagree/not agree, 4 = slightly agree and 5 = strongly agree.

Job satisfaction was assessed with a 17 item measure based on Hackman's and Oldham's Job Diagnostic Survey (see Hackman & Oldham 1975). Measure examines five specific satisfaction dimensions, which are: satisfaction with the feeling of security, satisfaction with social aspects of work, satisfaction with fair pay, satisfaction with supervision and satisfaction with worthwhile accomplishment and growth possibilities. The scale for the measure was from one to five, where: 1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = dissatisfied/slightly dissatisfied, 3 = neutral, 4 = satisfied/slightly satisfied and 5 = very satisfied.

Organizational trust was measured with an 11 item measure developed by McAllister (1995). The original McAllister measure was developed to investigate dyadic trust relationships in an organization. In SOLWE project the items were changed from dyadic level to organizational level. For example original item "I can talk freely to this individual about difficulties I am having at work and know that (s)he will want to listen" was changed into "In our organization I can talk freely about difficulties I am having at work and know that my co-workers will want to listen" (see McAllister 1995, Koponen et al. 2012). The scale for the measure was from one to seven, where: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree 4 = not disagree/not agree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree and 7 = strongly agree.

3.3   Reliability and Validity of the Research

When the measures are valid, there is a chance of obtaining reliable information. Using ready made measures usually provides comparable results. (Metsämuuronen 2009, 67.) Measures used in the SOLWE project are all well-known and thoroughly tested, so they can be considered appropriate for the study (Koponen et al. 2012, 19). The original measures were in English, but the questions were first translated into Finnish and Estonian and then back-translated into English to minimize the risk of semantic misunderstandings.

The reliability of the measures and sums of the variables was evaluated by examining the internal consistency and counting the Cronbach alphas for the measures. The alphas were counted by the mean of the answers method. (see Metsämuuronen 2009, 544-545.)

	N of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Scale
Organizational Commitment	14	.83	1 – 5
Affective Commitment	8	.87	1 – 5
Continuance Commitment	3	.70	1 – 5
Normative Commitment	3	.53	1 – 5
Job Satisfaction	14	.89	1 – 5
Security	1		1 – 5
Social	3	.65	1 – 5
Pay	1		1 – 5
Supervisory	5	.90	1 – 5
Growth	4	.84	1 – 5
Organizational Trust	11	.88	1 – 7
Affective Trust	5	.86	1 – 7
Cognitive Trust	6	.76	1 – 7

TABLE 2 Measures of reliability

The alpha value should be bigger than .60 to serve as a proof of reability. It can be noticed from the Table 2, that the value is acceptable for all measures but normative commitment. The low alpha value could be improved by leaving some of the items out of the sum of the variables (Metsämuuronen 2009, 549). Because there are only three questions in the normative commitment sum of the variable, and the overall alpha value of the organizational commitment variable is good, the normative commitment sum of the variable was considered reliable and acceptable for further study. Also the fact, that the normative commitment sum of the variable was used in the SOLWE project support the acceptability.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

The survey data was already filed as an SPSS Statistics Data Document and version 22 of the software was used to execute the analyses. At first, the descriptive statistics of the variables were examined to find any possible and apparent deviations. Three additional questions used in the SOLWE survey's organizational commitment section (questions 15-17) were left out of this study, because they addressed the participants' opinions about their re-employment, which wasn't specifically a part of this study's framework.

Reverse coding was necessary for one of the questions used in the survey's organizational trust section (question 11), since the question was negatively coded and all the scales should be combatible before calculating the sums of the variables (see Metsämuuronen 2009, 122, 541). Single questions were then formulated into sums of variables that provide also latent information about the phenomena (Metsämuuronen 2009, 540). Sums of the variables are presented in Table 2.

The object of the statistical analysis is to obtain statistically significant results. Significance value indicates the probability that repetition leads to incorrect conclusions. In human sciences $p \leqslant .05$ value is usually considered well enough to prove that true correlation exist in the population studied (hence the observed effect is not due to random chance). The results are reported on three significance levels (either as the p value or as asterisks), where ***p < .001 is considered as highly significant, **p < .01 as significant and *p < .05 as nearly significant. (Metsämuuronen 2009, 422-423, 440-442.)

3.4.1 Correlations

Presumption for using correlation analysis is that there is a linear connection between the variables. Value of the correlation can be anything between -1 and 1. In human sciences .4 - .6 is considered moderate, .6 - .8 is considered strong and .8 – 1 very strong. (Metsämuuronen 2009, 370-371.)

Spearman correlation was used to explore how the background factors correlate with the main variables. Spearman correlation works out best for ordinal scale measures. Pearson correlation was used to find out the strength of the relationships among the main variables. Pearson correlation works well for Likert –scale (interval scale) measures. Correlations are most often presented as matrices, as also in this study. (see Metsämuuronen 2009, 369-369, 372.)

3.4.2   One Way ANOVA

With One Way ANOVA it is possible to examine how grouped background factors (as independent variables, IV) affect on main factors and their dimensions (as a dependent variable, DV). For example: does age or gender affect on participants' attitudes about organizational commitment. The result is the F value and its significance, telling if the difference between the groups is statistically significant.

Eta squared (η^2) is a value stating what percentage of the changes in dependent variable can be explained by the change in independent variable. Differences between the groups (of one variable) can be examined with different Post Hoc tests. In this study the tests used were: Bonferroni, Dunnett T3 and T-Test). (See Metsämuuronen 2009, 471, 794.)

For ANOVA analysis the variables have to be classified into groups (changed into nominal scale). In this study participants' age was classified into four different age groups: under 30, 31 – 40, 41 – 50 and over 50. The criteria in the classifications was to get an optimal amount of participants in each group. Job tenure was classified into four different groups: under 1, 2 – 5, 6 – 10 and over 10 (using the same criteria).

There are three presumptions that have to be inspected before using One Way ANOVA: the observations have to be independable, the population has to be normal distributed and the variance of the groups have to be equal in size. The three presumptions before using One Way ANOVA were then inspected. Data had been collected by a survey method, so the observations can be assumed to be independent of each other. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used to find out if the population's distribution was to be normal, but it rejected the presumption (the Sig. value was less than .05). Examination of the graphs was convincing, however, that the population was normally distributed for all the main variables.

Variance of the groups was tested by the Homogenity of Variance Test (Levene statistic). The results were good, except for between age and organizational trust (.014) and between job tenure and job satisfaction (.049). ANOVA will still be a suitable method for the study, because the F test is quite robust in giving the right result. (See Metsämuuronen 2009, 645, 796.)

3.4.3   Linear regression

Linear regression is an analyzing method suitable for examining how several independent variables (IV) combined affect the chosen dependent variable (DV). The object is to create a statistically significant and suitable model to explain the studied phenomenon. Before using linear regression there are a few presumptions that have to be considered. There has to be correlation between the variables (or they have to be some other way reasonably chosen, eg. ANOVA analysis or previous studies). There has to be enough observations in relation to

the chosen independent variables and the independent variables have to be continuous or interval scaled. If not, the variables have to be recoded into so called dummy variables. (Metsämuuronen 2009, 1241.)

There are also some important issues that have to be inspected after executing the linear regression analysis. If correlation is too strong between the IV's, multicollinearity might become a problem. That is, if the VIF value is more than 2. Also the residuals (observations the model fails to explain) have to be examined. The normal and linear distribution of the residuals can be confirmed from graphs and the independency of the residuals can be determined by examining the Durbin-Watson value (acceptable if between 1.0 – 3.0).

The F value and it's significance level are essential, because they indicate if the model is fit for the data, meaning that it explains the dependent variable statistically significantly. Beta coefficients (β, standardized coefficients) refer to how many standard deviations a dependent variable will change, per standard deviation increase in the predictor variable (independent variable). The result of the linear regression analysis is the (Adjusted) R Square, also referred to as the effect size of the model. (See Metsämuuronen 2009, 719-723, 736-738.)

4   RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The fourth chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses. At first, the participants' experiences about organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust and then the findings about the relationships among the variables.

4.1   Results of the Variables

This chapter answers the first part of the RQ1 ("How high do the participants estimate the level of their organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust?"). The participants' experiences were on the positive side in all three attitudes. For organizational commitment and job satisfaction all sum of variable means, except for pay, were above 3 on a scale of 1 – 5. For organizational trust all means were above 4 on a scale of 1 – 7. The experience levels are presented as percentages because of the different scales in the surveys.

	Mean	Std. D.	Scale
Organizational Commitment	3.36	.65	1 – 5
Affective Commitment	3.47	.79	1 – 5
Continuance Commitment	3.37	1.04	1 – 5
Normative Commitment	3.06	.82	1 – 5
Job Satisfaction	3.67	.61	1 – 5
Security	3.77	.92	1 – 5
Social	4.04	.61	1 – 5
Pay	2.87	1.14	1 – 5
Supervisory	3.40	.90	1 – 5
Growth	3.88	.74	1 – 5
Organizational Trust	4.86	.87	1 – 7
Affective Trust	4.80	1.02	1 – 7
Cognitive Trust	4.90	.87	1 – 7

TABLE 3 Participants' opinions (experiences) about the leadership themes

In the following subchapters these experiences are presented theme by theme and illustrated as boxplot charts. The bottom and the top of the boxes are the 25 % and 75 % quartiles. That means that 50 % of the findings fit inside the box. The band marked in the box is the median and the ends of the whiskers represent the outlier limits. (Metsämuuronen 2009, 601.)

4.1.1 Organizational Commitment

From Figure 5 it can be seen, that the sum variable affective commitment had higher mean (3.47) than continuance commitment (3.37) and normative commitment (3.06).
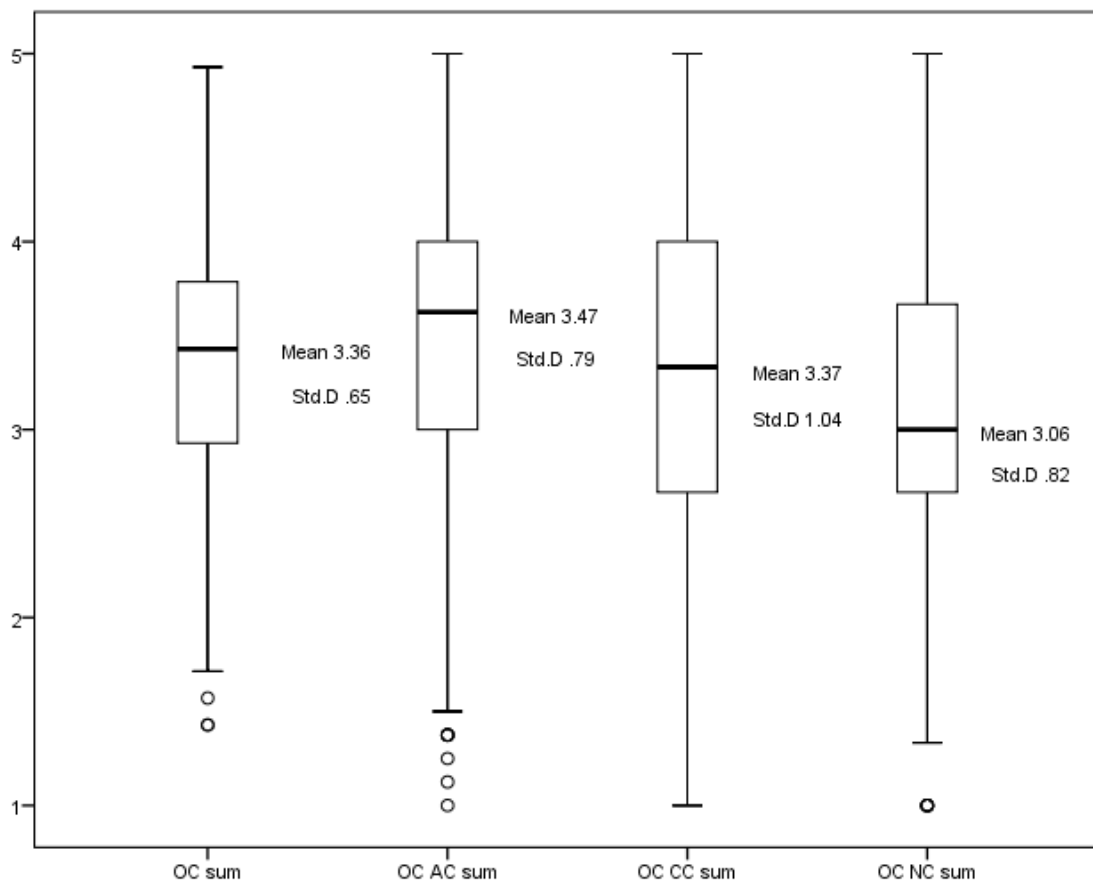

FIGURE 5 Participants' estimates on Organizational Commitment and its dimensions

A little over half (52 %) of the participants express commitment to their organization based on the answers (agreed strongly or slightly with the survey claims). If almost a half of the employees in the participating organizations don't feel committed (or don't have an opinion for the matter), it can be argued that these organizations could obtain remarkable improvements by investing in commitment development efforts.

As for the single questions, the participants were most unanimous about the meaning of the organization – over 70 % of the participants feel that the organization has a great deal of personal meaning to them. 46 % of the participants would be happy to spend the rest of their career in the current organization, but on the other hand only 34 % think that people change companies too often these days. As much as 30 % think that it wouldn't feel right

to leave their organization even if they got a better job offer elsewhere. Only 29 % reckoned, however, that they couldn't easily become as attached to another organization.

4.1.2 Job Satisfaction

From Figure 6 it can be noticed, that the means between the satisfaction components vary. Participants were most satisfied with the social dimension of the measure (mean 4.04) and least satisfied with their pay (mean 2.87).
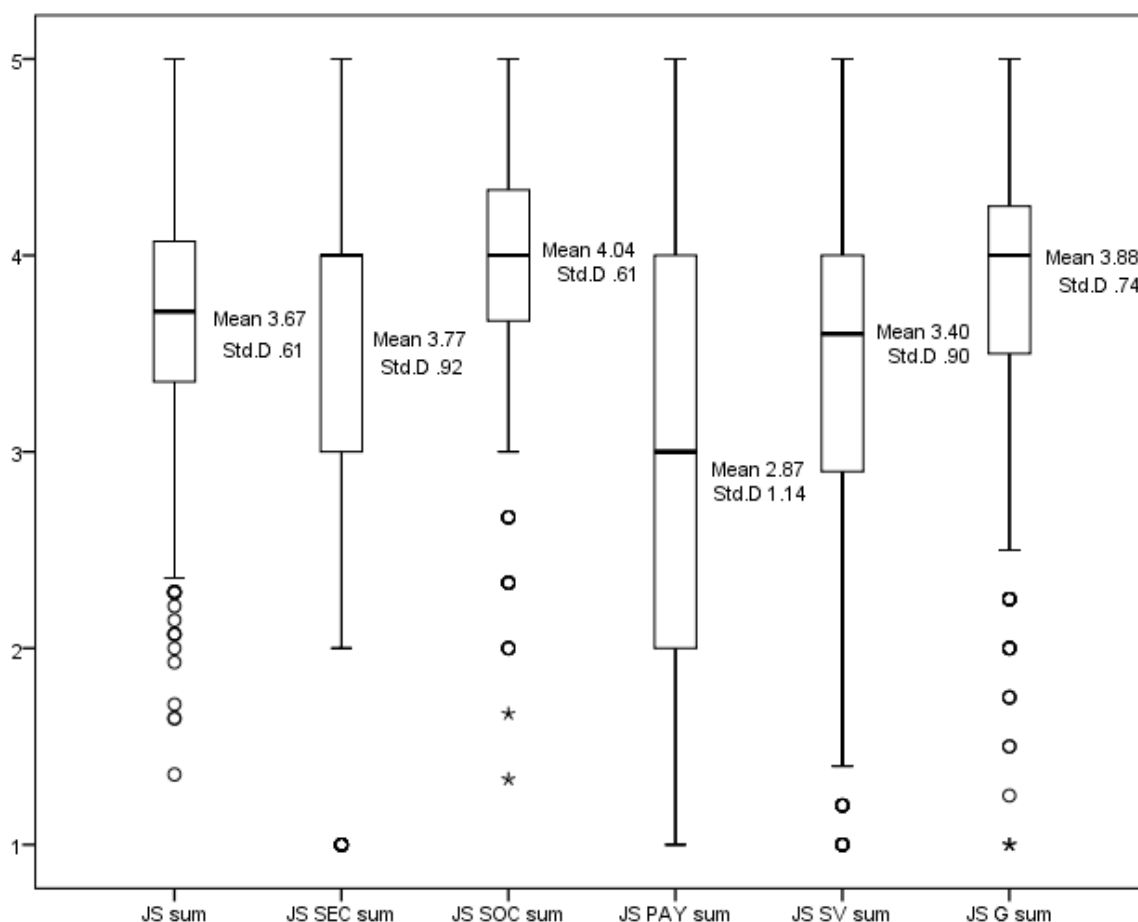

FIGURE 6 Participants' estimates on Job Satisfaction and its dimensions

The amount of satisfied participants (very satisfied / satisfied) was 67 %, which is 15 % more than the share of the committed employees.

As much as 84 % of the participants are satisfied with the people they work with. Four out of five employees (79 %) are satisfied with their job as a whole. 67 % are satisfied with the feeling of worthwhile accomplishment they get doing their job. Less than half of the participants (47 %) were satisfied with their

organization's management style and 57 % were satisfied with the support and guidance they receive from their boss. Only 36 % feel that they are fairly paid for their contribution.

4.1.3   Organizational Trust

66 % of the participants expressed overall trust in their organization (agreed strongly / slightly with the survey claims).
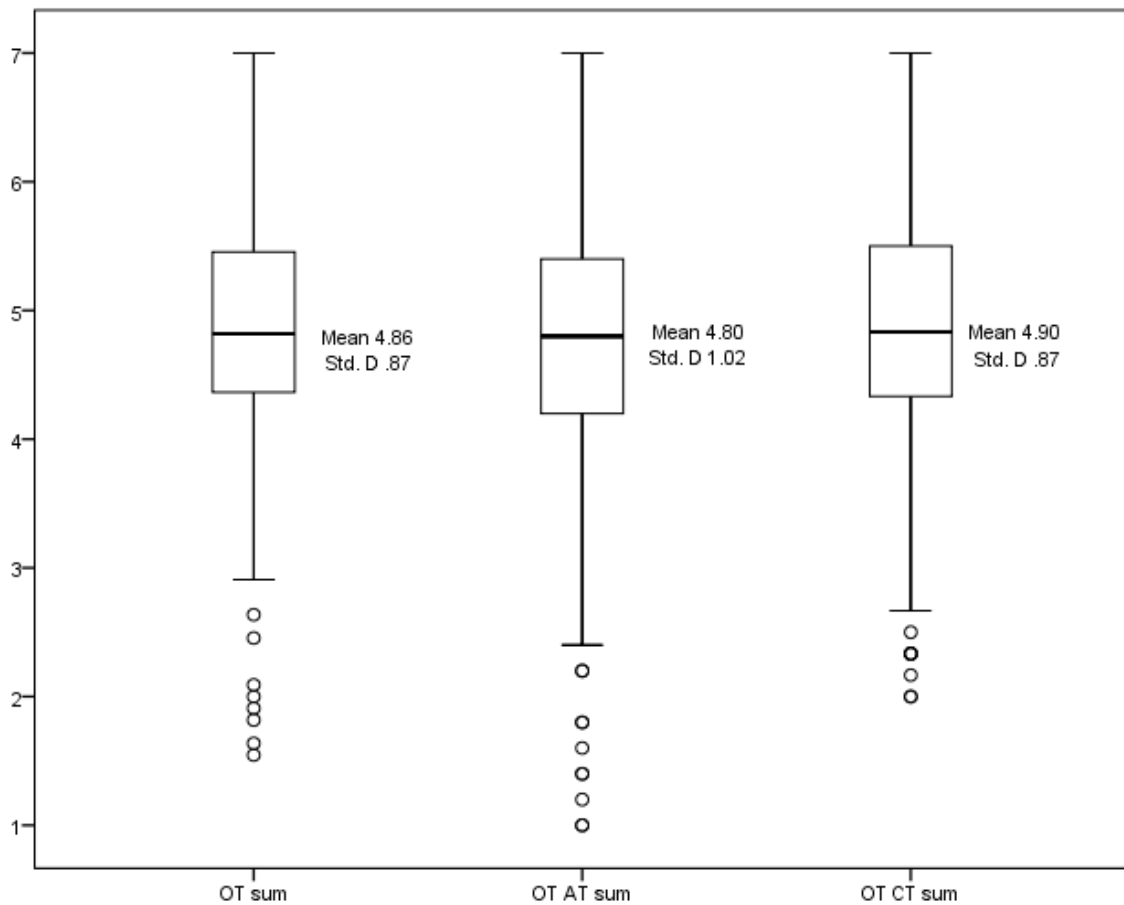

FIGURE 7 Participants' estimates on Organizational Trust and its dimensions

As can be seen from Figure 7, cognitive trust and affective trust were almost at a same level. Worth noticing is, that question number 11 measuring cognition-based trust was not quite well understood by the participants as half of the answerers neither agreed nor disagreed. Without this particular question the mean of the cognition-based trust would have been higher.

As for the single questions 82 % feel that their work associates consider each other to be trustworthy. 80 % feel that people in their organization are competent

professionals and dedicated to their work. 74 % feel that they can talk freely about their difficulties knowing their co-workers will want to listen and care. However, only 51 % would feel a sense of loss if their co-workers were transferred and they couldn't work together anymore.

4.2   Relationship among the variables

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses: Pearson's and Spearman's correlations, One Way ANOVA and the linear regression models.

4.2.1   Background factor's effect on Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Trust

All background information gathered in the survey was examined in order to provide an answer for the latter part of the RQ1 ("How do the background factors affect the evaluations?").

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. OC sum								
2. JS sum	,453**							
3. OT sum	,358**	,595**						
4. Country	,192**	-0,07	-,240**					
5. Gender	-,165**	0,05	,103*	-,552**				
6. Age	,312**	-0,019	-,101*	,205**	-,262**			
7. Position	,174**	-0,049	-,157**	,532**	-,299**	,225**		
8. Job tenure	,287**	-,125**	-,100*	,256**	-,250**	,589**	,192**	
9. Days of absence	-,179**	-,086*	-0,036	-,218**	0,071	-,226**	-,161**	-,159**

TABLE 4 Spearman's correlations of the background variables

By looking at the Spearman's correlations (Table 4) it can be seen that the background factors didn't correlate much with the main variables and that some background factors correlated with each other. The six most interesting background factors (country, gender, age, position, job tenure and days of absence) were chosen for further analysis.

The impact of the six chosen background factors on the participants' experiences about the main variables was tested and analysed with One Way ANOVA. Only the results in which the η^2 (Eta squared) was $\geq$ .05, thus equalling at least 5 %, were chosen for further analysis. Different Post Hoc tests were run

for pairwise comparison (Bonferroni, Dunnett T3 and T-Test). Summary of the results can be seen in the following table (Table 5).

	OC	AC	CC	NC	JS	SEC	SOC	PAY	SV	G	OT	AT	CT
Country			7 % ***2>1										
Gender			5,9 % ***1>2										
Age	10,5 % *4>1,2 3>1,2	6,8 % *4>1,2 3>1,2	6,9 % *4>1,2 3>1,2										
Position													
Job tenure	9,2 % *4>2,1,3 3>2,1		7,7 % *4>1,2 3>1,2	5,6 % *4>2,1 3>2									
Days of absence													5,3 % **No differ.

*Bonferroni, p≤.05 (only the significant results presented)
**Dunnett T3, p≤.05 (only the significant results presented)
***T-Test, p≤.001 (only the significant results presented)

TABLE 5 One Way ANOVA summary of the $\eta^2 \geq .05$ (5 %) results

Based on the results, age and job tenure (time spent in the same organization) are the most influencing background factors on overall organizational commitment (OC). Age is the only background variable affecting the experience of affective commitment (AC), job tenure being the only variable affecting the experience of normative commitment (NC). Country and gender have an effect only on the continuance commitment (CC); Estonians felt 7 % more continuance commitment, and women 6 % more than men. Days of absence due to illness seemed to have an effect on cognition-based trust, but Dunnett's T3 test showed no differencies in the comparison between the classified variables.

4.2.2 Job Satisfaction's and Organizational Trust's relationship with Organizational Commitment

Pearson´s correlation was then used to find out the degree of the correlation among the main variables and to answer RQ2 ("How do organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust relate with each other?"). Findings were (Table 6), that organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust relate positively with each other.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
1. OC sum												
2. OC AC sum	,891**											
3. OC CC sum	,556**	,191**										
4. OC NC sum	,712**	,487**	,309**									
5. JS sum	,477**	,603**	-,069	,302**								
6. JS SEC sum	,232**	,310**	-,077	,160**	,548**							
7. JS SOC sum	,361**	,459**	-,061	,236**	,703**	,359**						
8. JS PAY sum	,071	,142**	-,132**	,065	,483**	,259**	,224**					
9. JS SV sum	,377**	,469**	-,05	,254**	,881**	,402**	,437**	,398**				
10. JS G sum	,503**	,619**	-,006	,279**	,784**	,359**	,562**	,211**	,494**			
11. OT sum	,382**	,483**	-,056	,247**	,642**	,384**	,552**	,286**	,525**	,495**		
12. OT AT sum	,427**	,520**	-,012	,261**	,638**	,404**	,552**	,257**	,518**	,504**	,922**	
13. OT CT sum	,277**	,370**	-,091*	,195**	,543**	,304**	,462**	,270**	,450**	,407**	,925**	,705**

* p ≤ .05, ** p ≤ .01

TABLE 6 Pearson's correlations

Organizational commitment (OC) correlates most with job satisfaction/growth dimension (JS G), overall job satisfaction (JS) and affective trust (OT AT). Affective commitment (OC AC) correlates with job satisfaction/growth (JS G), job satisfaction (JS), affective trust (OT AT), overall organizational trust (OT), job satisfaction/supervisory dimension (JS SV) and job satisfaction/social dimension (JS SOC). Job satisfaction (JS) correlates with organizational trust (OT). Job satisfaction (JS) and job satisfaction/growth (JS G) dimension correlate more with organizational commitment (OC) and affective commitment (AC) than with organizational trust (OT) or affective trust (OC AC).

Based on these findings both hypothesis H1 ("Job satisfaction relates positively with organizational commitment, especially affective commitment.") and hypothesis H2 ("Organizational trust relates positively with organizational commitment, especially affective commitment.") can be considered confirmed. Job satisfaction relates positively with organizational commitment (.477**), especially with affective commitment (.603**). As well as organizational trust relates positively with organizational commitment (.382**), especially affective commitment (.483**).

On the other hand, the data showed no correlations between job satisfaction (or its dimensions) and continuance or normative commitment. Nor did organizational trust (or its dimensions) have correlations with continuance or normative commitment.

Linear regression analyses

As stated earlier, the object of the study was to create a statistically significant and suitable model to explain possible antecedents of organizational commitment, and specifically one of its dimensions, affective commitment. Prerequisites for the use of regression analyses were first inspected. All main variables correlated with each other (see Table 6). Background factors for linear regression analyses were chosen based on the ANOVA analyses (age, gender,

country, job tenure). There were also enough observations in relation to the chosen independent variables.

The independent variables have to be continuous or interval scaled for the regression analyses, so gender and country were recoded into dummy variables. After executing the analysis, multicollinearity was checked for the regressions, and all the VIF values showed to be under two. The residuals (observations the model fails to explain) were examined for all the executed regressions, them being normally and linearly distributed (this was secured on the base of the graphs). Independency of the residuals was also on a good level as all Durbin-Watson values were between 1.0 – 3.0.

The F values and their significance levels are presented for all the following models, stating if the model is fit for the data and statistically significant. The Beta coefficients (β, standardized coefficients) referring to how many standard deviations a dependent variable will change per standard deviation increase in the predictor variable (independent variable), are also represented for all predictors. Finally, also the result, the (Adjusted) R Square, also referred to as the effect size of the model, is presented for all the analyzed models.

Job satisfaction's and organizational trust's studied impacts on organizational commitment separately and together are presented in Table 7.

	Dependent variable: Organizational commitment		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Predictors:	β	β	β
Age	.154***	.217***	.177***
Country	-.114**	-.185***	-.147***
Gender	.046	.023	.041
Job tenure	.222***	.157***	.204***
JS	.508***		.379***
OT		.448***	.190***
Fit of the model	F = 68,592***	F = 52,831***	F = 60,888***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .393	adj. R^2 = .330	adj. R^2 = .408

JS = Job Satisfaction, OT = Organizational Trust
***p≤.001, **p≤.01
N = 522

TABLE 7 Job Satisfaction's and Organizational Trust's impact on Organizational Commitment

Job satisfaction and organizational trust reinforce organizational commitment both separately and together. The effect size, adj. R^2, is big (> .26) in all the presented models. The effect size indicates how much the variables have in common, that is, how many percent they can explain each other (Metsämuuronen 2009, 371). Statistical significance is a very common finding, so the effect size is

more interesting as an indicator, because it tells if the difference is relevant also contentwise (Metsämuuronen 2009, 371).

Based on these regression analyses, job satisfaction and organizational trust are strong predictors of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction alone is a stronger predictor than organizational trust according to the indicators (β coefficient, fit of the model and the effect size). However, the effect size of the Model 3 (adj. R^2 = .408) is bigger than the effect sizes of Model 1 (adj. R^2 = .393) and Model 2 (adj. R^2 = .330), meaning that job satisfaction and organizational trust together are stronger predictors of organizational commitment, than either one of them alone. Thus, hypothesis H3 ("The combined effect of job satisfaction with organizational trust on organizational commitment is stronger than the effects of job satisfaction and organizational trust as separate variables.") can also be considered confirmed.

Plenty of fitting models can be found, but in here are included only the four strongest background factors based on the ANOVA analyses. According to the Model 3, all independent variables, except for gender, are statistically significant predictors for organizational commitment (altough all Beta coefficients are not high). Strongest predictor of organizational commitment among the models is job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction's and organizational trust's impact on organizational commitment and its three dimensions is presented in Table 8.

	Dependent variable			
	OC	AC	CC	NC
Predictors:	β	β	β	β
Age	.177***	.186***	.065	.090
Country	-.147***	-.064	-.166***	-.164***
Gender	.041	.010	.105*	-.006
Job tenure	.204***	.153***	.155**	.169**
JS	.379***	.490***	-.061	.217***
OT	.190***	.199***	.027	.158**
Fit of the model	F = 60,888***	81,698***	13,005***	20,637***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .408	adj. R^2 = .482	adj. R^2 = .121	adj. R^2 = .184

JS = Job Satisfaction, OT = Organizational Trust, OC = Organizational Commitment
AC = Affective Commitment, CC = Continuance Commitment, NC = Normative Commitment
***$p \leq .001$, **$p \leq .01$, *$p \leq .05$
N = 522

TABLE 8 Job Satisfaction's and Organizational Trust's impact on Organizational Commitment and its dimensions

Job satisfaction improves both, affective (β = .490***) and normative (β = .217***) commitment. Organizational trust improves both, affective (β = .199***) and

normative (β = .158**) commitment, but not as strongly as job satisfaction does. The model, combining the mutual impact of job satisfaction and organizational trust, explains best affective commitment, the effect size being 48 % (adj. R^2 = .482). These results provide more support for the hypotheses H1 and H2 as the effect size is big for all of the tested models in Table 7 and the effect size of the affective commitment model in Table 8 is the biggest effect size thus far. Of the included background variables neither country nor gender explain affective commitment, but age and job tenure somewhat do.

According to the previous results job satisfaction was the best predictor of organizational commitment, and strongest predictor for affective commitment. To answer the research question RQ3 ("Which dimensions of job satisfaction and organizational trust can be determined as antecedents of organizational commitment and its dimensions?") also the independable variables' explanation rates were analyzed dimension by dimension. Results can be found in Table 9.

Predictors:	Dependent variable							
	OC		AC		CC		NC	
	adj. R^2	β	adj. R^2	β	adj. R^2	β	adj. R^2	β
JS	.23	.48***	.36	.60***	.00	-.07	.09	.30***
SEC	.05	.23***	.09	.31***	.00	-.08	.02	.16***
SOC	.13	.36***	.21	.46***	.00	-.06	.05	.24***
PAY	.00	.07	.02	.14***	.02	-.13**	.00	.07
SV	.14	.38***	.22	.47***	.00	-.05	.06	.25***
GROWTH	.25	.50***	.38	.62***	.00	-.01	.08	.28***
OT	.14	.38***	.23	.48***	.00	-.06	.06	.25***
AT	.18	.43***	.27	.52***	.00	-.01	.07	.26***
CT	.08	.28***	.14	.37***	.01	-.09*	.04	.20***

JS = Job Satisfaction, SEC = Security, SOC = Social, SV = Supervisory
OT = Organizational Trust, AT = Affective Trust, CT = Cognitive Trust
OC = Organizational Commitment, AC = Affective Commitment, CC = Continuance Commitment,
NC = Normative Commitment
***p≤.001, **p≤.01, *p≤.05

TABLE 9 Job satisfaction's and Organizational Trust's dimensions' impact on Organizational Commitment and its dimensions

Job satisfaction's dimension of growth (β = .62***), affective trust (β = .52***), job satisfaction's supervisory (β = .47***) and social (β = .46***) dimensions seem to be the best predicting job satisfaction and organizational trust dimensions of affective organizational commitment. Satisfaction with pay decreases continuance commitment (β = -.13**). None of these predictors increase normative commitment. Pearson's correlation analyses support these results.

Based on these findings also the last hypothesis H4 ("Different dimensions of job satisfaction and organizational trust predict affective organizational

commitment than continuance and normative commitment.") can be considered at least partially confirmed, as neither job satisfaction's growth, supervision and social dimensions nor affect-based organizational trust predict continuance commitment. These dimensions seem to predict also normative commitment, but the coefficients are remarkably lower, as can be seen from the Table 9.

To find out more about the three phenomena's relationship, the next interest was to analyze the job satisfaction and organizational trust's dimensions more closely to figure out which items of the variable dimensions specifically predict affective commitment and if there are items not related to affective commitment.

Dependent variable: Affective Commitment

Predictors:	adj. R²	β	Predictors:	adj. R²	β
GROWTH			SV		
Worthwhile	.27	.52***	Respect	.13	.36***
Independent	.20	.44***	Support	.14	.37***
Challenge	.20	.45***	Quality	.18	.43***
Job as a whole	.39	.63***	Org. style	.15	.39***
			Unit style	.20	.45***
AT					
Sharing relationships	.20	.45***	SOC		
Talk freely	.19	.43***	People	.14	.37***
Sense of loss	.14	.37***	Get to know	.12	.35***
Constructively	.16	.40***	Help others	.11	.34***
Investments	.17	.42***			

AT = Affective Trust, SV = Supervisory, SOC = Social
***p≤.001

TABLE 10 Individual items as predictors of Affective Commitment

As can be seen in the Table 10, also all individual items are significant predictors of affective commitment. Based on these results, e.g. the satisfaction on people you work with (β = .37***) is not as important predictor of affective commitment as the feeling of worthwhile accomplishment (β = .52***) or challenging work duties (β = .45***). Also the unit's management style (β = .45***) and sharing relationships (β = .45***) were notable individual predictors of affective commitment.

The following step was to test models even further to find out what would be a best predicting model considering the formation of affective commitment. The strongest related dimensions of job satisfaction (growth, supervision, social) and affect-based organizational trust were grouped with the strongest background factors.

Dependent variable: Affective Commitment	
Predictors:	β
Age	.177***
Country	-.058
Gender	-.005
Job tenure	.131***
GROWTH	.349***
AT	.264***
SV	.153***
SOC	.055
Fit of the model	F = 73,565***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .526

AT = Affective Trust, SV = Supervisory, SOC = Social
***p≤.001

TABLE 11 Best estimated variables' impact on Affective Commitment

In the model presented in a Table 11, it can also be seen that according to these results country, gender or job satisfaction's social dimension are not significant predictors of affective organizational commitment. The effect size of the model is big (adj. R^2 = .526), stating that these independent variables could explain upto 53 % of the formation of affective commitment.

The previous model was then simplified and tested a bit more. Only the most predicting background factor (age) and the most predicting dimensions of job satisfaction (growth) and organizational trust (affective trust) were chosen for further analysis.

Dependent variable: Affective Commitment	
Predictors:	β
Age	.265***
GROWTH	.425***
AT	.327***
Fit of the model	F = 181,531***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .506

AT = Affective Trust
***p≤.001

TABLE 12 Best predicting variables' impact on Affective Commitment

The result of the analysis (Table 12) was, that all predictors are statistically significant and the effect size is again big (adj. R^2 = .506). The effect size did not, however, get bigger, even though the model got simpler. Nevertheless, it can be contemplated, that employees' satisfaction with their job as a whole and possibilities for growth (e.g., feeling of worthwhile accomplishment, challenge and independent thought exercised in the job), as well as the presence of affect-based trust are the variables that have the strongest impact on affective organizational commitment, and might also most likely act as antecedents of it. Age seems to be the most predicting background factor of affective commitment in the light of these results.

4.2.3 Job Satisfaction's and Organizational Trust's relationship

According to Pearson's correlation analysis job satisfaction and organizational trust correlated strongly with each other (.642**). Especially dimensions job satisfaction/social, job satisfaction/supervisory and job satisfaction/growth correlated positively with affective trust. As can be seen in Table 13, the results were the same with the regression analysis.

	Dependent variable					
	OT		AT		CT	
Predictors:	adj. R^2	β	adj. R^2	β	adj. R^2	β
JS	.41	.64***	.41	.64***	.29	.54***
SEC	.15	.38***	.16	.40***	.09	.30***
SOC	.30	.55***	.30	.55***	.21	.46***
PAY	.08	.29***	.06	.26***	.07	.27***
SV	.27	.53***	.27	.52***	.20	.45***
GROWTH	.24	.50***	.25	.50***	.16	.41***

OT = Organizational Trust, AT = Affective Trust, CT = Cognitive Trust
JS = Job Satisfaction, SEC = Security, SOC = Social, SV = Supervisory
***$p \le .001$

TABLE 13 Job Satisfaction's and its dimensions' impact on Organizational Trust and its dimensions

Social dimension of job satisfaction explains 30 % (β = .55***) of the affective trust, supervisory dimension of job satisfaction explains 27 % (β = .52***) of the affective trust and growth dimension of job satisfaction explains 25 % (β = .50***) of the affective trust. The results differ from the explanation rates of affective *commitment*, as we could previously see in Table 9. It seems that there is a

difference between the dimensions of job satisfaction that are important in enhancing affective commitment and on the other hand affective trust.

The sum variable job satisfaction was chosen as predictor of organizational trust together with background factors (chosen based on previous ANOVA analyses). The results indicated, that the model explains 45 % (adj. R^2 = .446) of the formation of organizational trust.

	Dependent variable
	OT
Predictors:	β
Age	-.089*
Country	.200***
Gender	.058
Job tenure	.091*
JS	.638***
Fit of the model	F = 85.156***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .446

OT = Organizational Trust
***p≤.001, *p≤.05
N = 525

TABLE 14 Job Satisfaction's, its dimensions' and background factors' impact on Organizational Trust

Job satisfaction can thus be considered as a strong predictor of organizational trust. Neither age, gender, nor job tenure seem to play a role in the formation of organizational trust. Country, on the other hand, somewhat explains (β = .200***) the experiences of organizational trust. The model and it's impact on organizational trust's dimensions was then further tested with only the strongest predicting job satisfaction dimensions: social, supervisory and growth.

	Dependent variable		
	OT	AT	CT
Predictors:	β	β	β
Age	-.097*	-.111*	-.063
Country	.193***	.142***	.224***
Gender	.042	.015	.068
Job tenure	.087*	.078	.081
SOC	.285***	.288***	.232***
SV	.324***	.302***	.298***
Growth	.177***	.196***	.130**
Fit of the model	F = 61,880***	58,723***	38,249***
Effect size of the model	adj. R^2 = .449	adj. R^2 = .435	adj. R^2 = .332

OT = Organizational Trust, AT = Affective Trust, CT = Cognitive Trust
SOC = Social, SV = Supervisory
***$p \leq .001$, **$p \leq .01$, *$p \leq .05$
N = 525

TABLE 15 Job Satisfaction's dimensions' and background factors' impact on Organizational Trust and its dimensions

The results can be interpreted so that satisfaction with job's social and supervisory dimensions improve both, affective and cognitive trust. Satisfaction with job's growth dimension improves both, affective and cognitive trust, but is not as strong a predictor (same result in Spearman's correlation). Background factors do not explain feelings of organizational trust, although there are some differences between the countries. The model explains best organizational trust as a whole, effect size being 45 %. The explanation rate was stronger for affect-based trust (adj. R^2 = .435) than cognitive-based trust (adj. R^2 = .332).

4.2.4 Summary of the relationships among the variables

In this chapter the results of the statistical analyses are combined and visualized in order to better perceive the differencies among the variables and the effect sizes. Organizational trust was not studied as a moderator or mediator, the pointers simply indicate the direction to which the regression analyses were conducted.
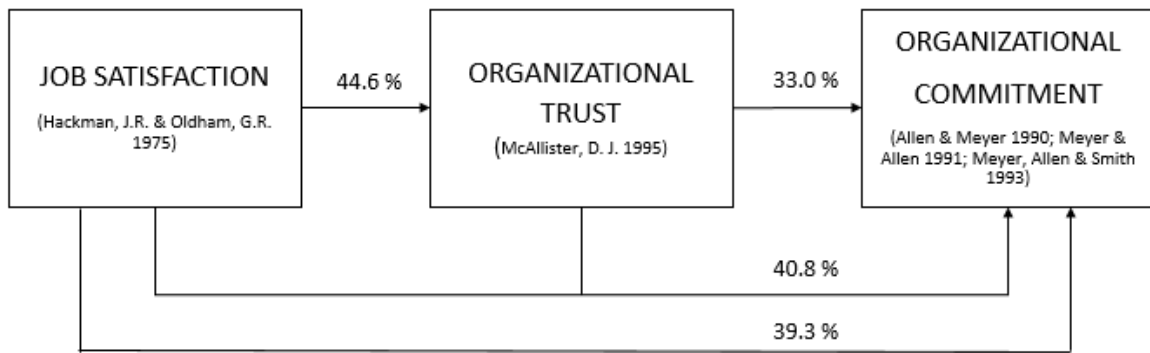
FIGURE 8 Effect sizes of the main variables

Figure 8 illustrates the effect sizes between the main variables on the construct level (differences between the dimensions of the variables are not presented). According to the findings, job satisfaction is a strong predictor (39 %) of organizational commitment. Organizational trust is, as well, a strong predictor (33 %) of organizational commitment. When employees experience both, job satisfaction and organizational trust, the combination can predict up to 41 % of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is also a strong predictor of organizational trust, the effect size being 45 % (with age, country, gender and job tenure as background variables in the examined model).

Because the main object of interest in the study was to find out antecedent factors of organizational commitment, especially of affective organizational commitment, the aim was to create a model that could combine the correlating dimensions in the most optimal way. The model that was found to be the strongest predicting one (effect size of 53 %), is described in Figure 9.
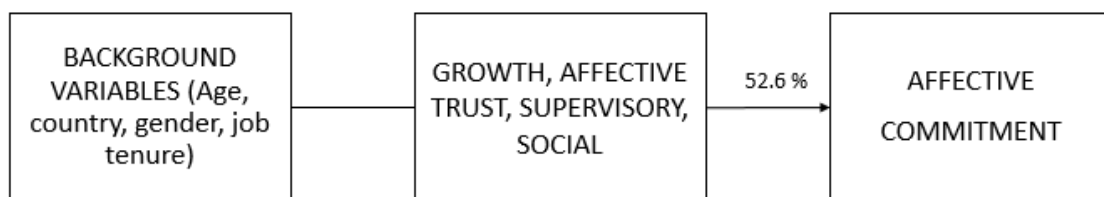
FIGURE 9 Effect size of the model best predicting affective organizational commitment

The model in Figure 9 includes the four strongest background variables (age, country, gender and job tenure) and the strongest correlating job satisfaction and organizational trust dimensions: job satisfaction's growth, supervisory and social dimensions and the experienced affect-based trust. Based on the model it can be argued, that if an organization wants to enhance its employees' affective organizational commitment, these four work experience areas should be skilfully

managed, as they can predict as much as 53 % of organizational affective commitment.

To make the managers' work easier, the model presented in Figure 8 was further simplified. Only the strongest predicting background factor (age) was left in the model with the two strongest predicting variable dimensions – job satisfaction's dimension of growth and affective organizational trust. The explanation rate was a bit lower than in the previous model, but still over 50 %. Commitment is, as stated in chapter 2, a very multidimensional phenomenon. Hence the explanation rate of over 50 % can be considered as a good result (see Metsämuuronen 2009, 737-738).
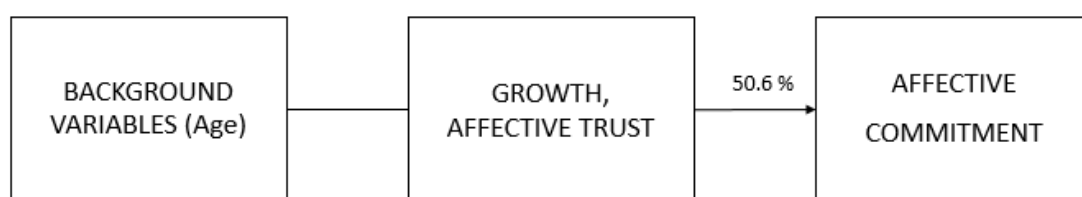
FIGURE 10 Effect size of the simplified model

The model in Figure 10 proves, that experiences of job satisfaction and organizational trust are strongly related to the feelings of organizational commitment. Especially the meaning of one's work, possibilities to grow as an employee and feelings of affect-based trust are essential factors for the development of affective commitment. The next chapter will continue the discussion about the main results of the study and increase understanding about how employees' experiences after entering the organization could be carefully managed and what questions should be taken into consideration in the development process.

5 CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter takes a look back and contemplates the results, and the way they line up with the past organizational commitment research and literature. The main interest of the study was to examine experiences of organizational commitment in Finnish and Estonian SMEs and to find out factors that might be related to the feelings of commitment by utilizing a previously gathered cross-sectional survey sample. The work was started by going through all of the SOLWE survey's leadership theme (suction of work, work strain and control, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, working ability, leader-member relationship, organizational trust, possibilities to influence, equality in the organization, preparedness for the work, continuing work and functionality of the work community). Already at first look into the correlations it turned out, that the strongest correlating dimensions with affective organizational commitment were job satisfaction's growth dimension (.619**) and affection-based organizational trust (.520**). Therefore, job satisfaction and organizational trust as organizational attitudes were valid and interesting choices for closer examination. The third highest correlation was that of suction of work's dedication dimension (.511**), but a decision was made to concentrate solely on job satisfaction and organizational trust in this study.

5.1 Discussion about the results and implications for SME management

Attitudes concerning Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Trust

Employees estimate their answers mainly based on their previous experiences and demographic factors. In all three examined themes the means were above the scale's midpoint, so the employees of the participating organizations can be generally considered to be committed to their organizations, satisfied with their jobs and trusting their organizations.

According to the findings only a little over half of the employees expressed commitment to their organization, agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statements concerning commitment. Highest estimated items were the personal meaning of the organization, enjoyment of discussing the organization with people outside of it and feelings of being a part of a family and a strong sense of belonging to the organization – all of the mentioned items included in the affective commitment scale.

Job satisfaction and organizational trust were both on a relatively high level among the participants, as almost 70 % of all employees agreed or strongly agreed with the item statements. Job satisfaction was strongest concerning the

social and growth aspects of work. The overall job satisfaction was experienced high, almost 80 %, but the dimensions the employees were less satisfied with dropped the mean (pay, organization's management style, quality of supervision and the amount of support, guidance and fair treatment). Cognition- and affect-based trust were on the same level with each other, but the employees agreed more strongly with cognition-based statements concerning the competence, professionalism and dedication of their co-workers.

Background factors explained only a small propotion of the variance. The only background variable that had over 10 % effect was age in relation to the overall organizational commitment. Country had a surprisingly small effect on the chosen main variables, the highest percentage found being 7 % in relation to the continuance commitment. Gender was also found to be related with continuance commitment, but only with 6 %. Job tenure affected organizational commitment, but mainly continuance (8 %) and normative commitment (6 %). All variables with over 5 % effect were presented in Table 5. Background variables did have some effect on the results, but mostly the answers can be interpreted to be based on the participants' previous experiences. These findings are in line with previous research (see e.g., Meyer et al. 2002). Four strongest background factors were included in the linear regression analyses, and the results were similar – background factors explained only a small proportion of the variance, age and tenure indicating the biggest explanation rates.

Relationship among Organizational Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Organizational trust

Based on the Pearson's correlations (Table 6), organizational commitment correlates with job satisfaction, job satisfaction's dimension of growth and affective trust. The main object of interest, affective commitment, correlates with job satisfaction, job satisfaction's dimension of growth, job satisfaction's dimension of supervision, job satisfaction's social dimension, organizational trust and affective organizational trust. Job satisfaction correlates with organizational trust. Job satisfaction and job satisfaction's growth dimension were found to correlate more with organizational commitment and affective commitment than with organizational trust or affective trust.

In the linear regression analyses the positive relation between the main variables was again present. Both variables, job satisfaction and organizational trust predict organizational commitment according to the models in Table 7. According to the linear regression analysis presented in Table 9 job satisfaction and organizational trust predict affective commitment more strongly than overall organizational commitment. Based on these findings hypotheses H1 and H2 were confirmed; organizational commitment, job satisfaction and organizational trust relate positively with each other. Job satisfaction relates positively with organizational commitment, especially its affective dimension and the same support could be found concerning organizational trust.

According to the linear regression analysis in Table 7, the combined effect size of the Model 3 is slightly bigger than in two other models. That finding gave support also for hypothesis H3, even though the fit of the model was better for job satisfaction. And to be noted, job satisfaction's relation with affective commitment is higher (than organizational trust's) in all of the analyses, especially between the dimension of growth and affective commitment.

Job Satisfaction and Organizational Trust as antecedents of Organizational Commitment

Positive relations among the variables was reasoned on the grounds of Pearson's correlations (Table 6). Correlations do not, however, tell about causality in a cross-sectional study. Neither do the regression analyses, but they give some implications about the variables' relationships in a form of the explation rates.

According to the results job satisfaction's growth dimension and affect-based trust were the best explaining variables of affective commitment. Growth possibilities, especially satisfaction with the job as a whole and the feeling of worthwhile accomplishment seem to be related to the feelings of affective commitment. Also the job satisfaction's supervision and social related dimensions explained affective commitment. None of the above mentioned variables explained continuance (nor remarkably normative) commitment. Thus hypothesis H4 could also be considered confirmed, as different dimensions seem to predict affective commitment than the two other commitment forms.

This study was about finding out factors that might be related to the feeling of organizational commitment, especially affective commitment, based on the survey data. Several models were tested with statistical methods. The finding that job satisfaction, especially satisfaction with the possibilities for growth and worthwhile accomplishment, enhance affective organizational commitment is supported also by previous research (see e.g., Meyer & Allen 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch 2001; Weng, McElroy, Morrow & Liu 2010). Weng et al. (2010, 398) stated, that providing jobs and experiences that allow employees to accomplish their career goals and develop their professional abilities will enhance affective commitment to the organization.

Multiple dimensions of Organizational Commitment

Recognition of the fact that organizational commitment has multiple dimensions and each dimension has somewhat different antecedents, although making the study of commitment more complex, should make it possible to manage the antecedents of organizational commitment more effectively. (Dunham et al. 1994.) An advantage of distinguishing among the components of commitment lies not with their relative ability to predict turnover but, instead, with their implications for on-the-job behavior. Not all commitment lead to desirable outcomes and employee retention to the exclusion of performance surely should not be any organization's only goal. Indeed, it is widely recognized that some voluntary

turnover is helpful, rather that harmful, to the organization (Meyer & Allen 1997, 26).

Employees with strong affective commitment are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviors and define their jobs more broadly (organizational citizenship). Affective commitment has also been positively related to willingness to suggest improvements, accept things as they are and on the other hand negatively related to passive withdrawal from dissatisfying situations. (Allen & Meyer 1996.) The committed individual always has some discretion in the specification of the terms of the commitment. The terms are likely to be interpreted more liberally in case of affective commitment that in the case of continuance or normative commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 312).

Demographic variables have been shown to play a relatively minor role in the development of organizational commitment. By contrast, work experiences have been found to have much stronger relations, particularly with affective commitment. These findings support the argument that organizations should concentrate on carefully managing employees' after entry experiences than attempt to recruit employees who might be predisposed to being affectively committed. (Meyer et al. 2002, 38; see also Coetzee & Botha 2012.) Coetzee et al. (2014) stated, that ultimately, affective commitment is a matter of managerial training and proactive approach in facilitating a favourable organizational culture.

Managing Job Satisfaction

Organizational practices that maximize job satisfaction will likely lead to having employees who are more cooperative and willing to help the organization be successful. Research findings also show that people who are satisfied with their work are more likely to maintain good health and positive well-being (Spector 1997). In addition, according to the results of this study, by increasing job satisfaction it is possible to increase also the employees' affective commitment.

There are many ways to enhance job satisfaction, e.g, forming autonomous work groups, conducting periodic job satisfaction surveys and organizing discussion meetings to develop an action plan to address the uncovered issues. However, management should be careful about undertaking diagnostic activities without a commitment to make positive changes. Lack of positive action following a survey is extremely frustrating to those who took the time to share concerns about the organization. Unfulfilled explanations can result in additional problems, such as counterproductive behavior and turnover. At the very least, there should be discussions throughout the organization about what can and cannot be done following a survey. Employees need to understand why dissatisfying situations must exist. (Spector 1997, 73-74.)

Worth looking into is also the age distribution issues of the organization, for it has been argued that age differences in overall job satisfaction are greater than those associated with gender, education, ethnic background or income. Clark, Oswald & Warr (1996) state that there is strong evidence for U-shaped

relationship between age and job satisfaction and that similar pattern occurs also for employees' context-free mental health. These findings suggest that both job satisfaction and context-free mental health are affected by non-job factors of life-stage and personal circumstances, e.g. changes in expectations with increasing age (Clark et al. 1996, 57).

Challenging and autonomous jobs were rated high in this study and growth possibilities were shown to have a strong correlation with affective commitment. Career growth may be a viable way for managers to maintain or perhaps even re-establish organizational commitment after difficult periods in the organization's history (Weng et al. 2010). Managers are, however, advised to proceed slowly and carefully with the implementation of job enrichment programs, especially when the target employees have only weak needs for personal growth. The magnitude of the gains realized in such circumstances may well turn out to be less than would be the case for employees high in growth need strength. The findings have, on the other hand, provided no reason to expect that ultimate impact of working on enriched jobs will be more negative than positive for any group of employees, regardless of their level of growth need strength. (Hackman & Oldham 1976, 274-275.)

Managing Organizational Trust

Commitment based on trust can be built on shared values and objectives, consistent operational principles and procedures, open and participative dialogue, feelings of safeness and caring, as well as on competence development possibilities (Lämsä & Päivike 2010, 97). Emotions are central in human functioning and they play important roles in facilitating intuition and psychological and relational health. It follows, therefore, that positive as well as negative emotions will play important roles also in business relationships, including those in workplace, and will be connected to, or part of, the trust and distrust occurring there. (Young & Daniel 2003.)

Management has the biggest role in trust building in an organization. Trust is earned through actions and interpersonal relationships play an important role. The same applies to distrust. Lack of trust can lead to conflicts and insults that lead to a cycle of negativity. Motivation and commitment towards work may weaken, employees may react with passive attitudes and keep from sharing information. As a long-lasting state trust problems might result in loss of effectivity and profit. (Vesterinen 2011, 111.)

Spence Laschinger et al. (2001) stated, that if managers are not willing to share accurate information in a timely fashion, the perception may develop that information is being hidden. As speculation grows as to why information is not provided, feelings of safety and comfort deteriorate and trust in management is destroyed. Similarly, when employees are provided with helpful feedback and guidance from managers and given the flexibility to use their judgement and make discretionary decisions, their trust in management increases. Gilbert & Tang (1998) argued, that employees who feel that they (or their outplaced peers)

have been treated unfairly or inhumanely are likely to lose trust in their organization. Therefore, there is a pressing need to stress to management the significance of distributive and procedural justice.

Managers engaging in excessive monitoring and defensive behavior will have fewer resources remaining with which to accomplish fundamental work objectives (McAllister 1995, 32). Organizations depend on the discretionary contributions of their members to maintain efficiency and coordination. Organizations must also depend on employees to use their skills and energies wisely so that contributions are maximized – organizations need employees who work not only harder but smarter. An essential in working smarter is undoubtedly paying attention and looking for opportunities to make constructive contributions. (McAllister 1995, 33.) McAllister (1995) states, that affect-based trust has a central role in facilitating effective coordinated action in organizations.

Even though management is in a central role as "trust builders", all the members of an organization need to take part in the building process. Trust in management can be enforced by active communication, open and informal dialogue, fair procedures, hearing the employees and explaining the decisions made, consistent behaviors, acting upon the common values, supporting the employees in difficult situations, supporting the teams in their objectives and acting as a role model. Employees can enforce trust by accepting the given information and decisions by committing to them, seeing supervisors positively, acting flexibly over the boundaries, giving feedback and being eager to learn new things. This would also lead to satisfaction with work and commitment to organization. (Vesterinen 2011, 118.)

Relationships are different, as are the individuals, and sometimes tight controlling or close monitoring might feel more appealing than trust initiations (Whitener et al. 1998, 523). The structure for optimal trust differs as situations or contexts change (for frameworks see e.g. Wicks, Berman & Jones 1999). Especially the socio-cultural context has to be taken into account in the trust-building efforts. Management can nurture trust with the help of appropriate and context-sensitive managerial practices (Lämsä & Pučėtaitė 2006, 130). Understanding the characteristics of a context, such as socio-cultural one, can help a company design practices and structures for the development of organizational trust. In the societies where the level of organizational trust is low due to work ethic, organizational trust can be developed by raising the employees' work ethic with people management practices based on ethical principles. (Pučėtaitė & Lämsä 2008, 333-334.) Worth noticing is, that codified and declared ethical principles alone may be insufficient to incite moral behavior, if employees perceive that they are not integrated into daily organizational processes and operations, in particular HRM practices (Pučėtaitė, Lämsä & Novelskaitė 2010, 200-201, 212-213).

Perception is more important than reality

To have the intended effect on commitment, organizational policies and practices must be consistent with one another, with the overall business strategy, and with the existing culture of the organization. Another important consideration in attempting to foster commitment through HR practices is that perception is more important than reality. Employees will react to conditions as they perceive them. In some cases, the same practices can produce different forms of commitment, depending on how they are perceived. This can lead to situations where a policy or practice has unexpected, possibly undesirable, consequences. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 88; Meyer et al. 2002, 42; Powell & Meyer 2004, 172-173.)

Managers have to be aware, that doing something might not be enough. Employees will have to perceive that it was done, attribute the action to the organization, and interpret it as being motivated by good intentions. These perceptions can not be assumed to take place automatically. To the contrary, managerial actions can often be interpreted in more than one way, with each having somewhat different implications. Communication, therefore, is very important. Management should not only inform employees of the actions and intentions but also listen to or seek out the reactions of employees to determine whether the message has been accurately received. Where appropriate, input from employees should also be sought before policies and practices are implemented. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 110.)

Motivational mechanisms are involved in how employee commitment affects behavior. Thus, "selling" the value of an assigned goal or allowing employees to participate in the goal-setting process promote affective commitment to the goal and leads to higher levels of task performance. Using a "tell" strategy to assign a goal is likely to, at best, instill continuance commitment. As a result employees might do what is required to achieve the goal but nothing more (Meyer et al. 2004, 1004).

Work has to have a meaning

There have been speculations whether commitment can be clearly distinguished from related constructs, exchange-based forms of motivation and from target-relevant attitudes (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 301). Meyer & Herscovitch (2001) also believe, that there is an important cognitive component to affective commitment. That is, the affectively committed employee also recognizes the important purpose of his or hers work. In this study over 70 % of the participants feel that the organization has a great deal of personal meaning. The desire to be creative, enterprising, and active is built into species. In addition, to varying degrees, people want to be of service and feel to have been of use to someone. Management should design jobs that are rich in the attributes that make work inherently rewarding. People need work that they can care about and believe in. Employees also want their organization's services and business practices to have integrity. (Macher 1991, 46-49.)

Even though the experience of meaningfulness was addressed on organizational level ("This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me"), the sources and mechanisms of meaning, as well as the theoretical framework presented by Rosso, Dekas & Wrzesniewski (2010) can be applied to better understand where the experience of meaningful work resides. Organizations are very strong contexts that carry unique systems of meaning exerting a powerful influence on how individuals interpret the meaning and meaningfulness of their work. For work as a whole to be perceived as meaningful it is important that there are sufficient opportunities to experience pathways ("individuation", "contribution", "self-connection" and "unification"; presented by Rosso et al. 2010, 114), through which meaningful work is created or maintained. Perceptions of meaningfulness are likely to take shape within the context of all possible sources of work meaning and their interrelationships. Various sources or mechanisms may have an additive effect on the meaning of work, or certain sources or mechanisms may interact with each other to produce multiplicative effects (Rosso et al. 2010, 115-116).

Meaningful work boosts employees' inner work life – the constant flow of emotions, motivations and perceptions that constitute a person's reactions to the events of the work day. Positive inner work life affects the well-being of employees and allows them to be more productive, creative, committed and collegial in their jobs. Consistent action to reinforce the purpose of work has to come from the top. In addition, managers need to be aware that the meaningfulness of work can (also unwittingly) be undermined through everyday words and actions. (Amabile & Kramer 2012; see also Aaltonen, Ahonen & Pajunen 2015.)

Commitment in the changing working life

Much emphasis is placed on being flexible and efficient, as companies must adapt to changing conditions in order to be competitive. Many strategies used to achieve these objectives involve the loss of job. It might create an illusion that neither employers nor employees should strive for commitment anymore. However, there are still many reasons why commitment should not be seen as an outdated issue. Even though organizations become leaner, they still must maintain the core people who need to have a greater variety of skills and ability to adapt to the demands of different situations. Commitment to the organization is very much appreciated so the employer can trust the key employees' performance. It is also believed that people have a need to be committed to something and that commitment will be channeled to some direction. Commitment can also be linked to employee well-being and have above explained behavioral consequences. So it seems, that understanding commitment and how it develops is as important these days as it ever was. (Meyer & Allen 1997, 4-6; see also Meyer 2009.)

Employees who are committed to implementing the change will be expected to adapt their behavior to be consistent with the spirit of the change.

But if they will or not, might depend on the nature of their commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001). Not all forms of employee commitment to change are equal. Although commitment, regardless of its form, may lead to minimum compliance with specified requirements for behavior changes, affective and normative commitment state a willingness to go beyond minimum requirements and do what is required to make the change work, even if it requires some sacrifice on their part. Employees with a strong continuance commitment are more likely to restrict their behavior to what is absolutely required – even more likely, than employees with weaker commitment. (Meyer et al. 2007, 205-206.) Given that effective implementation of change often involves some trial and error, greater employee autonomy and that it is often difficult to monitor and reward desired behavior, it is very likely that mere compliance will not be sufficient (Herscovitch & Meyer 2002, 483-484). The uncertainties surrounding change often make it difficult for management to anticipate all of the things that employees will need to do to make the change work. They must therefore rely on employees to buy into the change and to determine what they need to do to be effective. Employees with strong affective commitment and/or normative commitment are likely to do so. Those with a strong continuance commitment are not (Meyer et al. 2007, 209).

Managerial efforts to increase openness and readiness by communicating the need for change and providing necessary resources and training, are likely to contribute to the development of affective commitment. There is also some evidence that high levels of organizational commitment can help to buffer the effect of change-related stress on employee health and well-being (Herscovitch & Meyer 2002, 485).

In many cases, it is desirable to make the organization the target of the members' commitment. There might, however, be conditions under which this is neither desirable nor possible. For example, in highly unstable conditions in which the continuing of the employment can not be guaranteed, it might not be reasonable to expect employee continuing the commitment relationship to the organization. It might, also in this case, be possible to get employees to work toward those same goals if they can be shown to be relevant to an alternative target (e.g., profession, customer, personal career). (Meyer & Herscovitch 2001, 322; Meyer et al. 2002, 38; Meyer et al. 2004, 1004.) There are research findings also about several other constructs possibly affecting commitment development under conditions of organizational change, such as person-organization fit (see Meyer, Hecht, Gill & Topolnytsky 2010) and job status. Research findings (see e.g., de Gilder 2003) show, that people who perform the same jobs, but who have different contracts with their organization, may differ in their attitudes and behavior. More precisely, contingent workers showed relatively low affective commitment to the team and to the organization, although distributive justice was higher for contingent workers than for core employees. (See also Ruokolainen 2011, 93.) Here again, it is important to acknowledge the multidimensional characteristics of organizational commitment, and keep them in mind when the organizational development programs are being planned.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study

This study was based on a previously gathered cross-sectional survey sample. The participants were quite unevenly distributed, as 62 % of the participants were from Estonia, 66 % of the employees were women and 59 % of the participants were under 40 years old. Also the fact that the field of industry could not be connected to the participants, weakens the generalizability of the results.

One of the limitations of the Meyer's & Allen's approach is the lack of distinction between organizational commitment developed before and after entry into the organization. According to Cohen's four-component model (2007), more attention should be given to the notion of time in the conceptualization of commitment. The work experiences during the entry period are argued to alter the newcomers' interpretation of the commitment items, taking on a different conceptual meaning from one period to the next. Thus employees in different organizational career stages assign different meanings to commitment. (Cohen 2007, 340.)

The measures and questions were modified from the original measures, which weakens the comparability of the results at hand. Question number 11 in the Organizational Trust measure was clearly not understood well, as half of the participants did not take a position concerning the question, and the question can, indeed, be interpreted in different ways.

It would be pay off to continue the SOLWE project later with a longitudinal study to gain also causal results about the leadership themes included in the study. There are many interesting themes in the sample that were left unattained in this study. Affective commitment correlates quite strongly with intentions to stay with the present company. That gives another reason to enforce affective commitment as well as study the data further.

The results of this study arouses interest to learn more about the relationship between the experienced meaningfulness of work, the growth possibilities in work, and affective commitment. Organizational trust could also be studied as a moderator and a mediator between these variables and affective commitment.

5.3 Conclusions

The sample supported the theoretical models and hypotheses that were proposed in the light of the previous research. Job satisfaction, especially its dimensions related to growth possibilities, supervision and social aspects, as well as organizational trust, especially affect-based trust, correlate strongly and positively with organizational affective commitment. Background variables were not strong predictors of the organizational commitment variables, so it is more important to manage employees' after entry experiences than attempt to recruit employees who might be predisposed to being affectively committed.

Individual growth need strength is different for all employees, and some people like more challenges than others. Nevertheless, the experience of meaningfulness of ones work and opportunities for growth (i.e., feeling of worthwile accomplishment, challenge and autonomy in one's work), seem to be in a key role in enforcing affective commitment in any SME organization. Although the meaning of work was already included in Hackman's and Oldham's (1975) Job Characteristics Theory, the research of experienced meaningfulness in working life has not increased until the recent years, as the working life has become more complex and challenging for the employees and organizations. Meaningfulness of work has been found to be connected to several desirable outcomes considering work performance and personal well-being. (See e.g., Rosso et al. 2010; Amabile & Kramer 2012; Aaltonen et al. 2015.)

It is worth contemplating what kind of commitment organization wants to reinforce in the long run. It seems that Herzberg's (1959) motivation-hygiene theory holds its place, so money can't buy satisfied and committed employees if the other dimensions of satisfaction and trust do not exist. Dimensions of commitment can't be clearly separated in real life, but it seems rational to invest effort into having affectively committed and satisfied employees, because mere compliance is not sufficient in the fast changing working life. By maintaining an open, fair and supportive athmosphere and involving employees in decision making the employees are encouraged to freely communicate their expectations towards their jobs and stronger affective commitment is more likely to develop.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1 QUESTIONNAIRE FORM (ABBREVIATED)

Background Information

1) **Age**: ___ years

2) **Gender**: 1) Female   2) Male

3) Name of the company you work for:

4) **Position in the organization:**
1) Employee
2) Official
3) Supervisor
4) Other, please specify: _____

5) Are you a shift-worker?
        1) No
        2) Yes

6) **How long have you worked:**
        a) In your current profession? __ years
        b) For your current employer? __ years
        c) Under your current manager? __ years

7) **Which of the following options best describes the type of employment you have?**
1) Permanent
2) Temporary
3) Other, please specify?_____

8) Are you on a part-time pension from your work?
        1)   No
        2)   Yes

9) How much time have you spent away from work for health reasons (due to an illness or related examination) during the past year (12 months)?
1) Not at all
2) 9 days at most
3) Between 10 days and 1 month
4) over 1 month to 2 months
5) over 2 months to half a year
6) over half a year

Organizational Commitment

Scale
1=Strongly disagree
2=Sligthly disagree
3=Not disagree/not agree
4=Sligthly agree
5=Strongly agree

Statements
1) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization
2) I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside it
3) I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own
4) I do not think that I could easily become as attached to another organization as I am to this one.
5) I feel like 'part of a family' at my organization
6) I feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization
7) This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me
8) I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization
9) I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up
10) It would be costly for me to leave my organization
11) I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization
12) I think that people in these days move from company to company too often
13) I believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization
14) If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization

Job satisfaction

Scale

1) Very dissatisfied
2) Dissatisfied/Slightly dissatisfied
3) Neutral
4) Satisfied/Slightly satisfied
5) Very satisfied

Statements

How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job:
1) How secure things look for you in the future in this organization.
2) The people I talk to and work with on your job.
3) The chance to get to know other people while on the job.
4) The chance to help other people while at work.
5) The degree to which you are fairly paid for what you contribute to this organization.
6) The degree of respect and fair treatment you receive from your boss.
7) The amount of support and guidance you receive from your supervisor.

8) The overall quality of the supervision you receive in your job.
9) The organization's management style.
10) Your unit's/department's management style?
11) The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment you get from doing your job.
12) The amount of independent thought and action you can exercise in your job.
13) The amount of challenge in your job.
14) Your job as a whole.

Organizational Trust

Scale

1=Strongly disagree
2=Disagree
3=Slightly disagree
4=Not disagree/not agree
5=Slightly agree
6=Agree
7= Strongly agree

1. We have sharing relationships in our organization. We can freely share our ideas, feelings and hopes.
2. In our organization I can talk freely about difficulties I am having at work and know that my co-workers will want to listen.
3. In our organization we would feel a sense of loss if some of the co-workers were transferred and we could no longer work together.
4. If I shared my problems in our organization, I know my co-workers would respond constructively and caringly.
5. I would have to say that people in this organization make considerable emotional investments in working relationships.
6. In our organization people approach their jobs with professionalism and dedication.
7. Given people's track records in our organization, I see no reason to doubt their competences and preparation for the jobs.
8. I can rely on other people in our organization not to make my job more difficult by careless work.
9. In our organization most people, even those who aren't close friends consider each other to be trustworthy.
10. In our organization work associates who must interact among themselves consider each other to be trustworthy.
11. In our organization if people knew more about each other's backgrounds, they would be more concerned and monitor each other's performance more closely. (item was reverse-coded)